

Proposed Genex Kidston Connection Project

Continuing engagement with landholders and other stakeholders



SEPTEMBER 2021

About Powerlink

Powerlink is a leading Australian provider of high voltage electricity transmission network services, delivering safe, cost effective and reliable solutions. Our transmission network extends 1,700 kilometres from north of Cairns to the New South Wales border.

Our purpose is to connect Queenslanders to a world-class energy future, providing electricity to five million Queenslanders and 238,000 businesses. Through our unique central position, we are guiding the market towards a power system for the future. Our focus is on effectively balancing customer needs, while moving to a low carbon future comprising a diverse array of generation technologies, batteries and storage solutions, new grid technologies and demand management.

About the Kidston Clean Energy Hub

Genex Power Limited (Genex) is developing the Kidston Clean Energy Hub, a combination solar and hydro pump storage power generation facility at Kidston, approximately 270km north-west of Townsville. This facility is proposed to connect to the National Electricity Market via a new 275kV electricity transmission line and switching station, collectively referred to as the Genex Kidston Connection Project. Powerlink is the proponent of this infrastructure project. For more information, visit www.genexpower.com.au.

Key points

- Following Powerlink's receipt of 'Notice to Proceed' from Genex in March 2021, our project team has been reactivating planning activities to progress engagement with landholders and other stakeholders for the Proposed Genex Kidston Connection Project.
- In recognition of landholders' ongoing cooperation and potential impacts associated with re-engaging with Powerlink on this project, we re-initiated our 'Project Participation and Access Allowance'. This provides payment to eligible landholders whose properties are impacted by activities associated with project planning. We thank landholders for their continued assistance and involvement in progressing this landmark project.
- Our project team has met with all directly affected landholders, including local Traditional Owner groups, to discuss the project in greater detail. We have commenced a range of on-ground investigations to learn more about property-specific considerations, such as undertaking environmental, cadastral and Cultural Heritage surveys as well as tower survey and pegging.
- These on-ground studies are providing vital information to progress a range of necessary approvals which will be finalised prior to construction commencing, which is expected to occur in April 2022. In particular, major project approvals include:
 - > **Ministerial Infrastructure Designation under the Planning Act 2016** – Environmental consultant AECOM has completed a currency review of the Draft Environmental Assessment Report (EAR) from September 2018 and is now working with Powerlink to finalise the Ministerial Infrastructure Designation Assessment Report (MIDAR). We expect the report will be released in late 2021 for public consultation.
 - > **Matters of National Environmental Significance under the Commonwealth's Environmental Protection and Biodiversity Conservation (EPBC) Act 1999** – Following the identification of some species and potential habitat listed under the EPBC Act in the vicinity of the transmission line's draft alignment as per the Draft EAR, Powerlink has referred the project to the Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment (DoAWE) for assessment. We will continue to work with DoAWE in coming months to determine any additional approvals which may be required. This process requires the referral, once validated, to go through a public consultation period of 10 business days. Powerlink will advise landholders and other stakeholders of this consultation period as more information becomes available.
 - > **Cultural Heritage considerations under the Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Act 2003** – Powerlink has established formal Cultural Heritage Management Agreements with relevant Aboriginal parties and has been discussing our approach to address Native Title with the respective Native Title parties. We will continue this engagement to determine a mutually suitable outcome.
- We remain committed to ongoing open and transparent engagement with landholders and other stakeholders throughout our project activities. Phases such as planning approval, easement acquisition and construction will involve additional engagement and consultation opportunities.



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Q&As

Q. How will Powerlink consult on the upcoming Ministerial Infrastructure Designation Assessment Report (MIDAR)?

A. Similar to our approach for consulting on the Draft EAR in September 2018, landholders and other stakeholders will be invited to make submissions on the MIDAR when it is released for public comment in coming months. The report will examine the potential social, environmental and economic impacts of the proposed transmission infrastructure, and outline how those impacts will be managed or mitigated. The report will identify any updates required to the original proposed transmission line alignment taking into account new information which has come to light since the Draft EAR was first prepared.

We will provide electronic copies of the MIDAR on USB to landholders and other key stakeholders. A full copy (chapter-by-chapter) will be available on our website. Hard copies will be provided to Council offices. We will also hold local Community Information Drop-In Sessions to invite landholders, other stakeholders and interested community members to discuss the MIDAR in more detail with representatives from Powerlink and AECOM.

Q. Will the proposed transmission line affect using drones for mustering on my property?

A. The presence of a transmission line on a property does not prohibit the use of drones for mustering activities. To comply with electrical safety requirements, we request landholders observe the relevant safety exclusion zones (keeping drones a minimum of six metres from our infrastructure). We are committed to working closely with landholders to minimise any potential impacts from our infrastructure on their property and farming activities. We invite landholders to provide us with more information on their intended drone use so we can take this into consideration, and provide further advice on safe drone operation.

Landholder relationships a top priority for Powerlink



Powerlink's Manager Landholder Relations, Murray Abel, has been engaging with landholders and other stakeholders since we commenced work on the Proposed Genex Kidston Connection Project in 2016. During that time, he has developed an intricate understanding of the community landscape and local issues that Powerlink needs to consider when progressing the project.

Murray said he has greatly appreciated the investment of time and cooperation from landholders as this project has evolved.

"We understand the broader impacts that our planning and future construction activities can have on local communities, so it's vital we create mutual understanding wherever we can with landholders and the wider community," Murray said.

"In particular, we'd like to thank landholders for their continued assistance with providing valuable information about their properties, as well as facilitating property access for our project team to gather essential on-ground information.

"Along with the rest of our project team, I'm firmly focused on being accessible and responsive to any matters raised by landholders and other stakeholders as Powerlink's planning work continues. I'd like to encourage anyone with queries to please contact me on (07) 3860 2377 or mabel@powerlink.com.au so I can assist."

Commitment to exploring local employment and procurement opportunities

Powerlink is dedicated to working with the appointed principal contractor, UGL, to maximise local employment and procurement opportunities wherever possible for the Proposed Genex Kidston Connection Project.

In August 2021, Powerlink and UGL jointly hosted an online briefing for potential local businesses to learn more about the project and how they can potentially become involved. More than 50 representatives from businesses in the Hinchinbrook, Etheridge, Charters Towers and Townsville region attended the session to learn more and start this important conversation with Powerlink and UGL. Information on the types of contracts available and the registration process was discussed. A video recording of the session and presentation slides are available on our [website](#), along with contact details for UGL representatives who can provide more information for interested local businesses. Powerlink and UGL are also committed to working with local Native Title holders to identify employment and training opportunities associated with the project.



Further information

For more information on the Proposed Genex Kidston Connection Project, please contact:

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