

**Submission
No 77**

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

Name: Mrs Amanda Smith

Date Received: 12 July 2023

Amanda Smith

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

12th July, 2023

Dear The Hon Emily Suvaal MLC,

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

Thank you for the opportunity to make a submission to this important inquiry into the feasibility of undergrounding transmission infrastructure for renewable infrastructure projects.

My name is Mandy Smith, and I am a partner in Glenellerslie Herefords, which was founded by Gordon & June Smith in 1948 as part of the Ellerslie Estate War Service Land Settlement scheme. We are devastatingly impacted by Humelink, and support undergrounding as the solution to our very real concerns.

We very sadly became impacted due to our own community pushing Humelink off themselves and onto us, adding further devastation to an already devastating impose of what this project brings to us and our community. Since it was announced that the 80 metre towers were not going through Yaven Creek and instead through our farm, near our home, I have been mentally struggling... Depression, Anxiety, Restless, Worry, Insomnia and feeling physically ill. I have felt isolated and withdrawn from our community as a result, after being an active and supportive community member. I was contemplating suicide in June/July last year, when my family and Doctor intervened, and ambulance and police were called which was a traumatic time for all of us. I felt that life wasn't worth living and in the next fire we are doomed.

To see these towers as I sit at my kitchen table will be horrific, a scar that will live with us for the rest of our lives, and those of our children, and grandchildren. Our hopes of the future of our beautiful landscape impacted forever if Humelink goes overhead.

This farm cottage which my husband and I worked hard for and made into a loving home for our 4 children holds so many wonderful memories of bringing up our children. In 2013, we lost our son to a farm accident so this little patch of heaven we call home, more significantly holds precious memories of our son who loved the land and was going to take over from his dad. We are still here showing we love this land, every day in his honour, this place, this legacy is ingrained in our blood.

The thought of Transgrid cutting down more trees and putting more access roads in makes me see red. We should protect the environment and wildlife in regional areas, with some areas only just

recovering from the devastating Black Summer Fires. The Wedge Tailed Eagles, Emus and other birds took some time to come back after the fires.

We live just opposite where the Dunn's Rd Fire started, in close vicinity to ignition point. The fear of living that, surviving that, and the potential of that happening again has played a toll on me to the point that in summer I hardly sleep. Worrying about what will happen with looming fires, and now the last 3 years, how frightened we are to have the added hazard of Humelink.

My husband, an experienced Fire Captain and Tanker Driver for over 50+ years said he'd never want to see a fire like Dunn's Rd again. My son Blake was part of the crew that saved homes, farm sheds, and whatever else they could during these fires, protecting people and property. My fear of losing another son was unimaginable. I was so pleased to see a very sooty boy at the end of each day and prayed to God for his safe return.

When my husband and son were away fighting the fire, I worked hard to clear away everything around our home and outbuilding so if the fire came calling, I was hoping that the garden hose would keep my son's fiancé and I safe, but in reality, it wouldn't. I felt a huge responsibility when someone else's child is in your care, so I had to send her to a safe house in Wagga. Adding Humelink overhead to our already High Bushfire prone area, impacts our concerns for our safety, the safety of volunteers, and the safety of our community. We should not increase the risk; we should reduce the risk by undergrounding transmission. Undergrounding Transmission would bring comfort to Mothers awaiting their children and husbands bravely fighting fires for the safety of all, we can not further risk lives by increasing hazard.

The Humelink Project I feel very strongly for it to go underground. The way of the future for our great nation. Saving our trees and wildlife, protecting people, assets, and community from increasing the devastating affects of bushfires and acknowledging that people in the bush count too!

Yours Sincerely

Amanda Smith

Member Darlow RFS