

COMMUNITY INFORMATION SHEET • CONNECTIVITY

Planning approvals and your say

Where the decisions are made on connectivity projects — and how to be heard

The key idea: multiple doors, each with a deadline

Big connectivity projects pass through several approval processes, each with its own public comment window. Miss one and the next may still be open, but early submissions matter most, because routes and designs harden over time. The single most useful thing you can do is **get on the project's notification list on day one**.

The national door

Projects likely to affect matters of national environmental significance are assessed under the **EPBC Act**, with formal public comment periods on referral and assessment documents. Major interconnectors (Marinus Link among them) typically go through this alongside state processes.

The state door

Each state runs its own environmental and planning assessment for major infrastructure: an EIS or equivalent, publicly exhibited, with submissions invited and (in some processes) public hearings. This is usually where route, construction and compensation issues get the fullest airing. Transmission projects also face the AER's economic tests, which have their own consultation rounds.

The local door

Councils assess smaller components (landing stations, depots) and are consultees on the big ones. A council submission carries weight; organised community input to your councillors is often the most direct lever residents have.

What good practice looks like

- A published project timeline showing every comment window in one place.
- Plain-English summaries of assessment documents (which can run to thousands of pages).
- Submissions acknowledged and the response to issues published.
- Consultation before route selection, not exhibition after it.

Questions to ask

Which approval processes apply to this project and what are the current deadlines? Where do I register for notifications? What changed as a result of past consultation rounds? Can the proponent point to anything?

Want to know more? See also sheet 20 in our data-centre series (Planning approvals and your say). Your state planning portal lists current exhibitions; the EPBC public portal lists Commonwealth assessments. This sheet is general information, not legal or planning advice; a specific proposal is confirmed by qualified assessment.