**Tara Horsnell**
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cc:

**The Honourable Lily D’Ambrosio**
Minister for Energy, Environment and Climate Change and Solar Homes

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**The Honourable Richard Wynne**
Minister for Planning and Housing

richard.wynne@parliament.vic.gov.au

Dear Tara,

I am contacting you regarding the **Western Victoria Transmission Network Project (WVTNP) North Ballarat to Bulgana** and specifically, the proposed northern alignment between **Darley** and the **Significant Landscape of the Lerderderg State Park** *(DPCD South West Victoria Landscape Assessment Study | Significant landscapes).*

I am a resident living in this region and are devastated by the proposed northern alignment. The construction of a series of 85m high transmission towers through this corridor does not serve to **conserve or enhance Significant Landscape or protect Visual Amenity**. It serves to destroy this for residents of Darley, Coimadai and Merrimu.

**I refer to the WVTNP, 11th July 2020 Questions and Answers Session- Transcript (themed). Specifically, Item 4 of the Transcript.**

Part of your response to the question,"*Is there a possibility to have early visual impact assessment discussed with effected residents? When is the earliest this could occur? Darley / Lerderderg vicinity. Pamela Court?"*  was that "***obviously view lines that would like that should be protected***" (quoted verbatim).

When AusNet Services narrowed down the Area of Interest to two potential corridors, the northern alignment still formed part of the revised plan. I understand these corridors will be further considered, along with the output of further community consultation, to identify to a single corridor and refine a final route. What I do not understand is the following:

1. If you were aware of the Significant Landscape of the Lerderderg State Park and the impact of transmission towers on Visual and Landscape Amenity to Darley residents, **why does the narrow corridor between Darley and the Lerderderg State Park still exist on the Project map?**
2. Richard Wynne has stated “*While this project is important to the future of Victoria’s power system, it’s critical we assess its environmental effects to avoid or minimise impacts on the community or the environment*.” **Why does the narrow corridor between Darley and the Lerderderg State Park still exist on the Project map?**
3. Richard Wynne has stated “*The Victorian Government supports an efficient,* ***modern****, sustainable and affordable energy system – the EES process will tell us exactly where we stand and how we can move forward, it’s important to get this right.*” **Why are AusNet Services not investigating modern undergrounding alternatives** **using High Voltage Direct Current (HVDC)** as was used in Murray Link and is proposed for Marinus Link, connecting Tasmania to Victoria. Overhead transmission lines are old technology that create Visual Pollution rather than **conserving and enhance significant landscape features, biodiversity and ecological values in Renewable Energy Zones.**

I urge you to insist on a comprehensive review of the Western Victoria Transmission Network Project and request **permanent removal of the proposed northern alignment between Darley and the Lerderderg State Park from the Project’s Area of Interest**. To reference your public statement again, ***"obviously view lines that would like that should be protected"***. Continuing to propose the northern alignment north of Darley demonstrates willingness to deliberately impact the Visual Amenity of a Significant Area, a clear lack of planning, social license and understanding of the overwhelming negative impact on this important residential region.

I am in full support of Renewable Energy Zones but not when a potential corridor passes right through the heart of Significant Areas, wildlife habitat, residential developments, and public open spaces. The irreversible impact on the environment, visual amenity, wildlife, local economy, and the local community is simply unacceptable.

I look forward to your response in the hope we can work to conserve and enhance our visual amenity, significant landscape features, biodiversity and ecological values for future generations.

Thank you for acknowledging that our view lines would and should be protected.

Kind regards