Full name: Anonymous 1

Submission contents

Enter your submission below. Maximum of 500 words: Please find enclosed my submission.

Acknowledgement

I request that my submission be published with my identifying information removed

AUSTRALIA-ASIA POWERLINK

PUBLIC SUBMISSION TO NT EPA BY REDACTED, LITCHFIELD RESIDENT

Background

As a resident of Litchfield, on a property along the proposed Over Head Transmission Line (OHTL) corridor, I will firstly state that I have not been personally contacted by Sun Cable as an affected stakeholder. I am disappointed that many affected stakeholders have been contacted so late in the piece, or not at all. However, I will commend Sun Cable for the breadth and detail of their documentation, which has been an interesting and educational read. I do not doubt the efforts they have gone to, and the scope of works, especially in consultation with Traditional Land Owners. That being said, I have been informed that the Wulna Traditional Owners are opposed to this project variation.

There are 20 associated documents uploaded to the NT EPA website landing page for the project for the referral stage, and 54 Environmental Impact Study (EIS) documents for the assessment stage, and another 15 other documents, which are all extensive. I have not been able to read them all. It is unlikely that affected residents will have been able to do so either, with only one week's notice before closure of public comment.

The reserved NTG Utilities corridor that has been earmarked for this project under the variation forced by NTG in diverting the converter site away from Middle Arm to Murrumujuk/Gunn Point, has been my greatest concern and focus for my submission as an affected resident in Lloyd Creek. The proposed OHTL follows the rail way to Livingstone, where is bears to the East across the Stuart Highway, following the NTG Utilities corridor reserved in the Litchfield Subregional Land Use Plan (LSLUP). According to the maps, it is proposed that the OHTL will pass by my property approximately just 1000m (1km) away – which sounds like a lot but is a stones-throw for rural residents, who have driveways longer than this!

The power line capacity at peak generation is expected at 6.4GW, and forecast to be 17GW. Presumably this means bolstering the infrastructure with more cables as the project grows. Operating capacity is expected between 525-600kV.

This submission focusses on the community, air quality, eco system, and cultural heritage impacts.

Community

Visual Amenity

I believe I will be negatively impacted by the construction and associated activities of the OHTL, and for the 70 year expected duration I will no doubt see the top portion of several pylons during the day, which no doubt will be illuminated at night. Standing well over 40m high, they will tower over the native savannah woodland I currently enjoy views of from my veranda, and may have the potential to spoil the night sky views too.

How will the visual amenity affect my property value? I am not the only resident concerned by this question.

Recreation

Impact on access to recreational fishers, and impact on fish populations in affected areas, including the popular Fenton Patches artificial reef area. Have **AFANT** been engaged for comment?

Additionally, at least one stretch of the Alverly Road section of the Utilities corridor may impact land-based recreational fishers.

What affect will these power lines and pylons erected for the OHTL have on birds, particularly waterfowl that flock between mango farms in the Arnhem Highway vicinity to areas such as Lambells Lagoon, Black Jungle, and Shoal Bay Coastal reserves? Hunting reserves at Lambells, Shoal Bay, and Howard Springs might be impacted. **NT Field and Game** have already made public comment on this concern.

Access/recreational use of Gunn Point Beach/Murrumujuk coastal area may be impacted, especially during construction, for recreational visitors including campers, and also residents of Tree Point Community (currently under consultation).

Safety

To what extent could the OHTL infrastructure affect fires in the region of the Utilities corridor? This could be from introduced weed species such as gamba, which are known to increase intensity of fires. The land in the Lloyd Creek/Noonamah region has been burnt every single year, for the past 11 years on record according to documentation. Will project boundaries affect fire-fighting access during construction or thereafter? Have **Bushfires NT** been engaged for comment?

Power lines are known to affect communications signals. In the Lloyd Creek, Elizabeth Valley, Noonamah region, communications are already extremely poor. This is no exaggeration. Some properties have no mobile phone signal whatsoever, some residents have paid for additional personal infrastructure to be installed at their properties to have a 'reliable' phone or internet connection. Many, if not most, internet connections are achieved through Fixed Wireless, mobile, or Satellite connections, and there is little fixed line infrastructure. Residents are often isolated and there are already concerns regarding the ability to call for emergency assistance when required. I state this as a resident affected by all of the above points, and I am not alone. Have **telecommunications experts** been engaged for comment?

Additionally, UHF is also used for communication, especially by emergency services. Have **Bushfires NT, Volunteer Fire Brigade Captains,** or **NT PFES** been engaged for comment?

The proposed OHTL crosses the Stuart Highway, following the NTG Utilities corridor reserved in the LSLUP, which is just North of the Hughes airstrip, used during the dry season by crucial fire-fighting planes. Have **Bushfires NT** been consulted about the impact to their aviation operations?

Weather Interaction

Whilst the pylons themselves may have added grounding to protect from damage by lightning strikes, the area around my property has significant strikes each wet season, presumably due to the nature of the geology. Could these pylons increase the threat of lightning strikes nearby to my property or others, posing a safety risk and financial risk? Are there any risks for surrounding residents associated with cyclones?

Air Quality

Dust

I already have an issue with dust from the mine access road that backs onto my property. This road is maintained by mining companies, and I have existing complaint records with NT EPA for the lack of dust management performed by mine operators using this road consistently and predominantly throughout the dry season. I am concerned that this road may be utilised for construction and

maintenance traffic to access portions of the Utilities corridor, and dust will therefore become an increasing problem for my family, who have chronic lung conditions.

Noise

As above, what noise impact will I have during construction of the OHTL pylons in the vicinity of my home, just 1km away. Will this be weekdays, weekends, night times? I am not sure what this might mean for my home amenity.

Emissions

Certain atmospheric conditions often cause high voltage cables to emit a buzzing/humming sound. There are also high levels of Electro-Magnetic Frequency (EMF) around these cables. What impact will noise/EMF emitted from the cables have on my family?

Eco System

Clearing

Associated native vegetation land clearing and ground preparation during construction will negatively impact an extensive range of vulnerable and threatened species within the area of the OHTL section between Livingstone and Murrumujuk, and the converter precinct site itself. Some of these species' visit or grow, on or near, my property.

Vulnerable Species

I note that the Partridge Pigeon has been missed in much of the documentation, which is a vulnerable species, as has the Black Footed Tree Rat, both of which I have recorded on my property and in the woodland vicinity. I also note that the Howard River Toadlet is referred to as 'flora' in at least one table contained in the EIS.

Conservation Areas

The OHTL proposed in the Utilities corridor directly impacts the Priority Protection Area established in the Howard Sandplains Site of Conservation Significance, and Black Jungle Conservation Reserve. These areas are recognised as having high biodiversity value, and **NT Department of Environment** recommends avoiding clearing or direct impact in and around those areas, requiring mitigation with buffer zones.

Coastal Zone Impact

Although it has not been the focus of my assessment under time constraints, I am concerned about the environmental impacted around the coastal zone of Murrumujuk, which is virtually untouched in terms of development on land, and under sea. As a recreational fisher, a day out on the water is not just about catching fish, but enjoying the many rare and special encounters with dolphins, dugongs, and other species we have recorded seeing in the area. These are exceedingly rare in the wider Darwin Harbour region following other coastal industry and sea-traffic impacts.

Cultural Heritage

Known Sites

In the OHTL corridor between Livingstone and Murrumujuk alone, there are 34 known archaeological sites, 11 isolated artefacts, 4 culturally significant landscape features, and 33 cultural Heritage Risk Areas. These include a range of sacred sites, WWII sites, and other important evidence of human historic habitation, which links all people with the history of their country and ancestors. The documentation admits that any attempt to divert the OHTL around these sites will likely result in

disturbing others. Although not mentioned, I note this would be highly likely to require additional NT Planning permissions for rezoning and/or clearing, and private land owner permission.

Additional Concerns

Water

I have some concerns regarding the use of water in construction by way of private land owner permission to tap into existing bores. Will there be extensions of existing water extraction licences in order to fulfil their responsibilities and monitor groundwater consumption and forecasts?

Feasibility

How is the concept of an environmentally friendly project to produce and supply power feasible? Given that Sun Cable acknowledge that the variation in the route of the OHTL corridor will involve significant clearing of a 66km stretch of predominantly native vegetation, 20m wide, and additional cleared area for each pylon of 100m x 60m. How will native vegetation be "reinstated" to ensure a reduced corridor following construction, of 6m wide, and 12m x 6m around each pylon? In addition, how will this project help to achieve the NTG net zero target if the majority of the generated power is sent to Singapore and not the NT?

Request

I request that this project variation to the OHTL route is not deemed feasible by the NT Environmental Protection Agency.

I also request that the NT Government re-evaluate the Litchfield Subregional Land Use Plan (LSLUP) given the identified risks to significant sites in the reserved NTG Utilities corridor between Livingstone and Murrumujuk. It is apparent that this corridor is not appropriate for any level of infrastructure, and should be removed from any future projects to prevent private companies repeating studies and assessments, time and again.

Sincerely

Redacted