

**Submission  
No 108**

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

**Organisation:** Community Consultation Group Representatives on the  
HumeLink Undergrounding Study Steering Committee (CCGSC)

**Date Received:** 14 July 2023

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HumeLink Community Consultation Group (CCG)  
Representatives for:

Upper Lachlan, Yass Valley CCG

Snowy Valleys CCG

Wagga Wagga, Cootamundra, Gundagai CCG

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

14 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.

As the Community Consultation Group Representatives on the HumeLink Undergrounding Study Steering Committee (CCGSC) we are keenly aware of the importance of fairly assessing undergrounding transmission.

We believed that the HumeLink undergrounding study was flawed and unbalanced, and misrepresented the costs of the undergrounding option. We had 52 outstanding issues and were unable to endorse the report. As such, we were of the view that the study shouldn't be relied upon for making decisions about undergrounding HumeLink.

Further, part of the scope of the study was to quantify the non-benefits of underground transmission, so these could be valued and fully taken into account in making decisions on undergrounding HumeLink. This important part of the study, was omitted from the study.

Transgrid took nearly 6 months to respond to our position on HumeLink Undergrounding Study Report, which presented as deliberate delaying tactics, particularly as the Office of Environment and Climate Change said they were waiting for Transgrid to respond, before committing to review the study.

Please see attached two letters sent to the independent chair at the conclusion of the study:

1. A response to the Transgrid decision to dismiss undergrounding HumeLink on the basis of the unendorsed report, with a Table of the non-market benefits to be quantified, attached; and
2. Comments relating to our reasons for not endorsing the report.

We urge the Standing Committee to fully consider the non-market benefits of underground cables and recommend that HumeLink be underground. As we transition to net zero emissions, we need environmentally responsible transmission as well as generation.

Yours sincerely,

Andrea Strong, Upper Lachlan, Yass Valley CCG,  
Rebecca Tobin, Snowy Valleys CCG, and  
Peter Lawson, Wagga Wagga, Cootamundra, Gundagai CCG