

Media Release

Constraints Report



Date: Tuesday 4 July 2023

New report guides route refinement for VNI West

Communities across the Victoria to New South Wales Interconnector (VNI West) project area will get the chance to discuss a new report which provides an insight into the work underway to refine the route for this essential transmission line.

To coincide with five community information sessions taking place in July, Transmission Company Victoria (TCV) is sharing a series of maps, which illustrate the important areas of land use across the project area.

Drafted by engineering and environment consultant AECOM, the report identifies important areas and features across six distinct categories: agriculture, ecological values, Aboriginal cultural heritage, flooding, land use & infrastructure and engineering.

The Environmental Constraints Summary Report is based on detailed desktop analysis and expert workshops, along with information gathered through community and stakeholder discussions undertaken by TCV in recent months.

TCV spokesperson, Nicola Falcon, said “We are working to find a route that minimises impacts to agriculture, cultural heritage and the environment.

“This report highlights the challenge of charting a route for the project through a rural landscape featuring Aboriginal heritage sites, flood plains, environmentally sensitive areas and intensive agriculture,” Ms Falcon said.

“We have heard community concerns regarding the large area of interest, and we understand landholders want more certainty and more answers.

“Releasing AECOM’s maps and report provides more information for the community about the data and information TCV is using to narrow the route.

“We are still in the very early stages of determining the route for VNI West,” she said with construction not due to commence before 2026,” she said.

AECOM’s maps identify significant features that will influence the location of the transmission lines as well as outlining the area that should be avoided, wherever possible.

The ring-fenced areas identified include airports, significant heritage sites, RAMSAR wetlands, conservation parks and recreation reserves. The report also recommends a buffer around towns in the project area, including Navarre, St Arnaud, Charlton, Boort and Kerang.

These principles are balanced with the challenge of finding a suitable route through the broad area of interest for VNI West, as well as dense areas of sensitive and significant land uses as depicted in AECOM’s maps.

Ms Falcon said, “It will not always be possible to avoid all sensitivities, however where we can’t avoid particular areas, we will look at technical and engineering solutions to mitigate any impacts.”

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In coming months, TCV will publish a narrower 500m-1km corridor, which will be further refined to a 200m-400m indicative route towards the end of the year. Comprehensive environmental assessments will be conducted over a 12 to 18 month period in the next phase of the project.

All major announcements about the route refinement for VNI West will be published on the TCV website and shared through our social and digital platforms.

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About TCV

Transmission Company Victoria (TCV) is a new company created by AEMO Victorian Planning to progress the VNI West transmission project. TCV will discuss the VNI West transmission project with landholders, Traditional Owners and the community to understand local concerns as the project moves toward construction. As AEMO is the system planner and will not physically construct or own the transmission lines, it established TCV to make sure that commitments made in the early stages are captured and honoured across the life of the project. TCV will provide project updates, and will work with the community on this important transmission line. For more information, head to www.transmissionvictoria.com.au.