

What have stakeholders been saying?

Some common questions we have been asked and our responses are included in the table below.

Questions raised	AusNet Services response
Vegetation removal	
Some concern about the loss of vegetation as many landowners place a high value on their trees.	AusNet Services is required by law to remove vegetation for bushfire safety reasons. AusNet Services will minimise the vegetation loss wherever possible. This includes trimming trees where possible instead of removing them.
Damage to properties	
Damage caused by vehicles in wet periods was a concern for some landowners.	Every effort will be made to minimise the impacts of construction on properties including avoiding properties in a very wet condition. AusNet Services will leave properties in the same condition prior to the project commencing.
Crop damage	
Some landowners were concerned that their crops would be damaged by the construction process.	Where possible, the construction process will be timed to avoid impacts to crops. Where damage is unavoidable it will be minimised and compensated for.
Notification of accessing properties	
Some landowners have asked to be notified before people come onto their property, so they can manage stock.	AusNet Services will notify people when construction will begin, and discuss access requirements with each landowner on an individual basis.

Talking to people about the project

Over the last few months we have been busy talking to landowners and other stakeholder including:

- local councils, regulators and utilities;
- landowners directly impacted by the project to obtain approval for field teams to visit their property for technical studies; and
- interested landowners and community wishing to discuss project related issues and questions.

We have been informing the local landowners and community about the project via:

- direct mail outs (letters and brochures);
- responding to community enquires from our project email and 1800 number; and
- our project website.

Next steps

When planning approval permits are granted, preparations for the construction will begin. This will include updating stakeholders on the status of the project, scheduling meetings with all landowners to discuss the construction process, timing and any access requirements.

Subject to obtaining the planning permits, construction is likely to begin late 2015 or early 2016, with completion in mid-to-late 2016.

If you would like to find out more about the project or provide feedback, please contact us.



Moorabool to Ballarat transmission line upgrade

Project update



Call 1800 966 849 or
Email us at
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Visit our website at
www.ausnetservices.com.au



We move energy

The Moorabool to Ballarat transmission line upgrade project update

Background

Victoria's electricity transmission network planner, the Australian Energy Market Operator, has requested the Moorabool to Ballarat transmission powerline be upgraded. This involves installing a third 220kV circuit on the existing towers. AusNet Services as the owner and operator of Victoria's electricity transmission network, will be delivering the upgrade. A town planning permit is required to conduct this work from the four associated councils.

What work is required?

The new circuit will be strung on the south-western side of the existing towers (refer to Figure 1). To achieve this, we will need to remove some vegetation to ensure essential clearance distances from the powerlines. Every effort will be made to minimise any vegetation clearance.

We do not expect there will be any disruption to your power services during this upgrade.

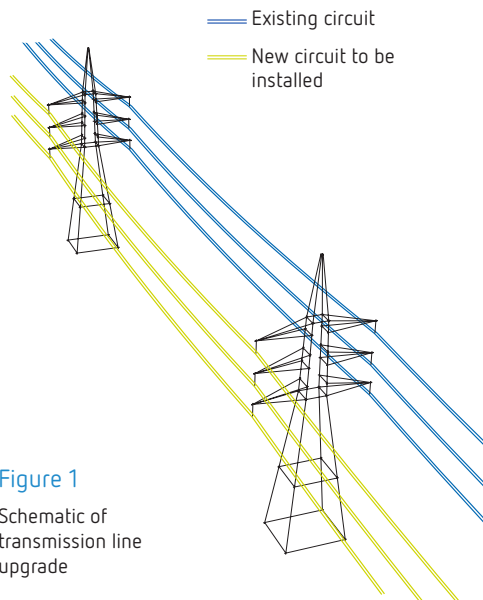
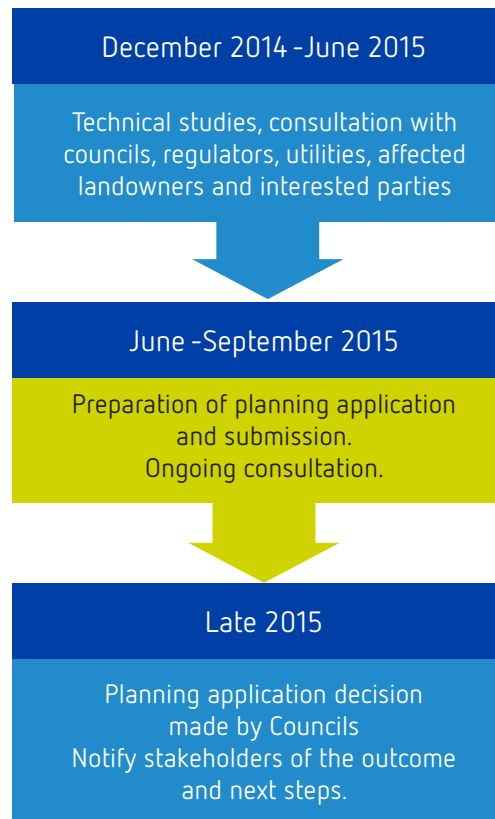


Figure 1

Schematic of transmission line upgrade

Project timeline



Planning application process

We have now completed all necessary studies. The planning permit application was submitted to Councils in late September.

For more background information on the project, please refer to the website.

Key findings from technical studies and community consultation

Flora and fauna

When the new circuit is strung on the existing towers, we will need to remove some vegetation to ensure essential safety clearance distances from the powerlines. Our flora and fauna studies have identified and documented the type of vegetation that will be impacted by the project. The Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP) requires that when native vegetation is removed, protection of bushland which makes an equivalent contribution to Victoria's biodiversity is required. This is known as a 'vegetation offset'. An offset strategy has been developed and will form part of the planning permit application.

Electromagnetic fields

To investigate the effects of the upgrade on Electromagnetic Fields (EMF), we have carried out onsite monitoring and created a model to simulate the changes in EMF strength. The model showed that EMFs will remain under public safety standards.

Aboriginal cultural heritage

A desktop assessment of cultural heritage has been completed to see if areas of cultural significance may be affected by the upgrade. The assessment found that while there are a few sites of cultural significance along the route, these would not be affected. Therefore a Cultural Heritage Management Plan is not required.