

Submission
No 301

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

Name: Name suppressed
Date Received: 25 August 2023

Partially
Confidential

22th August 2023

Dear Sir

MOULAMEIN AREA – PROPOSAL TRANSGRID ROUTE

On receiving correspondence and speaking to representatives from Transgrid regarding the instillation of overhead power lines, we strongly object to the proposal in our area.

Please read and give considerable thought to these comments.

1. FLOOD PLAIN AREA - This is a flood prone area and would make maintenance to the transmission line towers inaccessible during times of high streams or flooding.
2. BUSHFIRE - Placing transmission lines through the floodplain areas are extremely impracticable should a fire ignite either from the power lines or bushfire, there is no way fire brigades could contain the fire. River bends have thick undergrowth, dried ground cover with fallen leaves, limbs or trees that fuel fires making it a hazard. Bushfires create their own winddraft. Also fighting a fire around these lines is not possible due to WH&S regulations. I assume Transgrid has a Bushfire Management Plan.
3. ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECT – Removal of natural fauna and flora from river wetlands and river redgum forests for the erection of these towers would cause many native species of animals and reptiles to relocate to other areas, with the real possibility of death caused by fear, predators, isolation, hunger or being crushing by the felling of trees, or bulldozers intruding into their habitat by Transgrid.

We have a natural ecosystem on our property – our own nature reserve. We have documented over 120 species of birds, one being the Bush Stone Curlew an endangered species roaming in this area. (seen on both sides of the Edward River).

Echidna's are also present and can be sited around the farm. A feather glider possum has also been sighted, the smallest mammal in the world.

During last year's flooding the frog population exploded with amazing sounds coming from all directions. The Southern Bell Frog, Burrowing and Tree Frog are just to mention a few.

Reptile sightings include Red Bellied Black snake, Brown, Tiger, Bandy Bandy and Pythons. The latter are residing in our roof, but will often be sighted in sheds or down in the river bend.

HERITAGE /CULTURAL–The Moulamein area is known that the indigenous lived and hunted in this area. They would walk from one location along the rivers or flats fossicking for food, animals and their skins for clothing, stones to use for their preparation in cooking, e.g. grinding rocks, tools. Rivers were an excellent source of water and food. E.g. fish, crayfish, mussels, yabbies, eels, turtles and edible water grasses. The staples for survival.

Examples of aboriginal stones are on display at the Moulamein Heritage Village. Examples of canoe, ring and birthing trees can be seen in the reserve close to town.

On a personal note, my ancestors bought this property in the 1930's and is historically significant to us also. It is very special to my family and request that the power lines do not come through our farm or our district.

4. INTERFERENCE OF FARMING PRACTICES – Our district includes the growing of rice, a cereal that is included in “The food bowl of the nation”. To grow rice the farmers require planes to fly over the crops to sow, fertilize and spray the rice, requiring the plane to fly over the crop several times at a low height. The low flying is to prevent spray drift to ensure the correct coverage of the crop.

Having high voltage power lines through the crop would make it impossible and would mean the end of rice farming. I have heard that if the steel pylons are made in China it could have asbestos or other hazardous materials. “Hundreds of researchers worldwide have shown that living near to high voltage power lines and other parts of the electrical transmission network **increases your risk of cancer and numerous other health issues**”. I ask “ Have there been studies on the effects on animals that have habitats in close proximity to power lines?”

5. COMMUNITY/BUSINESSES - Major shifts in agriculture will occur in our community. The town of Moulamein will be affected and this will cause a chain reaction including businesses in other areas. Job loses or reductions would impact:

- Farm employees
- Local Rice Silo workers
- Transport operations - sell trucks
- Seed companies
- Fertilizer companies – Swan Hill, Barham, Deniliquin
- Agricultural companies – Swan Hill, Barham, Deniliquin
- Machinery (headers, bins, tractors, ploughs etc.)
- Aerial plane companies – Wakool
- Rice Milling industry, Deniliquin
- Rice Storage – Deniliquin, Tullakool, Wakool, Moulamein, Hay
- Murray Irrigation Limited – Deniliquin
- Sun Rice – less production of food
- Rice growers share price on ASX will possibly be affected. It is one of Australia's leading branded food exporter.

Then town businesses would suffer as people move away.

- Moulamein Retirement Village – staff move away to find other employment with husbands who have been put off.
- Moulamein Primary School – student numbers drop, reducing staffing requirements, Moulamein School Bus business – possible reduction in students, reducing bus run needs.
- Community transport & freight services – reduced or out of business
- Moulamein Pre School – as above
- Community Health Services – less services
- Social and sporting bodies – less participants – closure football/netball & bowls clubs

And so it goes on ... It will have a devastating impact on every business house in our community
– HOW CAN THIS BE BENEFICAL TO OUR COMMUNITY.

This will seriously impact our district financially, our lifestyle, emotionally and unstitch the
social fabric of the community, THE DEMISE OF OUR TOWN.

SUPPORT THE RICE INDUSTRY AND OUR FARMERS IN OUR DISTRICT

I URGE YOU TO REVIEW YOUR OPTIONS