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Via Email: [VIC2021-26@aer.gov.au](mailto:VIC2021-26@aer.gov.au)

**Response to Powercor Revised Proposal 2021-2026: Request to upgrade Tyrendarra, Strathdownie Cape Bridgewater and Gorae West to three phase power**

The purpose of this letter is to express support for upgrading single phase (SWER) power to three phase infrastructure in the Tyrendarra area of South West Victoria. To achieve our region's goals of renewable energy and water sustainability leadership, as well as to maintain and enhance our position as a world class tourism destination and Victoria's largest food and fibre producer, we need infrastructure that supports innovation and business growth.

I am a retired dairy farmer formerly from Winslow, which is 25 km north of Warrnambool. I had the good fortune of having 3Ph power near enough to have it connected at a reasonable cost in the mid 1970s. This meant that over the next 35 years I was able to expand from a herd of 100 cows to eventually installing a rotary dairy & milking 700 cows. The great pity I see in the lack of power infrastructure in the Portland surrounds is that similar expansion is being hampered. It is not only primary production being held back but also industry & tourism.

Renewable energy is another reason to upgrade power infrastructure. There is great potential for solar generated power from farm building roof tops or paddocks to be returned to the grid for general use. This cannot happen with inadequate SWER lines which cannot handle the load of power.

I am concerned that this proposal has previously been declined due to the numbers not stacking up due to our low population density. Low population density in your process seems to disadvantage our region twice – firstly in the evaluation process where fewer people is falsely equated to reduced investment value, and secondly, where the user-pays model means we pay a disproportionate fee for the privilege of having infrastructure upgraded when it is well and truly past its use-by date. I understand that there are calls to re-examine this approach in terms of its unintended negative impact on regional communities and I cannot support this strongly enough. I consider it the role of government and power companies to fund the upgrade, with users charged for the electricity they use.

I hope you can see your way to unlocking the economic & social potential of the Portland surrounding area by approving the investment in 3 Ph power to replace the 1950s outdated SWER infrastructure in place at the present time.

Yours Sincerely  
Chris O'Keefe