

The Hon Daniel Andrews  
Premier of Victoria

23 November 2021

Via email: [Daniel.andrews@parliament.vic.gov.au](mailto:Daniel.andrews@parliament.vic.gov.au)

Dear Premier,

**Re: Western Victoria Transmission Network Project**

Moorabool Shire Council (Council) would like to take this opportunity to raise some concerns in response to the Western Victoria Transmission Network Project (WVTNP). This project will have a significant impact on the region's development and industries of local specialisation, with over 190km of new 500kV transmission lines proposed to run through the length of Moorabool Shire and beyond.

It is important to note that Council does not dispute the importance of this significant renewable energy infrastructure project, and is supportive of the transition to renewable energy. However, Council is mindful of achieving long-term sustainable outcomes where the impact to the regional community and the natural environment is not unreasonably compromised.

Many of our significant concerns with the project relate to its apparent lack of proper consideration for undergrounding the transmission line, which would resolve many of the substantial impacts to Moorabool Shire, including:

1. Our agricultural industry and land uses, this being a sector of local specialisation and substantial investment potential, generating \$295 million output and \$206 million export value, equating to 33% of our exports and 800 jobs.
2. Direct loss of farming land to acquisition of up to 330ha within easements, affecting the efficiency, productivity and competitiveness of as many as 100 farms.
3. Potential loss of agricultural employment for regional people with highly specialised skills that will require re-training and re-education for employment in different sectors.
4. Negative impacts on natural amenity and views with the transmission towers likely traversing Lerderderg State Park, which would directly conflict with the tourism brand and reasons for visiting Moorabool that are based on scenic values and nature-based assets.
5. Implications for population attraction and retention, property values and businesses relying on population-led demand.
6. Decrease in the attractiveness of towns to future residents relative to current conditions, at least in areas proximate to or in view of the transmission lines, despite urban growth being a State-led priority for Moorabool Shire.

Please find attached the independent report commissioned by Moorabool Council that confirms utilising HVDC underground cables is a viable, low-impact alternative to the project currently being planned.



Most importantly, the HVDC underground report shows that the project can be done underground with minimal ground disturbance and using existing road easements. This approach would eliminate the significant visual impacts of 40m to 80m transmission towers with between 40m and 100m easements, and their unnecessary burden on the community at large.

A timeline of the key correspondence and other independent reports can be found on our website: <https://www.moorabool.vic.gov.au/western-victoria-transmission-network-project>

We are calling on you, as the Premier of Victoria, to request the project not only review alternative alignments options, but most importantly alternate technologies and construction techniques that would allow these lines to go underground.

We encourage the State Government to consider the long-term impacts of the multiple transmission upgrades that are forecast across the State and how to ensure a best practice approach is utilised in all cases. It is vital to minimise and plan for common issues that may delay, and in some cases prevent, the much-needed transmission infrastructure.

We thank you for taking the time to consider the issues we have raised and strongly urge the State Government to be leaders in the transmission sector, set the path for future projects, and make the Western Victoria Transmission Network Project a legacy of which we can all be proud.

Please contact Vanessa Osborn, Major Developments Coordinator, should your office wish to discuss further any of the matters raised above on (03) 5366 1344 or via email: [vosborn@moorabool.vic.gov.au](mailto:vosborn@moorabool.vic.gov.au).

Regards,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Tom Sullivan', is written over a light blue horizontal line.

**Cr Tom Sullivan**  
Mayor