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## Final determination on Ourimbah to Wamberal power line

The proposed Ourimbah to Wamberal power line will be built underground for an extra 750 metres past Wamberal Public School, according to the project's final environmental assessment released today.

The extension of underground cable will mean up to \$12 million will be invested to underground 4 kilometres of the power line. The latest extension of underground cable became necessary because of complex line design issues near the sensitive Wamberal Lagoon.

EnergyAustralia today wrote to more than 500 residents living near the project route advising them of the final decision.

EnergyAustralia General Manager Network Geoff Lilliss said work on the project would begin later this month.

"There has been a very strong response from the local community on this project," Mr Lilliss said.

"We have listened to their concerns and made several changes in response to their feedback. We are now undergrounding an extra 750 metres of the power line along Tumby Road.

"Design of an overhead power line near the Central Coast Highway/Tumby Road intersection was becoming increasingly complex.

"Possible future road works may have also required the line to be raised, and this would have conflicted with the environmental plans designed to protect Wamberal Lagoon.

"An underground line in this area is a much more feasible option."

Under the final environmental assessment, the first 750 metres of the power line along Tumby Road, between the Central Coast Highway/Tumby Rd intersection and Carbeen Rd, will be built underground. From here, the line will continue north as standard overhead design.

The underground and overhead sections of the line will both have levels of EMF that are less than one per cent of the latest draft national health standard.

Modified design and pole placement on the overhead line at the Tumby Umbi campus of Tuggerah Lakes Secondary College means the line will be 94 metres from the nearest school building.

"Almost 180 submissions were received during the exhibition of the Review of Environmental Factors for the project," Mr Lilliss said.

"We have spent the past nine weeks investigating and responding to all of these submissions. They have combined with other feedback over the past two years in helping to improve the final design and route of the project.

"This includes an extra \$12 million investment for undergrounding through Wamberal.

"Reductions in the number of poles and wires, and different line design and pole placement have also helped to significantly reduce any EMF and visual impact.

"We feel the final project has been significantly enhanced because of this involvement from the local community."

The \$50 million project, which also includes construction of the new Wamberal zone substation, will provide a more reliable supply of power to more than 10,000 households in Wamberal, Terrigal, Matcham, Picketts Valley, Avoca, Holgate, Erina and Erina Heights.

It is also an important part of a \$405 million investment between 2007 and 2012 designed to secure supply across the booming Central Coast.

Mr Lilliss said EnergyAustralia would continue to provide the community with information about any potential impacts from the construction over the next 18-months.

"We will continue to keep the local community closely informed on the project – just as we have done over the past two years," he said.

"We will maintain the dedicated project hotline for people to obtain information on construction, as well as providing project information on our website.

"We will also continue with letterbox drops to residents to keep them informed on construction progress.

"While we intend to take all measures to minimise impacts during this work, we are asking the community to appreciate that underground construction in particular can cause disruptions for longer periods than overhead lines."

The Ourimbah-Wamberal power line will connect the new Wamberal zone substation in Willoughby Rd, now under construction, to EnergyAustralia's bulk supply point in Ourimbah. It will follow a 17km route from Yates Road, Ourimbah, to the Willoughby Rd substation in Wamberal.

"The Central Coast is one of the fastest growing areas in NSW," he said.

"This growing residential and light industrial development means demand for power is also increasing. This \$50 million project will help cater for this growing demand for power."

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