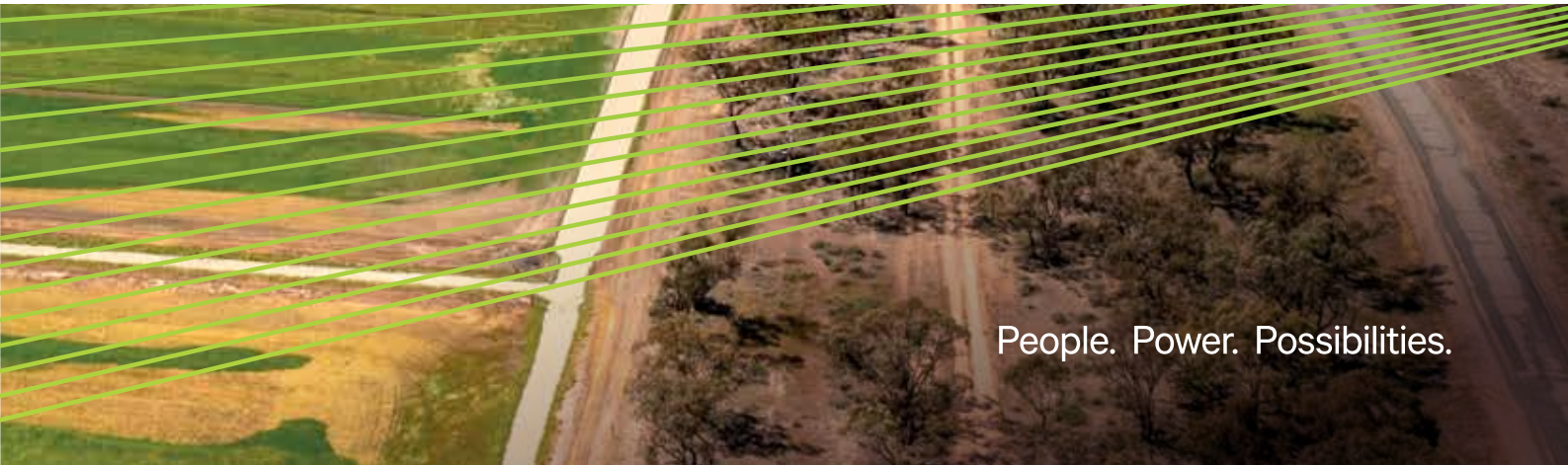
Transgrid

VNI West Project Update Brochure

Preferred Route Report - NSW

The Victoria to NSW Interconnector West – known as VNI West – is a proposed new 500kV double circuit transmission line connecting the high voltage electricity grids in New South Wales and Victoria. The project is part of Transgrid's program to build the future grid and reliably transition to a clean energy future.



What is the project?

The construction of VNI West and other major projects like EnergyConnect and HumeLink will enable the integration of renewables, reducing carbon emissions and drive down wholesale electricity prices.

VNI West is being jointly developed with Transmission Company Victoria and will connect major projects EnergyConnect in NSW and Western Renewables Link in Victoria.

The preferred option runs from Transgrid's Dinawan substation north of Jerilderie in NSW to new substations proposed near Kerang and Bulgana in Victoria.

What is an interconnector?

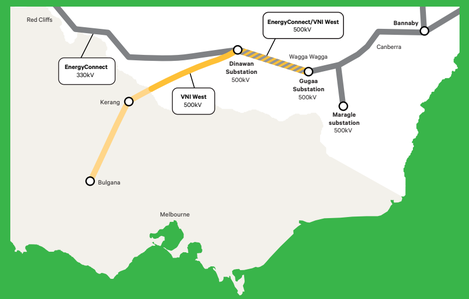
An electricity interconnector is a connection that allows power to flow in both directions between regions in the National Electricity Market (NEM), providing access to a larger number of electricity generators and greater ability to meet varying demand where and when it is needed most.

Where will VNI West be located?

Transgrid has identified a preferred route where the new transmission line could be located in NSW between:

- the 'Dinawan' substation, north of Jerilderie, being built as part of EnergyConnect
- the Murray River, north of Kerang (Victoria).

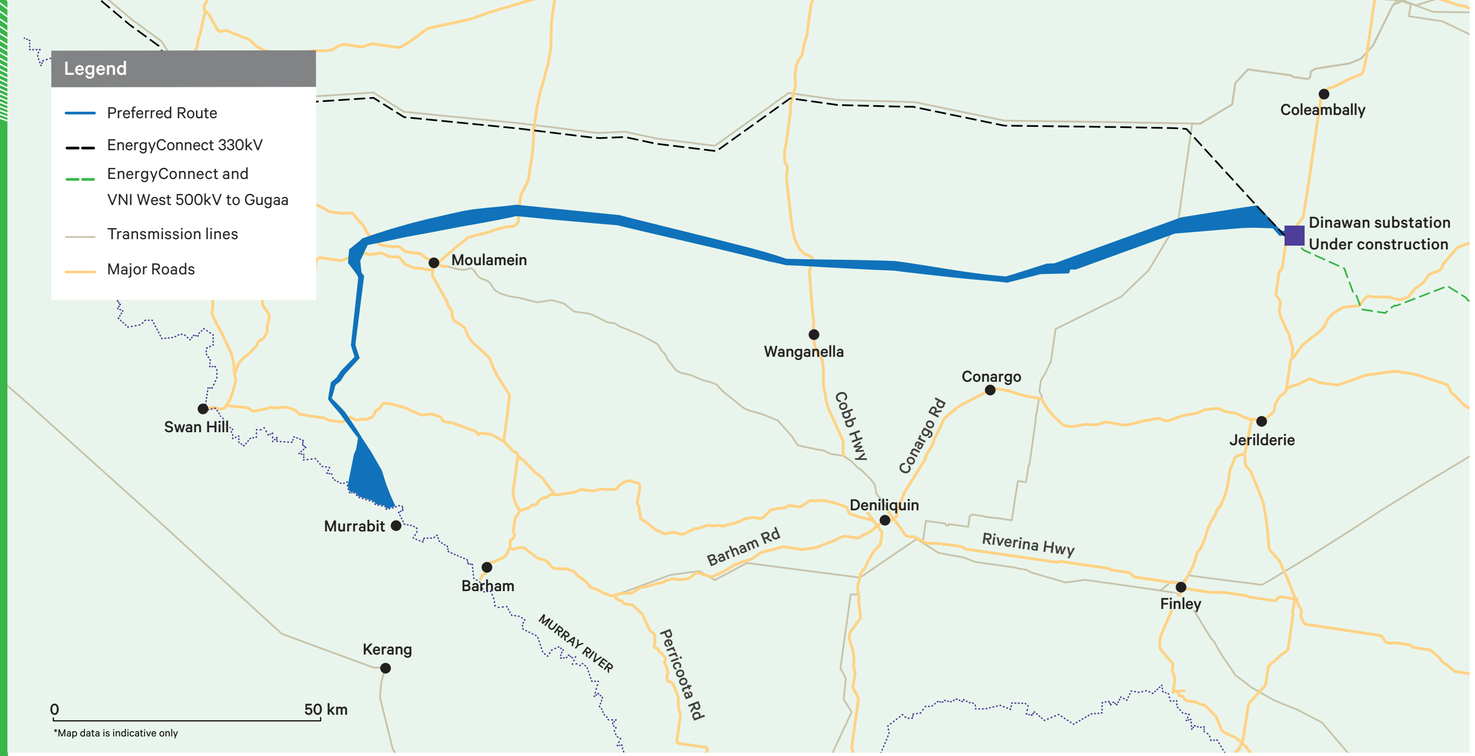
The next stage of the route development involves undertaking appropriate environmental assessment of the preferred route.



Why is the project needed?

VNI West will provide a vital new transmission connection that harnesses clean electricity from Renewable Energy Zones in NSW and Victoria. The project will help deliver the high-capacity transmission backbone needed to transform the NEM and support the transition to a clean energy future, as coal fired power stations close. VNI West will:

- increase in the capacity to share electricity between NSW and Victoria
- improve the reliability and security of electricity supply in both states
- increase access to renewable energy sources
- create an economic boost for regional communities through the provision of jobs, training and local supply opportunities
- help achieve renewable energy targets and the overall decarbonisation of the NEM, while continuing to deliver safe, reliable and affordable electricity to consumers.



Next steps in the approval process

Ongoing community and stakeholder engagement

Scoping Report

A preliminary assessment of potential project impacts submitted to the NSW Department of Planning.

SEARS

The NSW Department of Planning issues the Secretary's Environmental Assessment Requirement (SEARs) outlining the required assessments to be included in the EIS.

Site surveys and investigations

Undertake field surveys and investigations to inform the development of the EIS technical reports, design development and construction planning.

Prepare EIS

Finalise technical reports and prepare EIS for lodgement with the NSW Department of Planning.

Prior to lodgement, a Registered Environmental Assessment Practitioner provides a quality assurance review and declares the EIS meets the SEARs in accordance with the Department's requirements.

Public exhibition of the EIS

An opportunity for the community and stakeholders to provide feedback on the project EIS in a formal submission to the NSW Department of Planning

Review and respond

Submissions will be reviewed and responded to and Submissions Report lodged with the NSW Department of Planning.

Prepare Amendment Report considering proposed design and construction methodology amendments in response to EIS submissions and ongoing project refinements.

Assessment and determination

Final assessment of the EIS, Submissions Report and Amendment Report by the NSW and Commonwealth Governments under the Assessment Bilateral Agreement.

Minister's Conditions of Approval

Receive NSW and Commonwealth Ministers' Conditions of Approval which outline the requirements for next project stages.

A Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) will be developed and submitted to the NSW Department of Planning for approval before construction commences.

Why this Route?

In the route selection process we determined a preferred route with review of the following themes:

Technical
To find a reasonably direct route and avoid challenging technical conditions so we don't end up building unnecessarily long infrastructure, or using complex engineering solutions, which energy consumers will pay for.

Environment
To protect important areas of biodiversity, like protected habitats, national parks and state forests.

Community
To minimise potential impacts to the community and landholders.

Aboriginal heritage
To protect and preserve known and potential Aboriginal cultural heritage sites and areas of Indigenous importance.

Minimising loss of agricultural production
To protect important areas of agricultural operations with a focus on irrigated agriculture.

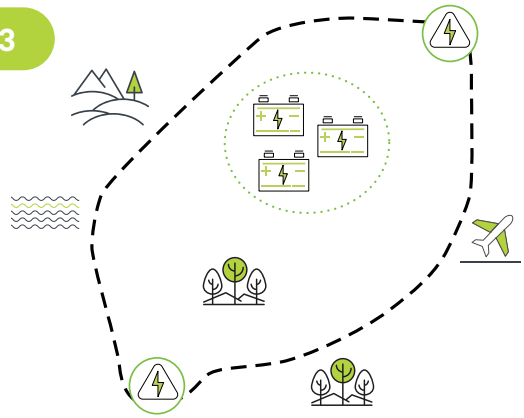
The preferred route runs in a north-south direction from the NSW/Victoria border towards the west of the Moulamein township before turning east around the north of the town. The route then travels in a generally east-west direction to the Dinawan substation, north of Jerilderie, following existing infrastructure, where it makes sense to do so, such as Mabins Well Road and some existing property boundaries.

The preferred route was selected for the following reasons. It will:

- Be in proximity to the least number of houses, providing the greatest opportunity to minimise visual disturbance.
- Have the lowest impact on irrigated agricultural lands, by following existing assets like railway corridors, roads, travelling stock routes and existing property fence lines.
- Have the least impact on previously identified Aboriginal sites.
- Have fewer impacts on existing waterways.
- Be further away from sensitive ecological environments, such as the wetlands associated with the Werai State Forest and other areas of the Edward-Wakool River Catchment.
- Have the least potential impact on the protected habitats of the endangered Plains Wanderer.

Route selection process

2023



Typically between 10 and 50 kilometres (depending on project scale)

Area of interest

Typically between one and 10 kilometres wide

Draft Corridor Report

Preferred Corridor Report

2024

Typically up to around one kilometre wide

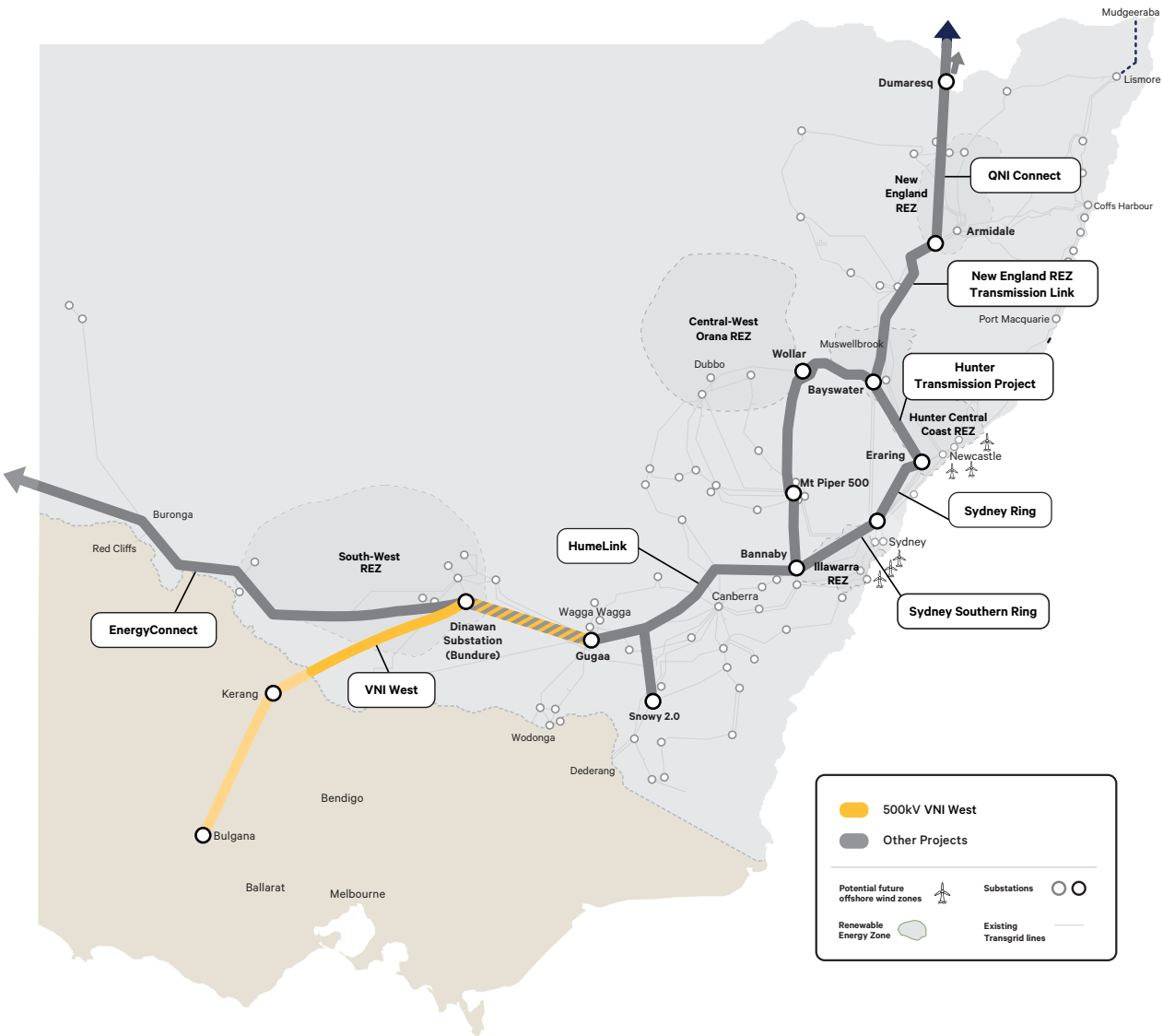
Draft Route Report

Preferred Route Report

Typically up to 200 metres wide (with the potential for wider area(s) up to one or more kilometres wide where further investigation may be required)

Environmental Impact Assessment

VNI West - part of the Integrated System Plan



* Diagram shows NSW projects. Full ISP available at www.aemo.com.au

** The transmission line between Dinawan and Gugaa (shown in orange and grey) is under construction as part of EnergyConnect. It will be built with a capacity of 500kV, but operate initially at 330kV as part of EnergyConnect. When VNI West is energised, the line will operate at 500kV capacity.

Scan the QR code for the VNI West interactive map.

Connect with us

Transgrid is committed to working with landowners and communities through the development of VNI West. Please connect with us for more information.

Transgrid

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