

Concord Substation Upgrade FAQs

As of 20 May 2020

EXISTING SUBSTATION

Can the existing substation be expanded to accommodate new equipment?

The existing substation was built in the late 1950's and now supplies 12,000 residents/businesses in the Concord and North Strathfield area. For the duration of the project, the existing switchgear will need to remain operational while the new switchgear is installed. This will ensure that there is an uninterrupted electricity supply to all residents/businesses. The internal design of the substation is insufficient in size to accommodate both the existing switchgear and installation of new switchgear due to the size and shape of the substation. The only suitably sized vacant land available is at the rear of Ausgrid's property.

The current transformers are really noisy and are especially disruptive in the evenings, can you fix this?

The replacement of the eastern most transformer (closest to the railway line) was completed late last year. This was an unexpected replacement for Ausgrid. We needed to replace this transformer to maintain electricity supply to the area. Given the recent replacement of the eastern most transformer, Ausgrid is currently re-assessing the condition of the other three transformers at the site to confirm if replacement is required.

We also understand that noise pollution emitted from transformers is an inconvenience to residents, especially during the evenings. You can rest assured that the proposed new switchgear will not generate noise once installed.

NEW SWITCHROOM

Why does the substation need to be upgraded?

The substation's 11,000 volt switchgear and associated equipment is aged and is ready to be retired. The switchgear needs to be replaced to enable Ausgrid to maintain a safe and reliable power supply to your area.

Will this affect the electricity supply in my home?

It is not anticipated that upgrades to the substation will have any direct impact on your electricity supply. In the unlikely event that we will need to temporarily interrupt your electricity supply during construction, you will be notified in advance.

When will constructions start?

The project to replace the switchgear is expected to begin in approximately 12 months from now and will go through various project stages before the expected completion date of late 2023, with decommissioning works to follow.

How will the local area be impacted during construction?

Construction work will be contained within our substation site, except for the construction of some ductlines and connection of cables to the existing network. You may notice an increase in vehicle and truck movements in local streets, such as George Street. Residents in close proximity to the substation on George Street may also notice some noise, dust and vibration coming from the substation site during construction. However, this will be managed to minimise impacts on neighbouring properties. Ausgrid's construction site is small and will limit the space needed for necessary materials and equipment. As a result, parking and traffic along George Street will occasionally be affected from time-to-time to facilitate these large deliveries. Residents will be notified of any impacts prior to the works.

Will the new substation pose any fire or explosion risk to residents?

The new switchgear to be installed in the new switchroom, will replace old switchgear which is reaching the end of its technical life and is now obsolete technology. All new equipment installed in the new substation will comply with current Australian Standards. Likewise, the new substation building will comply with these in line with the Building Code of Australia (BCA) – Australian Standards.

Rooftop landscaping

We are mindful of the existing height of surrounding residences and the minimum space required to accommodate Ausgrid's new equipment. The new switchroom will not be built to accommodate landscaping on the rooftop – as this will add additional weight and waterproofing complexity to the building construction.

What is the proposed new building height?

Ausgrid anticipates that it will be less than 7 metres from existing ground level. However, this will be finalised during the detailed design stage, which you will be kept informed of.

What is the proposed new building offset from the southern boundary?

The setback from the southern boundary will be 3 metres (which is a greater than the setbacks required for new residential properties; often less than 1 metre).

ENVIRONMENT

Will electric magnetic field (EMF) levels increase as a result of the upgrade?

Future EMF levels will be modelled and measured as part of the project's environmental assessment (known as a Review of Environmental Factors or REF).

In relation to long term health impacts due to EMF, Ausgrid is guided by research completed by the Australian Radiation Protection and Nuclear Safety Agency (**ARPANSA**) – and will comply with these guidelines.

As part of the proposed upgrades to the substation Ausgrid will ensure that EMF levels are well below those recommended by the relevant authority; Australian Radiation Protection and Nuclear Safety Agency.

There are a number of common sources of EMF which can be found in the residential home, which are identified if you [CLICK HERE](#).

For additional reading, you can refer to Ausgrid's webpage on EMF, this webpage obtains its information from the ARPANSA website and can be access from the following link;

<https://www.ausgrid.com.au/In-your-community/Environment/Electric-and-magnetic-fields>

ARPANSA's EMF webpage is included below:

<https://www.arpansa.gov.au/understanding-radiation/radiation-sources/more-radiation-sources/electricity>

PROPERTY VALUES

Value of nearby properties

Addressing concerns over the value of nearby properties, Ausgrid will be engaging an architect to prepare a number of artistic impressions of the new switchroom building, which will include some different options for the treatment of the building façade. Neighbours directly facing the new switchroom will have an opportunity to provide feedback on two options, which will be available online and delivered in a project newsletter in April 2020. We will use feedback from this consultation to finalise the preferred concept.

COMMUNITY

Community Information Session

We had originally planned to hold a community information session at a local facility in Concord to allow a face-to-face discussion between the community and the project team regarding Ausgrid's proposed project.

In the interest of public health and the developing situation regarding COVID-19, we have unfortunately had to make the decision to cancel the community information session. We will now consult via the following methods:

- notification and letterbox drops
- project website
- project hotline
- project email.



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