

**Submission
No 79**

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

Name: Mr Roger McLennan

Date Received: 12 July 2023

Robyn & Roger McLennan

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 family has owned a property at _____ for 55 years but also have been a **landowner in the Gilmore valley for over 140 years**. I, Robyn McLennan (Howe) am the 5th generation of the Howe family to operate the farming business. My husband Roger and I took over running the business in 2011 after my father will tragically killed in a farming accident on the above property.

Our concerns are simply listed below and are written in point form to give you an idea of the impact this will have on ourselves, neighbours, the community of Tumut and surrounding areas. I am not going to quote figures as I am sure the professionals have already submitted this. This is just in layman's terms.

1. Financial hardship on our business if the above ground HumeLink power lines are installed. I have attached a photo (Appendix 1) of the valley which the proposed above ground lines are to run through. This is prime grazing land which we will find hard to maintain if we are unable to have clear access to our land. We have a large area of steep terrain which is only accessible via helicopter for weed/ fertiliser spraying. In fact my father lost his life spraying weeds within a vehicle 12 years ago. For this reason we need unrestricted air access to maintain our farming operation. With over head lines installed this will no longer be viable.

It has been estimated at the value of our land will devalue by up to 20-30% with the installation of overhead powerlines. We understand that below ground lines are more expensive to install but think long term of the effect on farming businesses, people and I am sure you can realise that this needs to be carefully considered. We are only going to get one chance at this so let's do it right now.

2. Bushfire risk. We were within the Dunns Road bushfire area in 2020 and even though we were one of the very lucky ones to only loose $\frac{1}{4}$ of our property this was because we were able to use helicopters via access to our dam water. Without this access we would have been totally destroyed. With the current climate warming it is predicted that there are more fires to come. Please don't allow above ground towers that will attract lightning strikes and also not allow us to fight the fires. There will be no access to fight these fires -they will just rage down the valley destroying everything in its path.

3. Visual effect - as you can see from(Appendix 2) the Gilmore valley is a beautiful and tranquil place to live. Can you imagine looking out our window (Appendix 3) every morning and seeing a huge power tower in front of you. This is a new build for us with the intention of renting this out for a farm stay to supplement income but with a power tower in front this is no longer viable.

The tourism industry in the Tumut area is continuing to grow but if these HumeLink towers are to be approved no one will want to visit with visual pollution like this. It's not just us that's being effected it's the whole Snowy Valley area.

I urge the Standing Committee to recommend that undergrounding is the best way forward for renewable energy transmission in NSW. As we transition to net zero emissions we need environmentally responsible transmission as well as generation.

Yours sincerely,

Robyn & Roger McLennan

Trading as RB & RH McLennan