

Submission
No 88

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

Organisation: Community Foundation for Tumut Region

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To the representatives of NSW government inquiring into the underground high voltage power lines

To begin The Community Foundation for Tumut Region thank you for the opportunity to make a submission regarding the desperate need to have the high voltage wires installed underground.

It is imperative the government supports the local Hume-link Action group and all similar groups across the area in their endeavors to have the proposed high voltage transmission lines installed underground instead of hanging across the landscape carried on massive steel towers.

These towers will violate the visual amenity and environment of what is our major natural tourist attraction and destroy much of where we live, our ever-changing landscape.

The current plan as instructed by the energy authority - NSW Electricity Transmission Ministerial Holding Corporation; to have the subcontractor the internationally owned TransGrid implement plans; to install 75 to 90 metres high towers on valuable farmland and through the National Park is totally unacceptable and tragic when there is an alternative -underground on the same land.

This is not an objection to increasing the distribution of innovative re-newable energy when we all need to turn on the light and charge the phone!! Underground is simply a better non visually intrusive and safer way to distribute whether it be pumped hydro, wind or solar when all must be connected to these high voltage lines.

The towers will form a ring of steel throughout the area around the towns through the National Park and will critically render much of the farmland extremely difficult to manage. This is unmitigated vandalism on our environment our natural and rural landscape. Landscape that has been cared for managed and improved over centuries and decades by our First Nations people, farmers, landholders, and parks managers.

Significant and valid reasons to install high voltage lines underground

- Bush fires can be caused by the wires arcing under extreme conditions such as we have experienced in recent memory the inferno of 2019/20. Aerial firefighting will not be possible within 700 meters either side of the high-voltage lines overall 1.4 km which will increase with the planned additional lines as per CASA regulations.
- Aerial spraying on productive hilly country that is dangerous to take vehicles will not be possible within 700 metres from the centre of the lines overall 1.4kms which will increase with the planned additional lines as per CASA regulations.
- The health impacts caused by the radio activity generated by the high voltage lines are well documented.
- The mental health and well being of the farming community being impacted is a very real issue such as after the bushfires.

So what is the solution? As in so many other countries across the world these same high voltage lines have been installed underground, it's simple. Do it once for the generations to come and general health of the entire community.

We ask the government of NSW to listen and act in supporting the Hume-Link Action Group and all such groups in their unwavering commitment to have governments both state and federal re-consider and agree to have these high voltage lines installed underground as we will all be impacted in some way. A reminder to all involved from the politicians and bureaucrats to TransGrid it is now 2023 the technology is with us.

So we are asking:

Do you want to see the visual amenity and environment destroyed by a cobweb of steel and wires across the landscapes of this region and the country?

Do you want to see the risk of bushfires increase, remember 2019/20?

Do you want to see many of our farmers seriously affected with mental health issues and the loss of productive land?

Do you want affected and surrounding properties compromised and devalued?

This not just about supporting our important agriculture community but all communities. It is time all tiers of government are united in considering and acting on the planned high voltage power lines to distribute innovative and much needed.

re-newable energy to be simply installed underground across not just our local area but the entire country.

Yours in hope

The directors Community Foundation for Tumut Region