

Transport and Aviation

The Environment Effects Statement (EES) and the draft Planning Scheme Amendment for the Western Renewables Link are now available for public comment. Transport and aviation are key topics covered in the EES.



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 impacts on **transport and aviation** 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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Transport

AusNet is committed to minimising impacts on roads during the construction and operation of Western Renewables Link.

What was investigated?

Transport specialists assessed potential impacts on the transport network and identified measures to avoid, minimise or manage potential impacts during construction, operation and decommissioning stages of the project.

Investigations included:

- a desktop review to determine the existing transport conditions including existing road uses, pavement conditions and other relevant features (e.g., major culverts, bridges, overpasses, low-clearance locations, infrastructure with load limits and other restrictions)
- a review of public transport infrastructure (i.e. trains, public bus and school bus routes) and active transport infrastructure within the area
- field investigations and targeted site inspections and walkovers to inform site characteristics such as peak period traffic performance, road pavement condition (e.g sealed, unsealed and partially sealed), road geometry, sight lines, access configurations to laydown areas and construction sites, vegetation encroachments, bus stop infrastructure, school bus routes, load limits, safety issues, culturally significant features, major bridges / culverts, and oversized and over-mass routes.

Managing potential impacts

The transport assessment found that moving materials, equipment, and workers during construction will increase road traffic. This increase will be most noticeable on major roads, with most project traffic coming from the Port of Melbourne and travelling west on the Western Freeway and Calder Freeway to the project.

Current traffic levels were compared with the expected peak traffic during construction. The assessment showed that most roads along the construction route will not experience significant changes in performance or major traffic congestion. The assessment identified that there may be an impact on road safety during construction, especially from heavy vehicles interacting with public transport, schools, school bus routes, and walking and cycling paths. However, this will be infrequent and minimal. Local road conditions could also be impacted due to the increase in construction vehicles, but the project has committed to monitoring and fixing local roads as required.



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 Transport in **EES Chapter 20** and **Technical Report P**, and base submissions on the material provided there.



Examples of how we plan to manage potential impacts:



Developing traffic management plans with alternative routes and heavy vehicle restrictions



Conducting regular safety audits



Performing dilapidation surveys of councilmanaged roads to be used during construction



Implementing road monitoring to track the condition of the local roads



Restoring councilmanaged roads used during construction



Aviation

The project's potential effects on aviation values were investigated, with a focus on certified and uncertified aerodromes and aviation safety in the region.

What was investigated?

The study area includes four certified airports, including Melbourne Airport, and ten uncertified aerodromes, including Melton Aerodrome. It also captured various aviation facilities and services that support businesses, farming, education and training, emergency services, and recreational activities.

An aviation specialist assessed impacts of the project on aviation and measures to avoid, minimise or manage potential impacts to aviation through all phases of the project. A desktop assessment and consultation with relevant authorities and stakeholders was undertaken to determine aviation conditions and activities in the area including certified aerodromes, uncertified aerodromes including helicopter landing areas and aircraft landing areas, air navigation and air traffic management services, transiting air routes, authorised low flying activities and other aviation activities.

Project hazards such as the presence of transmission towers and lines and construction activities that could potentially impact on existing aviation conditions and activities were assessed for all project phases.

Managing potential impacts

Construction could potentially affect operations at Melton Aerodrome and Melbourne Airport. Towers near these locations have been designed to be shorter to maintain safe aircraft operations and protect relevant airspace. During construction, the use of cranes and helicopters to build towers and string overhead conductors may create additional challenges for pilots. These activities will require consultation with any aerodromes in proximity regarding affected operations and necessary approvals. Airservices Australia must also be kept informed about the project so they can alert pilots to any potential hazards.

While some flight adjustments might be needed, the new towers will not prevent aircraft from operating, leading to minor to negligible impacts from the project. ß

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 Aviation in **EES Chapter 16** and **Technical Report J**, and base submissions on the material provided there.



Examples of how we plan to manage potential impacts:



Implementing design considerations for towers in protected airspace and in close proximity to the project



Notifying Airservices Australia about project details



Installing obstacle markings near Melton Aerodrome to increase visibility



Consulting with relevant aerodrome operators during construction stage



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 <u>engage.vic.gov.au/Western-</u> <u>Renewables-Link-IAC</u>. 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



More information

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

Contact us

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