

Submission  
No 78

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

**Name:** Name suppressed  
**Date Received:** 9 November 2023

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Partially  
Confidential

I object to the CWO REZ Transmission Project – SSI-48323210

I am a landowner being FORCED by the THREAT of COMPULSORY ACQUISITION to become a “host”. A better description would be that I am a hostage to Energy Co and the government.

Is the process of releasing an EIS even valid considering we are not in agreement with being a host?

Our property includes residence 1103.

Energy Co states in section 3.4.3 that access easements would need to be “*negotiated with landowners as necessary*”. Energy Co. started the acquisition process for landowners for transmission infrastructure in May 2023. Prior to this very little real information was available, even after repeated asking – even the route was not released until the opening acquisition letter on 24 May 2023. We have already experienced “negotiation” which has been in name only. No real negotiation has taken place.

Energy Co continue to say it “*Where possible, easements and land acquisition has been through negotiated agreement in consultation with the relevant landowners*” (Section 7.4) Obviously the term “where possible” lets them off the hook entirely. Energy Co is doing a great job, however, of threatening us and other landowners with the compulsory acquisition process which is due to start in November.

Our “acquisitions manager”, Michael Swann is pleasant and completely ineffective. Every request and suggestion we have made has been rebuffed - in a jolly manner. He repeatedly attempted to get us to agree to access and surveys via a chummy style phone call rather than by letter, even after we requested all correspondence in hardcopy. This did not change until we employed a solicitor. Our requests for an extension of time to get our valuation report (which at the time of writing has not yet been received, a few weeks before the compulsory acquisition process will start) and the associated negotiation after that, has been denied. Energy Co are attempting to FORCE us to sign. We are in contact with numerous other identified hostages who have also said no real “negotiation” has occurred.

We feel COERCED. Isn't coercion frowned upon? Yet here is a government agency practicing coercion with multiple landowners. And the reason? To meet an unreasonable and misled target that the government of the day thinks is a good idea. For the 'greater good' – well 152,000 resident of the area now designated the CWO REZ likely disagree. But you wouldn't know this of course, since they were NEVER asked!

The proposed line leaves our property and enters Durridergie SCA. Section 7.4.1 states “*Energy Co would need to secure an easement in accordance with the NP&W Act and address any specific biodiversity impacts in accordance with BC Act and EPBC Act, Energy Co would continue to consult with NSW NPWS to secure this easement*”. So, Energy Co has NOT got approval to change the alignment through Durridergie SCA, has NOT got a signed agreement with us (and we presume from discussions with other locals, NOT with a major portion of affected landowners), yet has released their EIS aiming to push this through. One wonders whether NSW NPWS is also under a compulsory acquisition order!

This section also states, “*During construction, temporary restrictions would be put in place within the*

*construction area, which have the potential to restrict landowner access to sections of their properties".* This has never been laid out in detail in the easement documentation. What land can we NOT access? For how long? It is not explained in full in the EIS either.

Section 21.4 of the EIS mentions Property Management Plans, but there is no mention of these in the acquisition correspondence as these will ONLY be discussed prior to construction – so Energy Co expect us to agree to an easement without full disclosure.

"Hosts" are not considered fully regarding any mitigation, as they are considered to *"have negotiated landholder agreements that would form compensation from the impacts of the project"*. Yet we as purported "hosts" are, not hosts by choice, by rather hosts by force. The compensation they offer is paltry is comparison to loss of visual amenity and loss of property value by being forced to host the infrastructure. The compensation is inadequate, and hosts should still be considered.

Section 3.4.3 also raises questions about the future Network Operator. Who will that be? What qualifications, experience and guarantees can they provide? What assurance do we have that they will abide by landowner wishes? But of course, we will have NO say as we are being FORCED to sign an agreement and become a "host".

Section 9.4.2 says *"In the Talbragar River (RV-3) and Munmurra River (RV-4) rural valley landscape character zones, the project would be a new feature, introducing large-scale transmission towers into these rural valley landscapes. The transmission lines would cross the Talbragar River and several creeks, roads, and across rural properties. The character of these rural valleys is scenic, contributing to the landscape setting of towns such as Cassilis. Overall, there would be a high magnitude of change and a moderate landscape character impact in these landscape character zones during operation."* Therefore, our scenic value will be lowered, forced to host these monstrosities and we WILL have our property value reduced.

We are not being offered compensation anywhere near the loss of property value for the district.

#### Neeley's Lane Accommodation Camp

Section 3.5 talks of the Neeley's Lane Accommodation Camp, potentially being subject to *"removal and/or handover of construction compounds and workforce accommodation camp sites to EnergyCo"*. As this is a neighbouring property we require more information – exactly what is the future of this site after construction is complete?

The section on Out of Hours Work states *"the requirement to accommodate a rostered fly-in fly-out and drive-in drive-out workforce, construction hours would occasionally be extended across a seven-day work week between 7am and 7pm. To support construction activities during these extended hours, operation of the main construction compounds would also be required"* And *"workforce accommodation camps would be operational 24 hours a day, seven days a week to provide accommodation for the workforce"*. As a residence identified within a kilometre of the workforce accommodation site, what impact is that going to have on our ability to enjoy our property? For 3 to 5 YEARS we can expect increased traffic going to/from the camp and light/noise 24/7.

We are listed in Table 6-3 of Technical Paper 3 as being 1410m distance from the transmission towers with moderate visual sensitivity but have not been assessed for the negative impact of being within

1km of the Neeley's Lane Workers Camp. Yet 6.3.2.1 (Technical Paper 3) states *"There are potential for a view to the Neeleys Lane workforce accommodation camp at Cassilis from dwelling number 1103, which may experience glimpses to the site preparation works and installation of temporary infrastructure, through to the operation of the camp during construction. This may include views to demountable accommodation and office buildings and amenities. Workers would be transported between the construction areas and the workforce accommodation camp via shuttle buses, which would be seen from public roads and dwellings along Ulan Road with a view to the road."*

There is no mitigation suggested as we are considered a "host", even though we are UNWILLING.

Section 9.4.2 states that our residence will have views to the Neeley's Lane workers accommodation camp, which will operate 24 hours, seven days a week and the lighting at night will be visible at our home. Technical Paper 3 states that the Neeleys Lane camp will be removed from the RV-4 rural valley character zone. What impact will that have on our property value?

17.4.2 states that turning lanes would be required in both directions to access the Workers Camp at Neeley's Lane. *"The Neeleys Lane/Ulan Road intersection, would potentially require adjustments to provide a channelised right hand turn lane and an auxiliary left turn arrangement for the increased movements to and from the workforce accommodation camp."*

Our property is opposite to this camp, on Ulan Road and there is the potential for land to be taken from us to widen the road, to which we DO NOT AGREE. We have NOT been approached by Energy Co about this and no doubt as a forced "host" we will have NO choice in the matter. This is NOT a democracy apparently, for freehold land that has been in our family for over 60 years!

We are already being made unwilling "hosts" of the transmission lines on the eastern side of our property. We will be affected by light, noise, and traffic from the Neeley's Lane Workers Camp on our west (and potential road widening there as well).

Section 15 outlines that the construction of the workers camp at Neeley's Lane will exceed noise limits by up to 10dB during standard hours at one residence, exceed limits up to 15dB at two residences and be at levels that give sleep disturbances at two residences. (Section 5.1.23 of Technical Paper 9 state evening noise would be experienced at three residences). Is this our residence? We would like the dwellings that will be affected to be clearly identified. If we ARE one of the dwellings this is UNACCEPTABLE, and we DO NOT AGREE.

Mitigation measures in Section 15.7.2 are inadequate, for example, the proponent thinks that "advising" a residence of noise in advance is a mitigating factor? A more pro-active approach to ACTUAL mitigation should be taken before this project can even be considered for approval.

No mention has been made of potential noise from the operating phase of the workers camps and its potential negative noise impact on the nearby residences. Considering these camps will include accommodation, heating, cooling, lighting, operation of cooking, ablution/hygiene facilities etc. This should be ascertained and advised, with the opportunity to comment to DPE and our concerns dealt with to our satisfaction.

We would like to be FULLY assessed for the negative impact of being adjacent to the worker's camp, particularly as we are NOT a willing host and do not agree with the paltry offer of compensation.

### Cumulative Impact

Section 20.2.2, clearly states that the CWO REZ will be impacted by the multiple wind/solar/transmission projects that *“would introduce energy and electricity infrastructure, access tracks and upgraded roads into a landscape where there is currently limited built development .... This infrastructure would change the landscape character to one where the presence of energy and electricity infrastructure is more frequently encountered and prominent, resulting in a cumulative landscape character impact.”*

This confirms there will be a marked negative impact on visual amenity for us.

Whilst proposed mitigation measures are offered for private dwellings on non-host properties with a moderate or high visual impact (table 9.5.2) private dwellings on UNWILLING HOST(AGE) properties are not as they consider we are being compensated. We NOT being compensated sufficiently for infrastructure that will be there more than fifty years and the negative impact on our property values.

As well as dramatically reducing our potential enjoyment of our home, by changing the landscape character, our property value will decrease. The Urbis report from 2016 has always been inadequate and it is even more so in a REZ situation. Let me ask, would YOU willingly purchase a property in a modern day powerstation with views of giant wind turbines, solar arrays, transmission infrastructure and an accommodation camp? I think not.

I reserve the right to add to my objection at a future time.