

VNI West proposes the construction, operation and ongoing maintenance of a 500kV double circuit overhead transmission line that would connect the high voltage electricity grids in NSW and Victoria. As part of the EIS for VNI West (NSW), a detailed Social Impact Assessment (SIA) was undertaken to understand the potential positive and negative impacts of the project on local communities, landholders and broader regional areas. For more information, refer to **Chapter 11: Social** and **Technical Paper 5: Social Impact Assessment**.



Key findings from the EIS assessment

Construction impacts

Local employment and economic benefits

The project is expected to deliver positive economic and social outcomes during construction including local employment opportunities, increased demand for goods and services and enhanced community wellbeing as a result of Transgrid's Community Investment and Benefits Plan and Community Partnerships Program.

Amenity, access and wellbeing impacts

Construction activity may affect people in different ways. It has the potential to temporarily affect visual amenity, disrupt views, and require managed change for property access arrangements.

For directly-affected landholders, processes including easement negotiations and acquisitions, or potential changes in operational land use, may create concern or uncertainty for about how the project will affect their properties.

Potential impacts from construction activity may be more noticeable for those living and working close to the project footprint.

Community cohesion and safety

The arrival of non-resident workers and increased traffic may impact local cohesion, sense of place, and perceptions of safety.

Operational impacts

Perceived operational impacts

Some landholders may experience ongoing concern about electromagnetic fields, property values, or changes to insurance premiums, particularly those hosting or near to transmission easements, or landholders subject to compulsory acquisition.

Mitigation measures



A Social Impact Management sub-plan will be implemented to enhance social benefits and manage and mitigate negative social impacts, as well as how these measures will be monitored and evaluated to ensure their effectiveness.



A Community Wellbeing Strategy will be developed and implemented throughout construction to provide mental health support for landowners and communities, and identify activities to strengthen community cohesion and wellbeing.



Individual Property Management Plans (PMPs) will be developed to manage construction access, timing, restoration and land use concerns.



A Temporary Worker Accommodation Plan will manage worker housing, behaviour and community interaction in consultation with councils.



Local Worker Participation and Industry Participation Plans will promote employment, skills training, and Aboriginal business engagement.



A 24/7 complaints system will operate throughout construction and into operations, with clear processes for resolution.



An Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples Participation Plan will be prepared and implemented to enhance and maximise opportunities for employment, procurement, education and other potential project related benefits.



A Community Investment and Benefits Plan will deliver legacy projects and direct support to local communities, landowners and Aboriginal communities.



A pre-construction and construction communication and engagement plan will ensure timely updates, accessible information, and support for affected residents.



How the assessment was carried out

The Social Impact Assessment was carried out in accordance with the Secretary's Environmental Assessment Requirements (SEARs) and the *Social Impact Assessment Guideline* (NSW Department of Planning and Environment, 2023). It followed best practice methods for identifying, assessing and responding to the potential social impacts of infrastructure projects.

It considered changes to land use, amenity, and community wellbeing, cohesion and access across the project lifecycle.

The assessment approach included:

- defining a regional and local social study area to reflect how different communities may experience the project
- reviewing relevant policy and legislation and establishing the social baseline using ABS and other public data
- analysing how people and communities may experience change due to the project across social topics such as amenity, cohesion, wellbeing, employment and access
- undertaking community and stakeholder engagement to identify and understand local concerns and aspirations
- identifying potential social impacts during construction and operation, including cumulative impacts
- identifying mitigation and enhancement measures to address negative impacts and promote social benefits.

Next steps

You have the opportunity to review and comment on the EIS via submission to the Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure (DPHI) during August 2025. Electronic copies of the EIS are available via:

- DPHI Major Projects website:
<https://www.planningportal.nsw.gov.au/major-projects>
- VNI West (NSW) project website:
www.transgrid.com.au/vniw

Following the EIS Exhibition period, Transgrid will produce a Submissions Report to formally respond to community and stakeholder feedback received during exhibition.

The EIS outlines:

- opportunities for local employment, procurement, and regional economic benefits during construction
- community investment through Transgrid's Community Investment and Benefits Plan and Community Partnerships Program
- temporary visual and amenity impacts during construction affecting local landscapes and residential areas
- property impacts including access changes, easement creation, and stress related to land acquisition
- wellbeing concerns among landholders due to project uncertainty, lifestyle disruption, and amenity loss
- potential reduction in community cohesion due to differing views on project impacts and presence of non-resident workers
- unequal distribution of benefits and impacts between directly affected and neighbouring landholders
- ongoing mitigation and engagement measures to manage social impacts and maintain community communication during operation.



Image: Aerial view of Moulamein Township.



For more information on the VNI West EIS, please scan the QR code, or visit www.transgrid.com.au/vniw.

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.



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