EIS Volume 1 Chapter 21

Conclusion

JBS&G

project energy connect

21. Conclusion

The National Electricity Market (NEM) is currently undergoing a significant period of transition from a largely centralised fossil-fuel generation fleet to a more variable, dispersed energy mix characterised by increased penetration of renewable energy generation, storage technology, wide-scale behind the meter applications and emerging technologies.

To support this transition, new investment into the transmission infrastructure that supports the NEM in connecting electricity generators and transmitting energy to consumers is required. Project EnergyConnect is proposed in response to this need, to achieve the objective of improving the affordability, reliability and sustainability of electricity supply in the NEM through increased electricity transmission between states.

If approved, Project EnergyConnect would deliver a range of direct benefits for consumers in SA and NSW. In SA these would include:

- **Lower power prices**
  - Typical residential electricity bills are estimated to be reduced annually by $100 in SA.
  - Businesses can expect higher savings, proportional to their energy use.
- **Improved energy security**
  - A greater mix of renewable energy generators will be enabled to connect into the network.
  - Reliability and confidence in electricity supply will be increased.
- **Increased economic activity**
  - Approximately 200 jobs will be created in SA during construction.
  - The development of new renewable projects at connection points will be enabled, facilitating the growth of associated industries.
  - Approximately 250 ongoing jobs will be created in SA.

The Project has been designed, to the greatest extent possible, to avoid and minimise environmental and social impacts, and to respond to the issues raised by stakeholders and the community. The detailed design and construction phase for the Project will continue to be developed with the objective of further avoiding and minimising potential negative impacts on the environment and local communities and maximising positive benefits.

Assessments have been based on the current indicative design and construction methodology for the Project, and some uncertainties remain. A conservative approach to assessment has been adopted to this stage of the Project's development which indicates that, while no unacceptable impacts are anticipated (and despite efforts to avoid and minimise impacts through design), some residual impacts would remain. These impacts would be addressed through implementation of the proposed mitigation measures, supported by ElectraNet's demonstrated capability and strong corporate governance and management systems. The potential residual impacts of the Project are therefore considered manageable.

ElectraNet is committed to open and transparent engagement with stakeholders and community members throughout the EIS process and beyond and will continue to engage face to face with landholders, traditional owners, government and the wider community as construction of the Project progresses. Ongoing updates via the Project website, virtual engagement room and social media platforms developed for the Project will also continue to be provided.

Overall, the Project is a critical component in delivering long term benefits to SA and NSW electricity consumers, providing security to the NEM and facilitating the transition to a lower carbon emissions future.