

Navigating the EES

The Environment Effects Statement (EES) and the draft Planning Scheme Amendment for the Western Renewables Link are now available for public comment. 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.

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

It provides details on how potential cultural heritage, environmental, social and economic impacts have been assessed and where to find more information in the EES.

Assessment and approvals

The EES examines the project's potential environmental impacts and identifies ways to avoid, minimise or manage adverse impacts.

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 engagement. It includes 20 technical reports on the topics summarised on the second 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 (WRL) is a proposed 190km high-voltage overhead transmission line designed to transport renewable energy from western Victoria to Sydenham in Melbourne's north-west for distribution across the state. Developed by AusNet, the project aims to alleviate congestion in the existing transmission network, enabling the delivery of clean energy to over one million homes and supporting Victoria's transition to sustainable energy sources.

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Figure 1: Benefits to Victoria



We've been listening

Over several years, we've actively engaged with Traditional Owners, landholders, stakeholders and communities along the proposed route to understand their issues, concerns, and ideas. Your feedback has shaped our engagement approach, guided project development, and influenced the investigations included in the EES. Now, during the EES exhibition period, you have the opportunity to share your views about the issues that matter to you.

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Step 1	Step 2	Step 3		
What's in the EES	Choose your topics of interest	Get the details		
The WRL Environment Effects Statement (EES) includes a summary report, chapters, technical reports, and attachments—each offering varying detail for quick reference or in-depth review. Summary report A plain English overview of the project and its potential impacts. Main volume chapters Nere are nine introductory chapters that provide an overview of the project rationale, legislative and approval requirements, assessment approach and the community and stakeholder engagement undertaken. • There are 21 technical chapters that	Amenity and Safety	Noise and Vibration: Evaluates project-related noise and vibration impacts, provides measures to minimise and manage impacts.	Bushfire: Examines potential bushfire risks and impacts due to introduction of the project in a bushfire-prone landscape and provides measures to minimise risk and maintain safe construction and operational controls.	EMI and EMF: Examines electric fields (EMF) generated by elect the potential for electromagnet (EMI) on devices and the environ measures to minimise effects.
	Biodiversity and Environment	Biodiversity: Assesses potential impacts on flora and fauna listed under state and commonwealth legislation, and outlines measures to avoid or minimise impacts. Also includes an offset management strategy.	Climate Change: Evaluates the potential effects of weather extremes and climate change on the project; particularly the effects of extreme heat on transmission capacity and network resilience.	Greenhouse Gas: Estimates em construction and operation, wit reduce emissions through detai during construction and operat
		Chapter 8 Technical Report A	Chapter 28 Technical Report N	Chapter 26
	Community and Land Use	Social: Examines the project's impacts on communities, social cohesion, amenity, and quality of life, and proposes measures to reduce social impacts including disruption and maximise local employment opportunities.	Economic: Models the project's local, state, and national economic effects, and evaluates industry effects and benefits.	Agriculture and Forestry: Evaluation project impacts on agricultural practices, productivity and fore recommends strategies to mitig negative impacts.
provide an overview of the cultural, environmental, social, and economic impacts identified in the technical reports.		Chapter 21	Chapter 14 Technical Report G	Chapter 15 Technical Report H
Technical reports The 20 technical reports contain detailed information about the study method used for each of the study topics. These impact assessments have been prepared by specialists on topics such as biodiversity, heritage, noise, traffic, and agriculture.	Heritage	Aboriginal Cultural Heritage: Identifies, in consultation with Traditional Owners, both tangible and intangible Aboriginal cultural heritage, evaluates potential impacts, and proposes measures to avoid or minimise those impacts.	Historical Heritage: The project design avoids registered heritage places but potential impacts on historical sites like gold mines, homesteads, and WWII relics are assessed and measures identified to manage impacts.	
Map book and attachments Includes maps of the project which formed the basis for the EES impact assessments, along with the draft Planning Scheme Amendment and other attachments including: an overview of project development and alternatives, a feasibility assessment for an underground 500kV transmission	Land and Water	Surface Water: Assesses the project's impact on rivers, creeks, wetlands, and reservoirs, focusing on water quality, flow, erosion, runoff, and contamination management.	Groundwater: Looks at groundwater's role in ecosystems and agriculture, potential project interactions, and measures to protect water quality and availability.	Geology and Soils: Examines ge and natural processes, identifyin erosion and instability, with med landforms and waterways.
line, the stakeholder and community engagement report and the draft Offset Management Strategy. Environmental Management Framework The Environmental Management Framework is a chapter of the EES and sets out the framework for managing and monitoring the project's	Landscape and Visual	 Technical Report T Landscape and Visual: Assesses potential impacts on the landscape and visual amenity. The report considers effects on both public and private domains. Chapter 11 	Technical Report S	Technical Report Q
environmental performance. It contains the Environmental Performance Requirements (EPRs) which outline the minimum standards and environmental outcomes the project must achieve. EPRs are included in the documents on public exhibition. Once approved they form a key part of the environmental management framework for large projects like the Western Renewables Link.	Transport and Aviation	 Technical Report D Transport: Evaluates the movement of materials, equipment, and the workforce, assessing how these transport needs will impact the road network. Chapter 20 Technical Report P 	Aviation: Examines potential impacts associated with the project on aviation values such as certified/uncertified aerodromes and outlines measures to minimise impacts.	

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Air Quality: Considers dust, emissions, and airborne hazards during construction, operation and decommissioning, and looks at measures to minimise these from equipment and handling of materials.

Chapter 18



Technical Report I

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ates how the l land, farming estry. The study igate and minimise

Land Use and Planning: Evaluates project alignment with planning policies and considers impacts on existing and future land uses.





Technical Report E

eology, soil, ing risks like asures to protect Contaminated Land: Assesses project risks from existing soil and groundwater contamination, with measures to minimise disturbance, spills, and leaks.



Chapter 23





The EES and draft Planning Scheme Amendment are available to view and download on the WRL website.



Making a submission and next steps

During the public exhibition period, anyone can make a written submission on the EES and/or draft PSA. The submission process is independently managed by Planning Panels Victoria (PPV).

After the exhibition period, a public hearing will be held, where people and organisations who've made submissions can present.

After the public hearing, the inquiry and advisory committee will prepare a report with recommendations for the Minister for Planning. The Minister will then prepare an assessment of the environmental impacts of the project.

The Minister's assessment will inform other government decision makers on the approvals required for Western Renewables Link to proceed. This includes approvals under the *Commonwealth Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999.*

Preparing your submission

This fact sheet outlines potential EES topics you may wish to explore further, but submissions should not be based on the information contained herein. As part of preparing to make a submission, you should review the more detailed EES documents and the draft PSA. These documents will be on display at the locations shown in the figure below. They are also all available at: <u>westernrenewableslink.com.au/ees</u>

Make your submission

Anyone can make a submission on the EES and draft PSA. Submissions must be made in writing and be received by 11.59 pm on Friday 22 August 2025.

Planning Panels Victoria manages the submission process.

Submissions must be made in writing and received by the exhibition closing date via the Engage Victoria website which is 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 to the IAC you will need to make a written 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**



More information

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

Contact us

- 🖵 westernrenewableslink.com.au
- 1800 WRL WRL (975 975)

 $\boxdot \underline{info@westernrenewableslink.com.au}$



We are holding community information sessions and pop-ups across the project area where you'll be able to talk to technical specialists and ask questions of the project team.

For information on where and when information sessions are being held visit: westernrenewableslink.com.au/ees

Need a copy of the EES?

For those who may have accessibility issues, or where electronic options are impracticable, hard copies of some documents or a USB may be requested by contacting 1800 WRL WRL (1800 975 975) or info@westernrenewableslink.com.au

During the exhibition period, the full EES and the draft PSA will be available in hard copy at the public locations listed on this page. You can also pick up a summary report or a USB copy of all documents from any of these locations.

Please note, the EES is made up of many large documents, and we encourage the use of electronic versions where possible.

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