

Submission  
No 221

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

**Name:** Name suppressed  
**Date Received:** 14 July 2023

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Partially  
Confidential

As owners of a property, that will have the large towers installed across our property we would like to request the powerlines to be put underground. When we purchased the property back in 2019 it came with a registered and approved airstrip with an approved 6 lot subdivision. There are a large number of reasons for this request to change the powerlines to be underground.

Powerlines on rural properties are a known risk factor for bushfires. There has been moves by a number for state governments to address this risk. In the Victorian Government Powerline Bush Safety Program Progress Report 2012-2019 I refer to the top 2 actions to address bushfire risk:

- \* targeted replacement of 541 km of high voltage, bare-wire electric lines with underground or insulated conductors, which reduce ignition likelihood by 98-99% on those lines, in the highest bushfire risk areas of the State;
- \* the replacement of almost 800 low voltage, private overhead electric lines with underground or insulated conductors, protecting over 193 km of such lines in 33 areas of high bushfire risk.

With underground powerlines there are less risks of lightning strikes, falling trees or other events that could damage the powerline infrastructure. On rural land it also preserves the character of the area and the country feel without the large large towers across the landscape.

In newer suburbs across Australia electrical infrastructure is underground for the same reasons. There is less risk of fires, damage to infrastructure from accidents and improves the visual appeal of the area. There is no restriction to buildings only limitations on digging in the areas directly containing the underground powerlines.

We have a registered airstrip on the property which is approved to be extended to allow larger aircraft to use it. The extension has been approved into perpetuity. The planned powerlines to be installed on the property would directly impact the airstrip preventing its use. We would like to have the airstrip available for the Rural Fire Service as well as other small planes and helicopters for farming services such as fertiliser and weed spraying. There are other farms in the area that would also be impacted as fertilising aerially is common practice.

We are requesting the powerlines be changed to be underground so that it reduces the bushfire risk, allows the use of our registered airstrip and also extended airstrip to be retained. It would reduce the visual impact on the area and impact to wildlife and lessens the risk to the electrical infrastructure. I believe it would be cheaper to maintain the powerlines underground as it would only be the lines themselves and not the supporting towers, and being underground would protect them from most damages that could occur.