VNI West

Guide to the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS)

FACT SHEET | AUGUST 2025
Application number SSI-72887208

VNI West is a proposed 500kV double circuit transmission line connecting the high voltage energy grids of NSW and Victoria. Transgrid has prepared an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the Victoria to NSW Interconnector West (VNI West) project. The purpose of the EIS is to help members of the NSW portion of community, interested stakeholders, government agencies, and relevant authorities understand the potential impacts. The information provided in the EIS is to assist community members and stakeholders make informed submissions on the merits of the project.

The environmental assessment process

VNI West has been classified by the NSW Government as Critical State Significant Infrastructure (CSSI), and also declared a controlled action by the Commonwealth Government.

Based on these classifications, VNI West will go through comprehensive State and Commonwealth environmental assessment and approval processes to identify and assess the potential environmental, economic and social impacts of the project. It also ensures the community can have their say on the project before any final decision is made.

The EIS addresses the potential environmental impacts of VNI West project (NSW) by:

- detailing the potential impact of the project through a main report and 18 supporting specialist studies
- outlining proposed management measures to avoid, minimise or manage the potential impacts identified
- summarising engagement undertaken to date on the project, as well as outlining the proposed consultation that will be undertaken if the project is approved.

If approved, the project will be constructed and operated in accordance with the mitigation measures detailed in the EIS and any conditions of approval.

Separate planning approval for the Victorian component of VNI West is being progressed by Transmission Company Victoria (TCV) under the relevant State and Commonwealth jurisdictional requirements of Victoria.

Environmental planning approvals pathway

The approval pathway

The first step in the regulatory process required a preliminary assessment of VNI West (NSW)'s potential environmental impacts and the preparation of a Scoping Report. This report was submitted to the NSW Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure (DPHI) in April 2024, with an Addendum Scoping Report submitted in August 2024 to account for additional land areas to be covered by the environmental assessment. DPHI subsequently issued the project's Secretary's Environmental Assessment Requirements (SEARs) in October 2024 (revised in May 2025).

The SEARs set out the matters that must be investigated as part of the EIS, including the specialist studies that must be conducted to inform the EIS. These studies identify potential impacts from the VNI West (NSW) project and propose measures to avoid or mitigate those impacts.

Project footprint

The assessment footprint of the EIS includes:

- an indicative 200-metre-wide transmission line corridor
- the Dinawan 500kV substation expansion site
- areas which support project construction, including access tracks, workforce accommodation camps and construction laydown areas.

While the final easement will generally be about 70 metres wide, the EIS considers a broader 200-metre-wide area. This provides flexibility for future design changes that further avoid or minimise potential impacts. The exact location of all infrastructure will be confirmed during the detailed design phase.

EIS overview

The main volume of the report includes the EIS chapters and key appendices. The chapters present a summary of the assessment outcomes from the various technical papers. The EIS technical papers provide a detailed assessment of EIS topics including the potential significance of the project, related impacts and the proposed mitigation measures to avoid, manage or minimise them. The EIS chapters and associated technical papers are summarised below:

Chapter	Summary	Reference
1 **Introduction**	Provides an overview of the project and the contents of the EIS.	
2 **Strategic context, need and project development**	Describes the need for the project and the relevant Commonwealth and State government policies that support the project. It also outlines the key project objectives, and how the project was developed via the route selection process and alternatives considered.	Appendix C – Options assessment report
3 **Project description**	Outlines the key components of the project, including details of the built features, construction activities, and operation and ongoing maintenance.	Appendix B – Project mapping
4 **Statutory context**	Explains the planning approval process and the planning instruments for the project.	Appendix D – Statutory compliance tables.
5 **Stakeholder and community engagement**	Summarises feedback received during the range of community and stakeholder engagement activities undertaken for the project.	Appendix E – Community consultation outcomes report
6 **Approach to impact assessment**	Describes how potential impacts have been assessed as part of the EIS including identifying the potential environmental, social and economic impacts that may arise as a result of the project.	
7 **Biodiversity**	Details the potential impacts to biodiversity from construction and operation and proposed mitigation measures for these impacts. It describes existing vegetation and animal species within the project area, including threatened species.	Technical Paper 1 – Biodiversity development assessment report
8 **Aboriginal heritage**	Outlines the methodology used for assessing Aboriginal heritage impacts, assesses potential impacts and identifies mitigation measures. It also details Aboriginal engagement undertaken to inform the assessment.	Technical Paper 2 – Aboriginal cultural heritage assessment report and Technical Paper 2a – Cultural values assessment
9 **Landscape character and visual**	Identifies the potential impacts to landscape character and visual amenity during the construction and operation of the project, including a description of the assessment methodology, photomontages showing indicative views of the project and proposed mitigation measures.	Technical Paper 3 – Landscape character and visual impact assessment
10 **Land use and agriculture**	Considers the potential impacts on various land uses, including agricultural land, during both construction and operation of the project and proposes mitigation measures.	Technical Paper 4 – Agricultural impact assessment
11 **Social**	Considers the social impacts (both positive and negative) that may occur during construction and operation of the project, and proposes mitigation measures.	Technical Paper 5 – Social impact assessment
12 **Economic**	Outlines the potential benefits to the regional and NSW economy and identifies measures to minimise negative economic impacts.	Technical Paper 6 – Economic impact assessment
13 **Noise and vibration**	Considers noise and vibration impacts during both construction and operation of the project, including mitigation measures.	Technical Paper 7 – Noise and vibration impact assessment.
14 **Traffic and access**	Details the potential traffic impacts during both construction and operation of the project, including proposed mitigation measures. It discusses traffic changes, heavy vehicle movements, traffic volumes and road capacity, property access, and road condition.	Technical Paper 8 – Traffic and transport impact assessment
15: **Hydrology, flooding and water quality**	Assesses the impacts of the project during both construction and operation on flooding, hydrology and water quality, including proposed mitigation measures.	Technical Paper 9 – Hydrology, flooding and water quality impact assessment

Chapter	Summary	Reference
16 Groundwater	Assesses the potential groundwater impacts during both construction and operation, and identifies proposed mitigation measures.	Technical Paper 10 – Groundwater impact assessment
17 Non-Aboriginal heritage	Describes the existing environment as it relates to non-Aboriginal heritage and assesses potential impacts and mitigation measures. It provides an overview of the history of the project area and known heritage sites.	Technical Paper 11 – Non-Aboriginal heritage impact assessment
18 Hazards and risk	Outlines potential hazards and risks of the project during construction and operation, including proposed mitigation measures. Key topics addressed include aviation safety, bushfire, emergency egress and evacuation routes, electric and magnetic fields and potential dangerous goods and hazardous materials.	Technical Paper 12 – Bushfire impact assessment , Technical Paper 13 - Electric and magnetic fields (EMF) study and Technical Paper 14 - Aviation impact assessment
19 Air quality	Outlines the potential impacts on air quality during both construction and operation of the project, including proposed mitigation measures.	Technical Paper 15 – Air quality impact assessment
20 Climate change and greenhouse gas	Considers the impact of climate change and greenhouse gas on the construction and operation of the project.	Technical Paper 16 –Greenhouse gas impact assessment
21 Soils and contamination	Describes the existing environment for soils and contamination, the potential impact from construction and operation of the project and proposes mitigation measures.	Technical Paper 17 – Contaminated land impact assessment
22 Waste management	Outlines expected waste generation during construction and operation and how this will be managed.	
23 Sustainability	Outlines Transgrid's commitment to sustainability, including its project specific sustainability strategy.	
24 Cumulative impacts	Assesses the potential cumulative impacts from construction and operation of the project, when considered together with other relevant planned future projects in the VNI West region.	
25 Environmental management	Outlines the approach to managing environmental impacts during construction and operation. It includes details of how environmental performance will be measured and evaluated and outlines relevant management plans and strategies.	
26 Justification and conclusion	Presents the justification for the project and a conclusion to the EIS. The justification incorporates the strategic need for the project, how the project objectives are achieved and an evaluation of the overall findings of the EIS.	
27 References	Lists the sources used in developing the EIS.	

Supporting resources

Community Resources

Information including, FAQs, fact sheets, guidelines, briefings and newsletters.

VNI West EIS Summary

A Summary Report providing a high-level introduction to the project and the EIS assessment outcomes.

Digital EIS

A user-friendly and interactive digital platform presenting key EIS findings. Includes interactive mapping, multi-media and links to the full EIS on the NSW Major Projects Planning Portal.

EIS Chapters and Appendices

The main volume of the report that meets the requirements of the Planning Secretary's Environmental Assessment Requirements (SEARs) and Supplementary SEARs.

The chapters present a summary of the assessment outcomes from the various technical studies. Refer to Chapters 1-26 and Appendices A-F of the EIS.

EIS Technical Papers

A detailed assessment of EIS topics as required by the SEARs and Supplementary SEARs. These reports outline the potential significance of project related impacts and the proposed mitigation measures to avoid, manage or minimise them.

To access these supporting resources, please visit the VNI West webpage at www.transgrid.com.au/vniw.

How to make a submission

Local community members, councils, stakeholders, community groups and organisations are encouraged to have their say during the public exhibition period by making a submission.

Have your say by lodging a submission to the NSW Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure either by post or online. As the EIS exhibition process is managed by DPHI, all submissions must be sent directly to the Department (and not Transgrid).

Post

In your submission, you must include:

1. Your name and address (provide this information in a separate cover letter if you want your personal details to be withheld from publication)
2. The application name: Victoria to NSW Interconnector West
3. The application number: SSI-72887298
4. A brief statement on whether you support or object the proposal
5. The reasons why you support or object the proposal
6. A declaration of any reportable political donations made in the previous two years.

The submission must be mailed to:

Director – Energy Assessments Planning and Assessment
Department of Planning and Environment
Application number SSI-72887208
Locked Bag 5022
Parramatta NSW 2124

Online

1. Visit the NSW DPHI Major Projects Planning Portal: www.planningportal.nsw.gov.au/major-projects

Scan the QR code to visit the DPHI website

2. Create a Major Projects account by clicking the 'Sign in' button
3. Search for the Victoria to NSW Interconnector West project using the name or the application number: SSI-72887208.
4. Click the 'Make a submission' button and follow the steps.

For additional support, visit the Make a Submission page on the DPHI website https://www.planningportal.nsw.gov.au/major-projects/have-your-say.

Scan the QR code for additional support on making a submission

Next steps

Once the public exhibition period had closed, DPHI will collate all submissions and provide to Transgrid for review and consideration. Transgrid will then prepare a Submissions Report responding to issues raised. If significant changes to the project are required, an Amendment Report or Preferred Infrastructure Report will also be prepared.

Following assessment of the EIS by both State and Commonwealth governments, the determination will include decisions on whether the project is approved, and any conditions attached to the approval. Construction of VNI West would commence in mid-2026, subject to NSW Government and Commonwealth planning approvals.

We are here
August 2025
EIS exhibition

Late 2025
Transgrid responses to EIS submissions in a submissions report.

Minister for Planning provides decision on the project.

Early 2026
Transgrid finalises detailed design

Mid 2026
Construction begins

Connect with us

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

Transgrid

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