

Landscape and Visual

The Environment Effects Statement (EES) and the draft Planning Scheme Amendment for the Western Renewables Link are now available for public comment. Landscape and visual impact is a key topic covered in the EES.



This fact sheet has been developed as part of a suite to help you navigate the Western Renewables Link EES and connect you with the information that matters to you.

It provides details on how **landscape and visual impact** have been considered and where to find more information in the EES.

Planning and approvals

The EES includes information on how the project could affect the environment during construction, operation and decommissioning, and how any adverse impacts could be managed. It helps decision-makers determine whether the project should be approved under Commonwealth and Victorian laws and what conditions should apply.

The EES for the Western Renewables Link has involved extensive technical studies including field surveys and investigations, along with Traditional Owner, landholder, community and stakeholder consultation. It includes 20 technical reports on the topics listed on the final page of this fact sheet.

The EES and the draft Planning Scheme Amendment, which allows for the project land use and development to proceed, can be viewed in full on the WRL website at westernrenewableslink.com.au/ees



The Western Renewables Link will unlock Victoria's renewable energy generation potential and play a key role in facilitating access to clean, reliable, and affordable energy.

The Western Renewables Link is a proposed high-voltage, double-circuit overhead electricity transmission line, extending over 190 kilometres from Bulgana in western Victoria to Sydenham in Melbourne's north-west. The project will connect significant renewable energy developments within the Western Victoria Renewable Energy Zone to the grid and establish a direct link between the New South Wales and Victorian electricity networks.

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Figure 1: Photo montage, Links Road, Darley. (80m 500KV Double Circuit Lattice Tower. Distance 1.5km.)

Landscape and Visual Impact

The proposed Western Renewables Link will be unavoidably visible from many locations and will affect landscapes, views and amenity for those in the local area. Landscape and visual values refer to the importance placed on the aesthetic qualities and character of a landscape, including how people view and experience it.

The proposed route for the project goes through a variety of different landscapes. Some areas have already changed a lot, while others are natural and very sensitive to changes. These natural areas are valued for their features, cultural significance, biodiversity, and recreational uses. The proposed route and design of the project has sought to minimise impacts on sensitive landscapes including by avoiding national and state parks, scenic reserves, floral and fauna reserves, and bushland, where possible.

What was investigated?

Landscape and visual specialists assessed potential landscape and visual impacts of the project and measures to avoid and minimise impacts.

Investigations included:

- conducting a desktop analysis to define the existing landscape and visual features, conditions and sensitivity
- site inspections of public locations and nearby houses to capture views from key locations
- assessing viewpoints from key public viewing locations such as major roads, public parks and recreation areas, significant landscapes, townships and residential areas
- developing photomontages illustrating the project infrastructure in selected views
- assessing the potential impact from each viewpoint and mitigations where possible.

Examples of how we plan to manage potential impacts:



Developing landscape screening measures in consultation with affected landholders to reduce visual impact as much as possible



Retaining existing vegetation screening to minimise temporary and permanent impacts



Managing potential impacts

Construction will move along the proposed route in stages. There will be some temporary visual impacts, mainly from areas where materials are stored and where workers stay. Once construction is finished, temporary structures will be removed, and the construction sites will be restored to their original use.

When the project is operational, it will be visible from homes and significant landscapes known for their environmental values, vegetation, landforms, open spaces, and cultural significance, and from places where people go to enjoy the view. The project will be glimpsed by many people briefly while driving, or viewed for longer periods from recreational locations such as lookouts or picnic areas.

The impact of the project on a range of public viewpoints with significant landscape values and landforms has been assessed. Such locations include views from public lookouts, key vantage points, places of interest identified through community consultation, major roads and nearby towns where the project would be visible. Visual impact on nearby houses has been also assessed and views from houses are shown in the report, where landholders have provided their permission. The visual impact on these assessed public viewpoints and houses ranges from no impact to high level of impact.

Existing fencing and vegetation in neighbouring properties will screen views toward the project from most dwellings in townships and urban areas. The ongoing impact on neighbouring houses is considered high where landscape screening doesn't effectively screen views of the project from private living areas. This includes homes in farming areas close to the project and those in elevated areas in Darley, west of Links Road.



This fact sheet outlines potential EES topics you may wish to explore further, but submissions should not be based on this information. Please refer to the more detailed information on Landscape and Visual impacts in **EES Chapter 11** and **Technical Report D**, and base submissions on the material provided there.





Making a submission

Planning Panels Victoria (PPV) manages the EES public exhibition process.

Submissions must be made in writing and received by the exhibition closing date via the Engage Victoria website – the Victorian Government's centralised online consultation platform engage.vic.gov.au/Western-Renewables-Link-IAC. Submissions will be considered by the independent Inquiry and Advisory Committee (IAC) and the Minister for Planning.

Only one submission is needed to address all your views about the project, its effects, and the relevant documents.

If you do not have internet access and are unable to lodge a submission online via the Engage Victoria website, please contact PPV through the Customer Call Centre on 136 186 (select option 6) and request a hard copy submission coversheet. Each hard copy submission must be accompanied by a completed coversheet issued by PPV.

All submissions must state the name and address of the person making the submission. Submissions will be treated as public documents and will be published on the Engage Victoria website. Do not include personal information in the body of your submission (such as your email address or phone number or photos of people, particularly children).

If you would like to present your submission in person to the IAC, you will need to make a submission and mark on the submission form that you would like to be heard.

For more information about the EES submission process or any enquiries regarding the IAC process, contact PPV on 136 186 (select option 6) or email planning.panels@transport.vic.gov.au






Key topics in the EES

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|--|---|---|---|--|---|---|
| Amenity and Safety | Biodiversity and Environment | Community and Land Use | Heritage | Land and Water | Landscape and Visual | Transport and Aviation |
| Air Quality | Biodiversity | Agriculture and Forestry | Aboriginal Cultural Heritage | Contaminated Land | Landscape and Visual | Aviation |
| Bushfire | Climate Change | Economic | Historical Heritage | Geology and Soils | | Transport |
| EMI and EMF | Greenhouse Gas | Land Use and Planning | | Groundwater | | |
| Noise and Vibration | | Social | | Surface Water | | |

More information

Visit the project website westernrenewableslink.com.au for the latest project information.

Contact us

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