

17 June 2025

Enquiries: 03 5358 8700

The Hon Sonya Kilkenney MP
Minister for Planning
Ground Floor, 622 Nepean Highway
CARRUM VIC 3197
Email: sonya.kilkenney@parliament.vic.gov.au

Dear Minister Kilkenney

Opposition to VNI West Project

On behalf of Northern Grampians Shire Council, I write to formally advise that at the 2 June 2025 Council Meeting, Council unanimously resolved to oppose the Victorian Government's VNI West transmission line project in its current form.

Council passed the following resolution:

That Council does not support the State Government's VNI West project in its current form and will continue to:

- a) advocate to the State Government for an alternative to the VNI West project;*
- b) highlight the Government's responsibilities under the Paris Agreement, which includes the protection of agricultural land from renewable energy infrastructure;*
- c) strongly advocate for the protection of food security in Victoria and for the mental health and wellbeing of our rural communities.*

Alternative projects and transmission lines are required for the benefit of the state. However, due to the overwhelming objection by our local farming community over an extended period, the Council has taken a stance against the project for the following reasons:

- 1. Is against the Paris Agreement as this agreement states that addressing climate change should not be done in a manner that threatens food production.
- 2. Has significant detrimental impacts on the mental health of our community
- 3. The need to explore opportunities for an alternative route
- 4. Undermines our food security and the importance of agriculture
- 5. The lack of consultation with stakeholders

Council has been actively following this project for approximately two years, during which time it has engaged significantly with residents, impacted landholders and subject matter experts. Our monthly Transmission Forum convened by our CEO, has been invaluable in informing Council on this project. As a result, Council has made its resolution with a comprehensive understanding of this project and its impacts.

Given the serious concerns outlined above, we urge the State Government to explore alternatives to VNI West that are more respectful of farming communities with the importance of agriculture.

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In view of the significance of these issues we respectfully request an in person meeting at your earliest convenience to discuss this matter further. As the foremost concern for our community, it warrants our time and careful consideration.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Justine Hide', with a stylized flourish at the end.

CR JUSTINE HIDE
DEPUTY MAYOR

