

Submission  
No 99

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

**Organisation:** Upper Lachlan Shire Council

**Date Received:** 14 July 2023

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ABN 81 011 241 552

# Upper Lachlan Shire Council

All correspondence addressed to the General Manager, PO Box 42, Gunning NSW 2581

**Crookwell Office:** 44 Spring Street, Crookwell NSW 2583

p: 02 4830 1000 | f: 02 4832 2066 | e: council@upperlachlan.nsw.gov.au | www.upperlachlan.local-e.nsw.gov.au

**Gunning Office:** 123 Yass Street, Gunning NSW 2581

p: 02 4845 4100 | f: 02 4845 1426 | e: council@upperlachlan.nsw.gov.au

**Taralga Office:** Taralga Community Service Centre, Orchard Street, Taralga NSW 2580

p: 02 4840 2099 | f: 4840 2296 | e: taralgacsc@ceinternet.com.au

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## File Reference: F14/30-010

The Honourable Emily Suvaal MLC,  
Standing Committee on State Development  
Parliament House  
6 Macquarie Street  
SYDNEY NSW 2000  
Email: [Officeof.MLCSuvaal@parliament.nsw.gov.au](mailto:Officeof.MLCSuvaal@parliament.nsw.gov.au)

13 July 2023

Dear Hon. Emily Suvaal MLC,

### **Re: Feasibility of Undergrounding Transmission Infrastructure**

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

HumeLink high voltage overhead lines will traverse the Upper Lachlan Shire across approximately 115 kms negatively impacting:

- multi-generational productive agriculture farms that will be impacted by the loss of value to their properties, production and elimination of cropland, with 70 metre wide easements
- adverse environmental outcomes traversing our Shire affecting endangered or threatened fauna or flora by fractured connectivity, the loss of balanced biodiversity of native vegetation and rare woodlands generated over thousands of years
- adverse economic impact on growing tourism that is a major industry leveraging our unique environments, open and spectacular vistas, by imposing 80 m high towers every 300-500 metres
- social discourse from our constituents whose mental and physical health are impacted living with the noise, electromagnetic fields and loss of asset values by intrusive visual industrialisation of once pristine and much loved landscape
- disaster management in a Shire where 8 disasters have affected Upper Lachlan over the past few years, including severe storms, wind, fires and localised flooding and how our emergency services will manage the affects of these high voltage wires

The above could be mitigated with undergrounding HumeLink where:

- farmers would have minimal physical barriers to their successful farming practices and ground cover could be restored over time
- disruption to the environment landscape would be minimised by reducing easement width, eliminating the need for concrete pads, heavy vehicle maintenance track erosion, reduced weed spray drift of native vegetation running 360 km length of this project affecting over 5,714 ha
- regional economic development and tourism could flourish benefiting businesses, employment opportunities, attracting green industries and new settlers moving into our region
- adverse mental and emotional health would be greatly alleviated, reducing strain on our medical providers
- disaster management and emergency services would have more tools at their disposal to counter fire, wind or storm events
- reduced maintenance requirement for HumeLink longer term as has been demonstrated around the world with undergrounding

Whilst the drive for rapid decarbonisation is necessary, the risks of unintended negative and irreversible environmental and health consequences should have equal standing.

I urge the Standing Committee to recommend that undergrounding be recommended across the Upper Lachlan Shire and other impacted Shires, as is accepted as best practice for renewable energy transmission across the world, so why not in NSW?

I look forward to your response to this matter and invite you to write to Upper Lachlan Shire Council at [council@upperlachlan.nsw.gov.au](mailto:council@upperlachlan.nsw.gov.au) acknowledging receipt of my letter.

Yours sincerely,

Clr. Pam Kensit  
**Mayor, Upper Lachlan Shire Council**