

**Submission
No 176**

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

Name: Mr Brian Cameron

Date Received: 14 July 2023

Brian Cameron

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

Date: 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.

In summary we strongly support and urge the Committee to support the adoption of underground transmission lines in specific areas.

Background and context:

I and my brother manage our family farm which was taken up by our ancestors in the early 1880's. The back (eastern) portion of the farm is included in the EnergyCo preliminary study corridor and as such we have a direct and personal interest in this proposal.

The basis of our concern is the impact of overhead transmission lines on the natural environment and native species within that 70-80 meters of clear felled land that EnergyCo will occupy.

Our land is a known Koala habitat and subject to the NSW State Environmental Planning Policy (SEPP) and has hosted Koalas for as long as I can remember. Indeed we even have one paddock we call the Bear Tree paddock as Koalas lived in a tree in that paddock for many years. In recent years I have observed three koala sighting on our land one in the middle of the proposed EnergyCo study corridor.

Not only will the clear felling of the corridor remove koala habitat but will form a barrier between koala habitat locations which koalas will find difficult or impossible to cross. Effectively limiting their ranging area and as such impacting koala populations.

On February 12, 2022 the Koala was listed under national environmental law as endangered.

Reference: [Koala listing under national environmental law - DCCEEW](#)

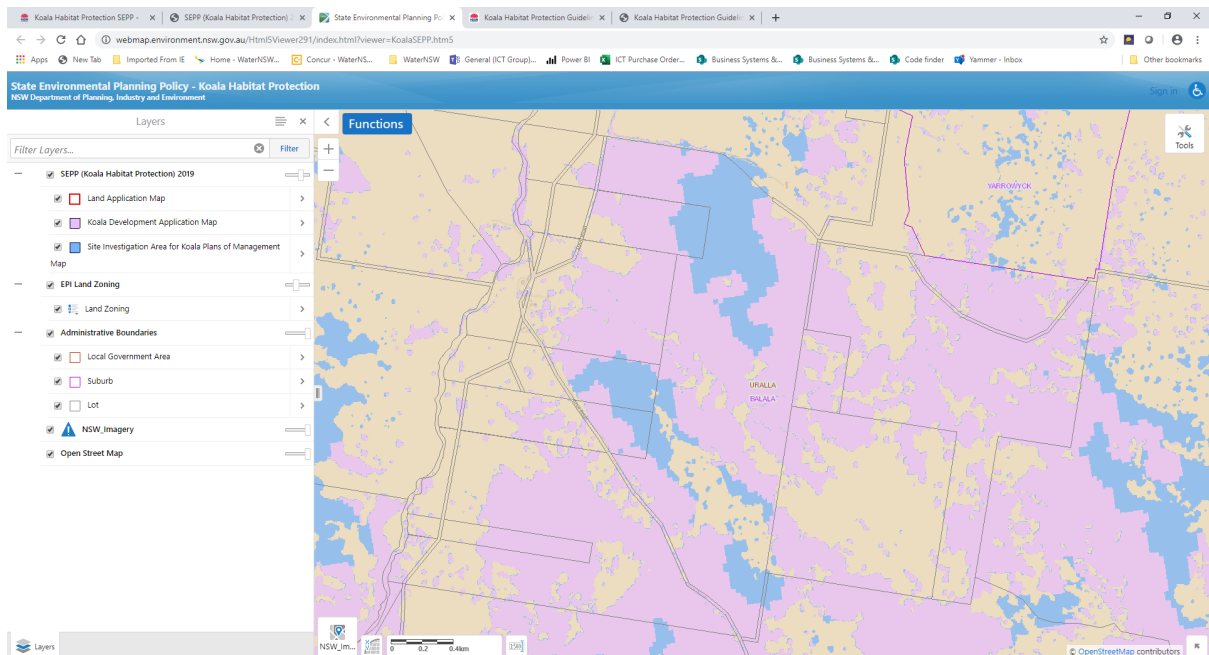
Given the devastating fires in the last drought and the prospect of another strong El Nino event this coming summer protecting Koala habitat must continue to be given high priority in any development whether it be for Agriculture, industry or government infrastructure.

Fortunately our land was not impacted by those fires so the local koala populates are still intact and their habitat untouched.

Our request to the Committee is to recommend underground transmission lines where endangered species will be impacted. This means that not all the transmission line length needs to be underground.

To provide some visual evidence of the impact I submit two images.

Firstly below is a screen shot from the environment.nsw.gov.au of Koala Habitat protection areas highlighting our property. The pink areas highlight areas subject to Koala development applications



The second image below covers the same area showing the proposed EnergyCo



As evidenced by the images the proposed transmission corridor bisects established Koala habitat and will be devastating to the population if clear felled.

Finally, I have separately attached a photograph taken on our property of a koala in 2021.

We cannot in all good conscience implement destructive approaches when less impactful alternatives are available.

I urge the Standing Committee to recommend that undergrounding is the best way forward where endangered species habitat will be impacted.

Yours sincerely,

Brian Cameron

