

Purpose and Outcome

The purpose of the meeting was to engage with stakeholders to introduce and discuss the transmission line engagement process and current transmission line projects in the Burnett region.

This meeting is part of the ongoing Powerlink stakeholder engagement program for new projects in the Burnett region.

Attendees

Nicole Maguire (Chair) (Powerlink), Harminder Bhar (Powerlink), Kurt Baker (Powerlink), Kerry O'Brian (Powerlink), Nicole Gagan (Powerlink), Rebecca Powlett (Queensland Hydro), Helene Johnson (Yarraman Museum Association), Gloria Kirkness (Visit South Burnett Inc), Rick Kirkness (observer), Helen Brieschke (Somerset Regional Council), Jason Erbacher (South Burnett CTC), Alan Broome (Burnett Inland Economic Development Organisation), John Carey (Stanwell), Kirstie Schumacher (South Burnett Regional Council), Euan Morrison (Observer from Burnett Today)

Apologies

Georgie Somerset (AgForce), Rebecca Cross (South Burnett Grazing Network), Damien Martoo (Kingaroy Chamber of Commerce and Industry), Sarah Short (Swickers), Keith Campbell (Coopers Gap Community Consultative Committee), Les Schloss (Nanango Show Society), Scott Prendergast (Kingaroy Police Station), Sharyn Hansen (Rosalie North Landcare Group)

Date & Time: 13 October, 2pm to 4pm

Location: Nanango CWA Hall

Minutes

Agenda Item	Minutes and Actions	Assigned to	Due Date
1.0	Welcome and introductions		
1.1	Participant introductions	N/A	
1.2	Overview of who Powerlink is – network and customers	N/A	
2.0	Queensland Hydro and the Borumba Pumped Hydro Project		
2.1	<p>Overview of the Borumba Pumped Hydro Project and Queensland Hydro.</p> <p>Borumba Pumped Hydro Project is in the detailed analytical studies stage, with the detailed analytical report due to State Government in 2023 to inform an investment decision. The State Government has set a target for the project to be operational by the end of the decade.</p>		

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2.2	Question and answer from participants		
	<p>Q. Are there any environmental impacts from the fluctuations?</p> <p>A. There can be environmental impacts associated with fluctuating water heights. The impact depends on the environment, and the type and scale of fluctuation. Understanding the potential impact of fluctuations in reservoirs is one of the studies being carried out for Borumba Pumped Hydro Project. Things that can minimise the height fluctuations is the size of the dam – higher dam increases the reliability and capacity and lower daily water level fluctuations.</p>		
	<p>Q. Roller-compacted concrete (RCC) was used for Paradise Dam – has Borumba taken on board learnings from this dam?</p> <p>A. The engineering studies are several dam construction methods, including RCC. Lessons from Paradise and other large dams is being considered in these engineering studies.</p>		
	<p>Q. How many kilolitres will be pumped?</p> <p>A. The volume of water depends on network demand. When demand is high, more water will be pumped to generate electricity. Less network demand, less water will be pumped.</p>		
	<p>Q. What will the fluctuations be?</p> <p>A. The fluctuations vary depending on the lower reservoir levels. The higher the water level, the smaller the fluctuation. The fluctuations also vary based on several parameters, which are being looked at as part of the detailed analytical studies.</p>		
	<p>Q. What about existing allocations?</p> <p>A. There has been a commitment that the pumped hydro project cannot impact on existing water allocations or environmental flows.</p>		
3.0	Transmission		

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3.1	<p>Overview of drivers for transmission line corridor selection and what Powerlink is seeking from stakeholders at this stage of the project.</p> <p>These drivers include, but are not limited to, social impacts (such as towns and schools), co-location of infrastructure, environmental and engineering factors.</p>		
3.2	<p>Question and answer from participants</p>		
	<p>Q. What does the 500kV and 275kV infrastructure look like?</p> <p>A. It will depend on the topography and terrain as to the height of the towers, but 500kV towers are taller and more robust than 275kV.</p> <p>The transmission line corridors for the final alignment are about 60m to 70m wide depending on the kV. Powerlink will look at corridors about 4km wide, which will be part of stakeholder consultation in November 2022. The corridors will then be refined to about 1km for the Draft Corridor Selection Report (CSR), before being refined to the final 60m to 70m wide corridor.</p>		
	<p>Q. It is noted there is a lot of agricultural land and activities in the area, does Powerlink do an individual assessment of properties and discuss with the landholders?</p> <p>A. Yes, usually occurs when the corridors are down to 1km widths. When Powerlink gets to constructability – we do talk it through with landholders during construction and operation. At the final alignment stage these discussions will include property owners and specialists such as agronomists.</p>		
	<p>Q. Is all vegetation cleared under the transmission lines?</p> <p>A. These days Powerlink prefers to do custom clearing. This means vegetation maybe scalloped, may be whole corridor clearing. However, Powerlink does try to limit clearing.</p>		

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	<p>Q. Is there anything of concern for people living in/around transmission lines (e.g., noise, health)?</p> <p>A. Electric and magnetic fields (EMF) does comes up as a landholder concern quite a lot. Powerlink has scientific information that we can share with landholders. One factor Powerlink consider is prudent avoidance in relation to houses, parks, etc.</p> <p><i>[Prudent avoidance is that reasonable efforts to minimise potential risks should be taken when the actual magnitude of the risks is unknown]</i></p>		
	<p>Q. Biosecurity in construction and operation is becoming a significant concern for stakeholders – Powerlink has a better reputation than others, but it is a concern. How does Powerlink address this?</p> <p>A. Once we get down to the corridors, Powerlink goes through our land access protocols. Powerlink also has policies (e.g. washdown procedures), environmental investigation (pre and post-weed survey) for managing biosecurity risk. During construction there are environmental officers onsite. Biosecurity is an issue that has become more complex.</p>		
	<p>Q. Use of contractors is an issue. How does Powerlink address this?</p> <p>A. Since about 2014, Powerlink has landholder relations officers – this project will have a dedicated landholder relations officer. These landholder relations officers have relationships with landholders and contractors.</p>		
	<p>Q. What is Powerlink’s expectations for providing more washdown facilities?</p> <p>A. Washdown facilities are looked at as part of project. Is possible for project washdown facilities to be legacy infrastructure, but often have temporary facilities during construction.</p>		
4.0	Stakeholder engagement/community sentiment research		
4.1	Overview of stakeholder engagement to date and what Powerlink has heard. Powerlink is available to meet with various stakeholder groups and councils, so just reach out.		

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	<p>Q. What is the difference between underground and above ground transmission lines? And what is the aesthetics impact from underground vs above ground?</p> <p>A. Powerlink is looking at underground transmission with this project. That consideration is usually at the more refined corridor. Some of the differences include cost, vegetation clearing, underground can have more restrictive conditions on properties, underground can be more difficult to span things than for overhead.</p>		
	<p>Q. Small towns are at capacity for local business – would you be looking at upskilling local businesses to get them ready for tenders etc.?</p> <p>A. This is something Powerlink is working with the Toowoomba and Surat Basin Enterprise (TSBE) to get businesses ready for these projects.</p>		
	<p>Q. TSBE aren't out here, it would be good to get them out here before Powerlink need them?</p> <p>A. There is potential for a partnership approach to business readiness – between Council, Stanwell and Powerlink.</p> <p>ACTION: John (Stanwell) happy to be contact point for a conversation on a partnership approach.</p>	<i>John Carey</i>	Update next SRG
	<p>Q. There is already an accommodation shortage – Powerlink projects are likely to land with other projects have you thought about that?</p> <p>Regional Development, State Development and South Burnett Regional Council met this week and looking at gantt chart of major projects in the area. There is a community expectation that this is thought about early.</p> <p>A. Powerlink understand that this is a concern that the State Government take seriously and is part of the considerations during project planning.</p>		
	<p>Q. By creating this transmission do you create more inappropriate location of renewables?</p> <p>A. The renewable energy zones (REZ) are the approach the State Government is taking to have a more coordinated approach to renewable development.</p>		
5.0	Current projects		

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5.1	Powerlink provided information in relation to the Wambo Wind Farm and Meandu Mine Transmission Line Relocation.		
6.0	Stakeholder reference group terms of reference (TOR)		
6.1	<p>Powerlink gave an overview of the TOR for the stakeholder reference group.</p> <p>Powerlink acknowledge that the TOR identify stakeholder reference group quarterly; however, there will be community information sessions in November to get feedback from the community on the potential 4km wide corridor options. Propose to have another stakeholder reference group meeting in November.</p> <p>Stakeholders present at the meeting agreed that another meeting in November to focus on the corridor options would be beneficial.</p> <p>ACTION: Powerlink to send invitations for next stakeholder reference group meeting in November.</p>	<i>Powerlink</i>	07/11/2022
6.2	Question and answer from participants		
	<p>Q. Is there likely to be any change between the Tarong/ Halys corridor? Follow same easement?</p> <p>A. Nothing is locked in with the corridors, there may be potential to use the same/existing corridor, but there may be a need for new corridors.</p>		
	Somerset Regional Council identified that Powerlink will need to talk to the planning department regarding roads.		

	<p>Other stakeholder concerns and interests</p> <p>Burnett Inland Economic Development Organisation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Concerns include biosecurity and plastic rubbish <p>Somerset Regional Council</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Concerns include transport and traffic impacts, and traffic management plans. Roads are already not in a good condition. <p>South Burnett Regional Council</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Accommodation crisis already in region, timing of Powerlink activities with other projects is a concern There is a need to maximise opportunities for local suppliers and don't want to see a cycle of boom and bust, need sustainability. Local businesses may not have the level of plans, certifications, capability statements ready to be able to participate. Job scarcity concerns Gap between jobs/service and capability, need assistance to make then ready. Community is not ready for the scale of project. Can Powerlink influence and advocate? Random projects are knocking on local doors. Very hard on councils to manage all enquiries these create Concerned about property value fluctuations (increasing and decreasing) Impacts like noise, health (EMF) – need an education piece for stakeholders. <p>South Burnett CTC</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Legacy and creating long-term opportunities Need a local footprint out here Capacity and skillsets of smaller communities and businesses to participate – needs a coordinated approach Training opportunities for smaller contractors <p>Stanwell</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Accommodation shortage already in the region. Need a five to 10-year plan. This projects creates opportunities for other projects to come Changing expectations of stakeholders e.g., washdowns by landholders Will corridor follow existing lines between Tarong and Halys? 		
	<p>Meeting Closed</p>		

