

**Submission  
No 74**

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

**Name:** Mr Mark Lucas  
**Date Received:** 12 November 2023

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Mark Lucas

The Director,  
Select Committee on the Feasibility of Underground  
Parliament House, Macquarie Street  
SYDNEY NSW 2000

8<sup>th</sup> November 2023

Dear Director

**Re Feasibility of Undergrounding the transmission infrastructure for renewable energy projects**

Thankyou for the opportunity to make a submission to this critical inquiry. I write this submission to reiterate my support for undergrounding transmission infrastructure and I refer the committee to my initial submission to this inquiry.

I, Mark Lucas, am a principal of Reiland Angus and also a Consulting Agronomist to farmers in NSW, Qld and Victoria. I represent a farming family that will be brutally impacted in terms productivities, environmentally and personally in the degradation of the monetary and aesthetic value of our property, Killimicat Station.

After reviewing Transgrid's HomeLink EIS, I ask that the below points are considered in addition to my initial submission.

From the outset, we accept that if power needs into the future, requires transmission, then it needs to be programmed and delivered in an environmentally balanced manner with least impact on the landscape.

To date, Transgrid cannot assure us both, the affected landholder and the community of Tumut, that the erection of overhead 86m power lines through hilly, undulating country will not be a long term erosion confrontation. My experience with skeletal soils throughout the hilly country, suggests that they respond poorly to any disturbance and require a specific level of understanding to repair them. Such erosion and the reckless removal of established vegetation from such country is clearly understated by the engineers of this proposal.

The offer by Transgrid, of tree off sets for trees removed from the sensitive area was completely unsatisfactory.

Transgrid do not acknowledge that there is a significant elevation of fire threat by erecting the proposed 3.8kms of power lines over our high rainfall pristine grazing and farming country. However, with climate change evidenced by erratic weather events cannot be ignored. It is actively discussed at all levels of society and thus Transgrids proposal must truly be risk assessed to avoid future catastrophic impacts.

The emotional scar of the enormous Dunns Road fire in 2019 is too raw to dismiss and validates our concerns. If Killimicat is impacted by fire not only would our place be destroyed so too the state owned pine plantations to the east.

I usually accept that as people become better educated the environment is always of the highest priority to preserve and we must work towards achieving this goal.

The construction of overhead power lines do not support environmental preservation. They may be a quick economic fix but long term threat to agriculture, ecology, productivity and stewardship is a real possibility.

I am committed to assisting in improving outcomes for long term sustainability given my 43 years as an agricultural consultant and 55 years as co-principal of a progressive seed stock operation.

Hoping this submission, along with previous submissions elevates a greater level of understanding and commonsense.

In order to minimise the above impacts, I urge the Select Committee to recommend undergrounding the HumeLink project.

Yours sincerely,

Mark Lucas (Dip Ag Sc, Dip Ed)