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## EnergyAustralia finalises power line route

A new power line needed to supply electricity to homes in Scone, Aberdeen and surrounding areas has been modified after further technical assessments and community feedback, EnergyAustralia announced this week.

Executive General Manager Network, Geoff Lilliss, said the new route took on board the community's views and would also provide better ground conditions for the power line.

Mr Lilliss said a major portion of the line would now divert around parts of Aberdeen via Gordon Street and Blairmore Lane in response to feedback from residents as well as technical issues with land nearer the Hunter River.

The remainder of the line, which runs from south of the Dartbrook Coal Access Road at Kayuga to the new Scone substation, will be built predominantly in road reserve along the New England Highway.

EnergyAustralia initially wrote to about 150 residents along the route seeking their input on the power line, and also recently informed them by letterbox drop of the new proposed route.

"We initially looked at using Abercairney Terrace as a route but we have now nominated the Gordon St/Blairmore Lane route as our preferred option," Mr Lilliss said.

"This responds not only to feedback from local residents but our own concerns over the suitability of ground conditions around the Hunter River near Abercairney Terrace.

"The new option avoids most of the residential area south and west of Aberdeen. It will also provide a reasonably direct route to our future Aberdeen substation, which will be built in a similar location to the existing substation."

Mr Lilliss said EnergyAustralia had also investigated routes to the east of Aberdeen, but these were not practical because of the risks involved with the new line crossing over existing high voltage lines in the area.

He said the proposed power line would improve the existing streetscape along Gordon Street.

"Our designers will use timber poles that will only be slightly taller than poles already in the road," Mr Lilliss said. "By increasing the length of the spans between the new poles, and undergrounding existing power lines in the street, we will actually reduce the number of poles in the street.

"And we will use existing vegetation and some additional landscaping to enhance the visual appeal of the site."

Mr Lilliss said EnergyAustralia would now undertake an environmental assessment of the power line route prior to the proposed start of construction at the end of this month. The new power line and the new Scone substation were needed in service by the end of 2009.

Work on the Scone substation began last month, while the future Aberdeen substation, which is required to replace the existing facility, is in the very early stages of planning and due to be in service by 2011.

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