

# CopperString 2032 project approvals

July 2023

## About the project

The Powerlink-led CopperString 2032 project, formerly known as CopperString 2.0, initially involves building 840 kilometres of new electricity transmission line from just south of Townsville in the Burdekin region to Mount Isa that will connect Queensland's North West Minerals Province (NWMP) to the National Electricity Market.

The overall expanded project has a budget of \$5 billion and includes:

- 500 kilovolt (kV) transmission line from just south of Townsville to Hughenden
- 330kV transmission line from Hughenden to Cloncurry
- 220kV transmission line from Cloncurry to Mount Isa
- up to six new substation sites.

Powerlink is progressing early works on the project in 2023 ahead of construction commencing in 2024. The project is expected to be completed by 2029.

*The below information has been prepared to explain the process that CopperString 2032 is following to gain additional environmental and land planning approvals prior to construction commencing.*

## What existing environmental approvals are in place?

The project has received the following environmental approvals from the State and Federal governments. Please follow the links for detailed information.

### State Government approvals

The Office of the Coordinator-General (OCG) accepted the project's revised Draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) as the Final EIS on 28 February 2022.

#### [CopperString Final EIS](https://www.statedevelopment.qld.gov.au/coordinator-general/assessments-and-approvals/coordinated-projects/completed-projects/copperstring-project)

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The Coordinator-General released the project's evaluation report and approval of the Final EIS under the *State Development and Public Works Organisation Act 1971* on 28 September 2022.

#### [Coordinator-General's evaluation report](https://eisdocs.dsdp.qld.gov.au/CopperString/2022/CGER/copperstring-project-coordinator-general-evaluation-report.pdf)

<https://eisdocs.dsdp.qld.gov.au/CopperString/2022/CGER/copperstring-project-coordinator-general-evaluation-report.pdf>

### Federal Government approval

The Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water (DCCEEW) approved the project as a 'controlled action' under the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (EPBC Act) on 11 November 2022.

#### [EPBC final approval](http://epbcnotices.environment.gov.au/publicnoticesreferrals)

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## What additional approvals are required?

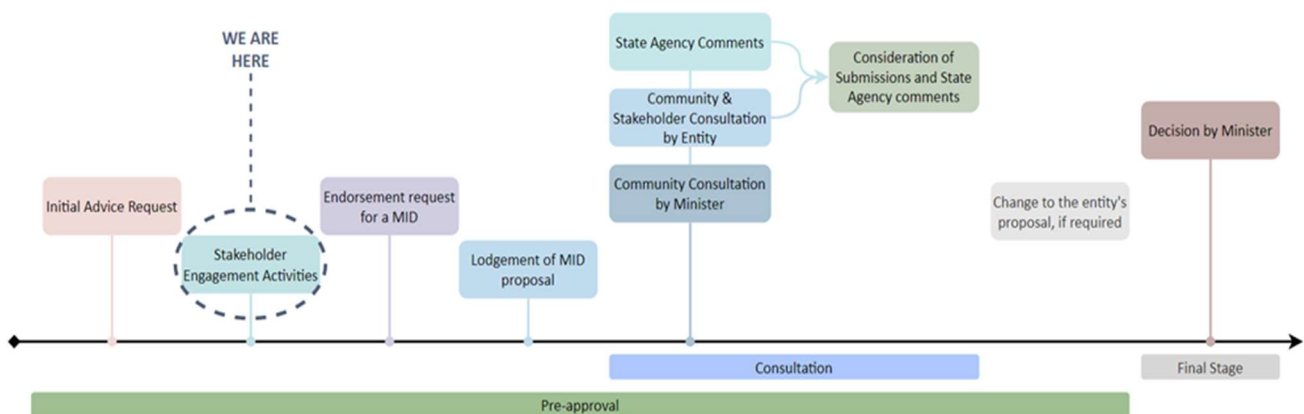
Expanding the project's transmission line capacity from 330kV to 500kV between just south of Townsville and Hughenden means we need to prepare and submit additional information to support the project's EIS and EPBC Act referral.

These changes will then be assessed and updated approvals will be issued if the State and Federal governments accept the changes. CopperString 2032 can then progress land use planning approval through the Ministerial Infrastructure Designation (MID) process.

## What is a MID?

A MID helps support the delivery of community infrastructure such as hospitals, schools, emergency services stations, powerlines, sporting facilities, water supply infrastructure and sewerage treatment plants.

The MID process provides an alternative to lodging a development application with local government and is managed by the Department of State Development, Infrastructure, Local Government and Planning (DSDILGP) with input from other government agencies. The diagram below outlines the MID process and where we currently are in the process.



*The MID application process*

## How is a MID different from an EIS?

An EIS considers project impacts to determine if environmental conditions are required for the project to proceed. A MID is an alternative process for land use planning approval. Where necessary, the Planning Minister can impose requirements on a MID to ensure the adequate provision of services and that certain outcomes or impacts are addressed.

## Who is responsible for making decisions in relation to a MID?

The Minister for State Development, Infrastructure, Local Government and Planning is responsible for making all decisions relating to a MID proposal and, under the *Planning Act 2016*, can make, amend, extend or repeal a MID. However, assessment advice is also obtained from other state agencies.

## Why is Powerlink seeking a MID?

CopperString 2032 crosses seven local government areas each with its own set of planning regulations. The MID process simplifies planning and approvals by allowing the project to be assessed at a whole-of-government level by a single assessment manager (the Minister) who all landholders and other key stakeholders can engage with and provide feedback to.

## What does a MID proposal allow?

A MID proposal allows a project to be assessed at a whole-of-government level. It does not allow a project to skip the development application process.

The MID process provides an alternative to lodging a development application with local government. It also does not allow for any changes to an existing agreement you may have with Powerlink. Conditions of the project's EIS cannot be changed and additional conditions may be imposed through the MID process as part of the planning assessment.

## How will the MID process run?

Due to the size and scope of CopperString 2032, the project will be broken down into work fronts with construction occurring in multiple locations at the same time to ensure safe travel distances for workers and timely project delivery.

As such, we expect to lodge several MID proposals and are currently undertaking preliminary engagement with impacted landholders, communities and other stakeholders to ensure anyone with an interest in the project has an opportunity to provide initial feedback before proposals are lodged.

We anticipate that each MID work front will start and end at either a road or on the boundary of a lot/plan. This may mean that some stakeholders including landholders, Traditional Owners and local governments will be impacted by more than one MID.

## Why does Powerlink expect to submit more than one MID?

The initial length of the project is 840 kilometres and construction will not occur in a linear manner.

For example, there are some aspects of the project that need to be constructed first and some aspects that need to be constructed last. Construction will also occur in multiple locations at once to minimise the project's overall construction timeline.

## What will be included under each MID?

MID proposals will include all temporary and permanent infrastructure components needed to develop the project. This includes, but is not limited to, towers, substations, access tracks, camps and laydown areas.

The MID assessment focuses on the proposed land use, and its associated impacts including traffic, car parking, stormwater, noise, ecology, amenity, and built form.

## What can impacted landholders expect to happen?

If a property is impacted by a MID proposal, the landholder will receive formal notification via the Minister who will outline the proposal and how to provide feedback. Submissions must be made to the Minister via the [DSDILGP](#) website which lists MID proposals that are open for consultation.

During this time, Powerlink will also undertake public consultation with landholders, community members and other key stakeholders to share project information and how to make a submission to the department.

## As there are multiple MIDs, will landholders and other key stakeholders be notified of all MIDs / can a submission be made on more than one MID?

Landholders will receive formal notification of any MID that directly impacts them.

The MID process also includes statutory requirements for a public notice and invites feedback from the wider public.

While landholders may receive formal notification of more than one MID if they are impacted by more than one MID, they – and the wider community – are also welcome to provide a submission on any MID submitted for the project.

## How to provide feedback

We invite you to share your feedback on the project at any time. Any information you submit will be provided to relevant State Government departments to help with their assessment of the project.

You can:

- call our project team on **1800 635 369**
- email us at [copperstring2032@powerlink.com.au](mailto:copperstring2032@powerlink.com.au)
- visit us at an upcoming [community information drop-in session](#) in your local area
- submit your feedback via the project's [online feedback form](#).

Once the formal application process for a MID starts, there is a 20 day statutory period to provide your submission to the Minister via the [DSDILGP website](#).

During this time, we will also undertake public consultation with landholders, community members and other key stakeholders to share project information and how to make a submission to the department.

### Where can I find more information?

For more information on the MID process:

- visit the [DSDILGP](#) website  
<https://planning.statedevelopment.qld.gov.au/planning-framework/infrastructure-planning/ministerial-infrastructure-designations>

For more information about CopperString 2032:

- visit our website [www.powerlink.com.au/copperstring2032](http://www.powerlink.com.au/copperstring2032)
- email [copperstring2032@powerlink.com.au](mailto:copperstring2032@powerlink.com.au)
- call our project team on **1800 635 369**.