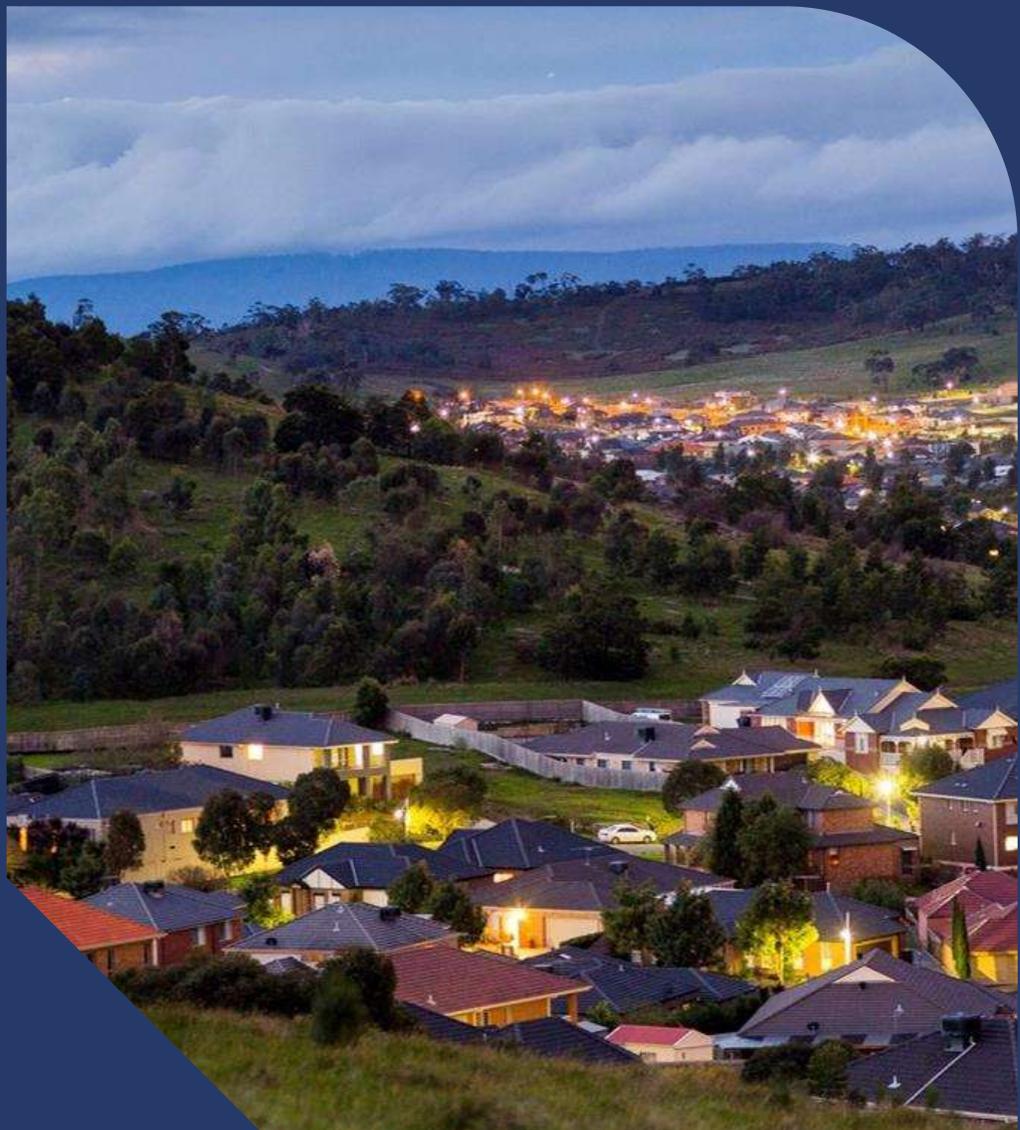


## Sydenham Terminal Station Rebuild

### Planning Assessment Report

Monday, 22 July 2024

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# Executive Summary

AusNet Transmission Group Pty Ltd (AusNet) is the owner and operator of the Sydenham Terminal Station (SYTS) at 67 Victoria Road, Plumpton within the City of Melton. The SYTS is part of the main 500kV transmission network, which provides major transmission network services and power to Melbourne. The existing terminal station is a key connection between western Victoria to Melbourne, and beyond to South Australia via the Heywood Terminal Station.

The SYTS 500kV outdoor Gas Insulated Switchgear equipment (GIS) is approaching its end of life and must be replaced as soon as possible. The 500kV GIS is integral to the existing terminal station as it performs the function of switching, measuring and distributing electrical energy. Therefore the timely replacement of the switchgear is key to ensuring the continued supply of electricity to consumers across metropolitan Melbourne, the wider state of Victoria and more broadly as part of the National Energy Market.

The works required to replace 500kV GIS assets and rebuild the SYTS are known as the Sydenham Terminal Station Rebuild Project (the Project) which needs to commence construction in early 2025 to manage this.

Most of the works for the Project are located on land owned by AusNet in the Special Use Zone schedule 3 (SUZ3) that relates to terminal stations. Additional works, for transmission line connection and access road upgrades is required on land located either side of the terminal station, included in the Green Wedge Zone (GWZ).

As the owner and operator of the SYTS, AusNet is seeking a planning permit in accordance with the Melton Planning Scheme for the use and development of a utility installation. AusNet is seeking consideration of the planning permit application pursuant to Clause 53.22 of the Victoria Planning Provisions (VPP) 'Significant Economic Development'.

Clause 53.22 of the VPPs applies to an application under any provision of the Melton Planning Scheme to seek a planning permit for the use and development of a utility installation (other than data centre) used to transmit or distribute electricity or store electricity if the installed capacity is 1 megawatt or greater. In accordance with Clause 53.22-4, this application would be exempt from the decision requirements of sections 64(1), (2) and (3), and the review rights of sections 82(1) of the *Planning and Environment Act 1987*(Vic).

If approved, the planning permit will facilitate the rebuild of an important utility asset that contributes to facilitating and securing more sustainable, efficient, reliable, affordable energy system connections assets in future. This, in turn, will bring economic benefits to Victoria and will enable continued use of the energy-consumptive services and facilities that support a pleasant, efficient and safe working, living and recreational environment for all Victorians and visitors to Victoria.

The proposed land use and development have been assessed as resulting in an appropriate planning outcome in the context of the Victoria Planning Provisions' integrated Planning Policy Framework, the requirements of the SUZ3 and GWZ, and have been assessed as not resulting in any adverse impacts to the environment, human health and amenity. Accordingly, this report concludes that the proposal represents an appropriate planning outcome based on a balanced assessment of the policy objectives of the Melton Planning Scheme and will ultimately result in a net community benefit and a sustainable development outcome for the benefit of present and future generations.

# 1. Introduction

AusNet Transmission Group Pty Ltd (AusNet) is the owner and operator of the Sydenham Terminal Station (SYTS) at 67 Victoria Road, Plumpton within the City of Melton. The SYTS is part of the main 500kV transmission network, which provides major transmission network services and power to Melbourne. The existing terminal station is a key connection between western Victoria to Melbourne and beyond to South Australia via the Heywood Terminal Station.

The SYTS 500kV outdoor Gas Insulated Switchgear equipment (GIS) is approaching its end of life and must be replaced as soon as possible. The 500kV GIS is integral to the existing terminal station as it performs the function of switching, measuring and distributing electrical energy.

The SYTS needs to be rebuilt, and operational by 2026, to effectively manage this. To achieve this target in-service date, planning approval is required to facilitate the commencement of construction in early 2025. The construction of the new SYTS is estimated to take 18 months, followed by a 3-month diversion process to transfer existing transmission lines from the old to the new infrastructure.

AusNet is seeking approval for the Project via a planning permit pursuant to Part 4 of the *Planning and Environment Act 1987* (Vic) (PE Act), in accordance with the provisions of the Melton Planning Scheme. Specifically, AusNet is seeking consideration of the planning permit application pursuant to Clause 53.22 of the Victoria Planning Provisions (VPP) 'Significant Economic Development', which is intended to accelerate decision-making on projects that would make a significant contribution to Victoria's economy and provide substantial public benefit. Clause 53.22 of the VPPs applies to an application under any provision of the Melton Planning Scheme to seek a planning permit for the use and development of a utility installation (other than data centre) used to transmit or distribute electricity or store electricity if the installed capacity is 1 megawatt or greater. In accordance with Clause 53.22-4, this application would be exempt from the decision requirements of sections 64(1), (2) and (3), and the review rights of sections 82(1) of the *Planning and Environment Act 1987* (Vic).

The majority of the works for the Project are located on land owned by AusNet zoned Special Use Zone Schedule 3 (SUZ3) in the Melton Planning Scheme, a schedule relating to terminal stations. Additional works, for transmission line connection and access road upgrades are required on land located either side of the terminal station zoned Green Wedge Zone (GWZ).

Site investigations have been undertaken for ecology and cultural heritage on the land that will be developed for the Project which found that the land is a highly disturbed and modified landscape, resulting from both the historical agricultural (grazing and cropping) land use prior to the existing terminal station's development and the more recent (post 1980's) development of the existing terminal station. The findings of these investigations, combined with other desktop studies including transport, visual impact, noise, bushfire and aviation, confirm that the Project does not have the potential to cause significant environmental impacts.

Accordingly, based on an assessment undertaken by Jacobs, AusNet's environmental consultant for the Project, which assessed the proposal against the referral criteria as outlined in the *Ministerial Guidelines for Assessment of Environmental Effects under the Environment Effects Act 1978* (Vic), the works do not warrant assessment under the *Environment Effects Act 1978* (Vic) and approval can be considered via an application for a planning permit under Part 4 of the PE Act.

## 2. Subject Site and Surrounds

### 2.1. Subject Site

The subject site is located on the northern edge of Sydenham, on the north western peri-urban edge of Melbourne in the City of Melton. The subject site comprises the following two parcels of land:

- Lot 1 on Title Plan 78358, known as 67 Victoria Road, Plumpton, a parcel of 23.9 hectares of land currently zoned SUZ3 (referred to in this report as the SUZ3 lot) and used and developed for the existing Sydenham Terminal Station. The lot also includes an access road to Victoria Road.
- (Part) Lot 1 on Plan of Subdivision 711917E, known as 1 Holden Road, Plumpton, a parcel of 58.3 hectares of land currently zoned GWZ and surrounding the existing Sydenham Terminal Station on its eastern, western and northern sides (and referred to in this report as the GWZ parcel). This land is partly used and developed for the existing high voltage transmission lines with the terminal station. The second part of this lot is located 370 metres to the north and is separated from it by another parcel.

Both properties exist as a highly disturbed and modified landscape, resulting from both the historical agricultural (grazing and cropping) land use (prior to the existing terminal station's development) and the post 1980's development of the existing terminal station. The subject site undulates gently and generally falls towards the north-east, with a fall across the site from south-west to north-east of approximately 25 metres over a distance of approximately one kilometre.

The SUZ3 lot contains the existing terminal station, located centrally in its southern half, as depicted in Figure 1. The most significant features of this are the switchyard of gas insulated switchgears, arranged in parallel rows and with a maximum height of approximately 27 metres above natural ground level, and the communications tower, a lattice mast with a height of 65.6 metres above natural ground level. The lot is accessed via an unsealed road contained entirely on title, leading east and north from the main part of the lot, to connect to Victoria Road adjacent to the Sunbury railway line. Also on the SUZ3 lot are five existing lattice type transmission towers with heights of up to 46.7m and a small manmade dam in its south-western corner. The lot is ringed for most of its perimeter with planted vegetation, which has a height of approximately 15 metres above ground level.

The GWZ parcel includes:

- 500kV high-voltage transmission lines, which extend east and west from the terminal station with a lattice tower height of approximately 50 metres.
- the small 22 kV local electricity distribution ("zone") substation on the eastern edge of the GWZ parcel, associated with local electricity distribution assets owned and operated by Jemena.

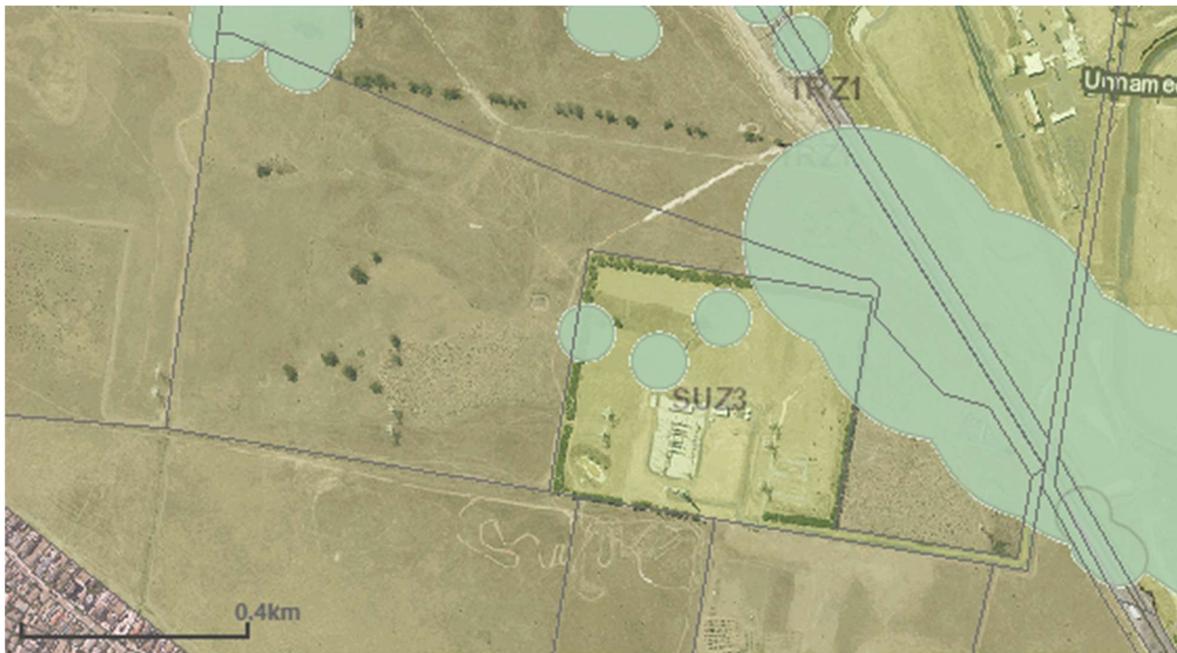
The SUZ3 lot is encumbered by two easements affecting the eastern part of the lot over the access road, for carriageway and powerline purposes. The GWZ parcel is encumbered by an easement for the high-voltage powerlines extending east and west from the existing terminal station. The GWZ parcel also has two caveats on title, one of which relates to the zone substation located on the eastern edge of this parcel, and the other relates to the declaration of a Trust pertaining to parties that have an interest in the land with the registered owners of the land.

Beyond the subject site, road improvement works are also proposed as part of the Project along Victoria Road and at the intersection of Victoria Road and Calder Park Drive intersection to the southeast. However, these works do not require planning approval as they constitute 'roadworks' which are exempt from requiring a planning permit pursuant to Clause 62.02-2 of the Melton Planning Scheme, and do not require the removal of native vegetation. Accordingly, they do not form part of this application.



**Figure 1: Existing conditions on the Subject site with easements shown in green (source: Existing Conditions Plan Rev. D, Ausnet, 20/05/2024)**

Both parcels are located partially within an area of cultural heritage sensitivity (CHS) as legislated under the *Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006* (Vic). Pursuant to Regulation 46 of the *Aboriginal Heritage Regulations 2018* (Vic), the Project constitutes a high impact activity, as it requires planning permission to be granted for a land use change. A Cultural Heritage Management Plan (CHMP) no. 19659 was approved by the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung Cultural Heritage Aboriginal Corporation on 16 May 2024, as a prerequisite step for being able to issue a planning permit for the Project. The CHMP contains measures to ensure that cultural heritage values are appropriately considered prior to any new land use and development of the subject site.



**Figure 2: Location of areas of legislated Cultural Heritage Sensitivity on the subject site (source: VicPlan 2024)**

## 2.2. Surrounds

The subject site is located within one of Melbourne's planned green wedges in the peri-urban region north-west of Sydenham. The surrounding land forms part of Melbourne's Western Volcanic Plains, and the landscape is generally flat with minor undulation. The site is abutted by the following land uses and features.

### South

To the south of the subject site is cleared pasture, also zoned GWZ. The closest dwelling to the terminal station in this direction is the dwelling at 5 Glencapel Court Hillside, located 356m to the south on a large parcel within the GWZ, as measured from the closest new transmission tower (KTS 102B, refer Figure 3) to the verandah on the northern side of the dwelling. Further to the south is conventional -density residential development within the Urban Growth Boundary, in the Melbourne suburb of Hillside.

### East

To the east of the subject site is a strip of cleared land forming part of the parcel to the north, beyond which is the Sunbury railway line, zoned Transport 1 Zone, and forming the border between the City of Melton and City of Brimbank. Further east of this is the Calder Park Raceway motorsports complex, zoned Special Use Zone 1. South of this a level crossing removal project which is under development where Calder Park Drive crosses the railway line.

### North

To the north of the subject site is another lot containing cleared pasture, also zoned GWZ. As with the subject site, this parcel is affected by Schedule 2 of the Specific Controls Overlay (SCO2) which relates to the development on this parcel of the Calder Park Train Stabling and Maintenance Yards, the first part of which already occupies the eastern part of this parcel. Further north is the second land parcel that makes up Lot 1 on Plan of Subdivision 711917E, which is occupied by a single dwelling and outbuildings on a large ex-urban parcel fronting Holden Road. This dwelling's southern wing has a setback of approximately 1020 metres from the northern-western corner of the SUZ3 lot at the subject site.

### West

To the west of the subject site is cleared pasture, also zoned GWZ. The land immediately to the west of the subject site is currently being developed as the Melbourne Renewable Energy Hub (MREH), a 1.6 GWh energy storage facility, which will be set back approximately 100m from the subject site's (i.e. GWZ parcel's) western boundary. Transmission lines are proposed to cross this boundary to link it with the Sydenham Terminal Station.

### 3. Proposal

To facilitate the Project, planning permission is sought for the use and development of the subject site for a utility installation.

The buildings and works that are proposed as part of the Project at the subject site are shown on the development plans accompanying this planning permit application. These buildings and works include the following (broken down into the two different parcels to assist with the consideration against the planning controls in the following section).

Overview of buildings and works at 67 Victoria Road, Plumpton (SUZ3 lot):

- Installation of a new outdoor Air Insulated Switchgear (AIS) 500 kV switchyard to replace the existing outdoor GIS switchyard at SYTS and associated infrastructure.
- Temporary hardstand areas for terminal station, towers and transmission line construction.
- Installation of a new control room, a battery room (which provides back up power supply to the station secondary systems in an event of main power supply failure) and an amenity room and associated infrastructure.
- Installation of five (5) transmission line terminal towers within the SYTS land to transfer and re-connect five (5) existing 500kV transmission lines. The maximum height of the towers will be 52.5m above natural ground level.
- Installation of a temporary monopole to connect the existing GIS to the new AIS. This will be removed following the final diversion of all the transmission lines.
- Removal of existing planted vegetation (noting there is no planning permit required for the removal).
- Installation of a temporary pole in the eastern extent of the switchyard land to facilitate connection of the rebuilt station to the existing station until completion of the five (5) transmission line cutover.
- Benching and earthworks to allow for the new hardstand.
  - Construction of heavy vehicle access tracks

Overview of buildings and works at 1 Holden Road, Plumpton (GWZ parcel):

- Installation of three (3) new transmission line towers to the east of the existing SYTS land with accompanying temporary hardstand areas for towers and transmission line construction. The maximum height of the transmission towers will 46.5 metres above natural ground level.
- Diversion of the existing five (5) 500kV overhead transmission lines.
- Some steel member replacement works and foundation strengthening works to the two (2) existing towers to the west of the existing SYTS land.
- Installation of underground communication conduits between three (3) new transmission line towers to the east of the existing SYTS and the new control building.
  - Construction of heavy vehicle access tracks.

Following completion of the works and commissioning of the new switchyard, decommissioning works will be undertaken in the existing SYTS land and it will be rehabilitated to its former condition: The following areas will be decommissioned and rehabilitated:

- GIS switchyard.
- Standby generator building.
- Five transmission towers and associated lines sections.
- Control room building.
- Storage building.

All of these works can be seen in Figure 3. No native vegetation removal is required for these works (refer to Section 5.4.2)

It is noted that there is further development associated with the Project that does not trigger a requirement for a planning permit, including works associated with re-routing 22kV powerlines and rehabilitation works along the existing access road and Victoria Road.

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**Figure 3 Proposed SYTS Rebuild Project Works (source: Proposed Site Plan Rev. A12, Ausnet, 19/07/2024)**

As can be seen in the Site Plan at Figure 3, the Project works are all located further north than the existing terminal station infrastructure, providing greater separation to the residentially zoned land located approximately 350 metres from the southern site boundary.

The Project features the following minimum setbacks from the subject site's boundaries.

- From the northern boundary:
  - Minimum 74m setback from northern boundary of GWZ parcel to the north-eastern corner of the proposed expanded extent of security fencing associated with the new switchyard, as dimensioned in Figure 3.
  - Minimum 153m setback from northern boundary of GWZ parcel to transmission tower SMTS2 108A as dimensioned in Figure 3.
  - Minimum 170m setback from northern boundary of GWZ parcel to north-easternmost infrastructure in switchyard as dimensioned in Figure 3.
- From the eastern boundary:
  - Minimum 260m setback from eastern boundary of GWZ parcel to transmission tower SMTS2 107A as dimensioned in Figure 3.
- From the southern boundary:
  - Minimum 54m setback from southern boundary of SUZ3 lot to transmission tower KTS 102B as dimensioned in Figure 3.
  - Approx 230m setback from southern boundary of SUZ3 lot to closest infrastructure in switchyard
- From the western boundary:
  - Minimum 544m setback from western boundary of GWZ parcel to transmission tower MLTS2 1A.

The Project features the following minimum setbacks from nearby sensitive receivers:

- Transmission towers:
  - 340m setback from land zoned GRZ1 at 15 Wendover Crescent (on which a dwelling is constructed) to transmission tower KTS 102B as dimensioned in Figure 3.
  - 356m setback from northern verandah of dwelling in GWZ at 5 Glencapel Ct to transmission tower KTS 102B as dimensioned in Figure 3.
- Switchyard:
  - Approx 500m setback from northern verandah of dwelling in GWZ at 5 Glencapel Ct to south-easternmost infrastructure in switchyard.
  - Approx 1.1km setback from southern wing of dwelling at 1 Holden Rd to north-westernmost infrastructure in switchyard.

## 4. Victoria Planning Provisions

The proposal is subject to the policies and provisions of the Melton Planning Scheme (the Planning Scheme). Relevant provisions of the Planning Scheme are outlined in the following sections.

### 4.1. Municipal Planning Strategy

**Clause 02.02 'Vision'** states that Melton City Council's vision is to, "create a vibrant, safe and liveable City accessible to all". Council's strategy to achieve this vision includes seeking land use and development outcomes that allow for sustainable, strategic and fair growth and development in addition to promoting greater employment.

**Clause 02.03-2 'Environmental and landscape values'** seeks to protect and enhance biodiversity values, maintain the character of significant and key landscape features, manage visual impact of development and provide a sensitive interface with waterways and landscape and conservation areas through siting and design.

**Clause 02.03-3 'Environmental risks and amenity'** seeks to address climate change, bushfire risk and floodplain management. This clause seeks to (as relevant):

- plan for climate change by reducing greenhouse gas emissions,
- plan for bushfire by minimising the risk to life and property from bushfire.

**Clause 02.03-4 'Natural resource management'** seeks to plan for agriculture by (amongst other things) protecting land that has ongoing capacity for sustainable agriculture.

**Clause 02.03-7 'Economic development'** recognises the need for local job creation to help the City prosper and that local economic opportunities can be expanded by investment in major infrastructure.

**Clause 02.03-8 'Transport'** seeks to manage sensitive land uses and development affected by the Melbourne Airport Environs Overlays to protect airport operations and maintain community amenity.

**Clause 02.03-9 'Infrastructure'** recognises that the provision of major infrastructure and reticulated infrastructure is a considerable public investment.

### 4.2. Planning Policy Framework

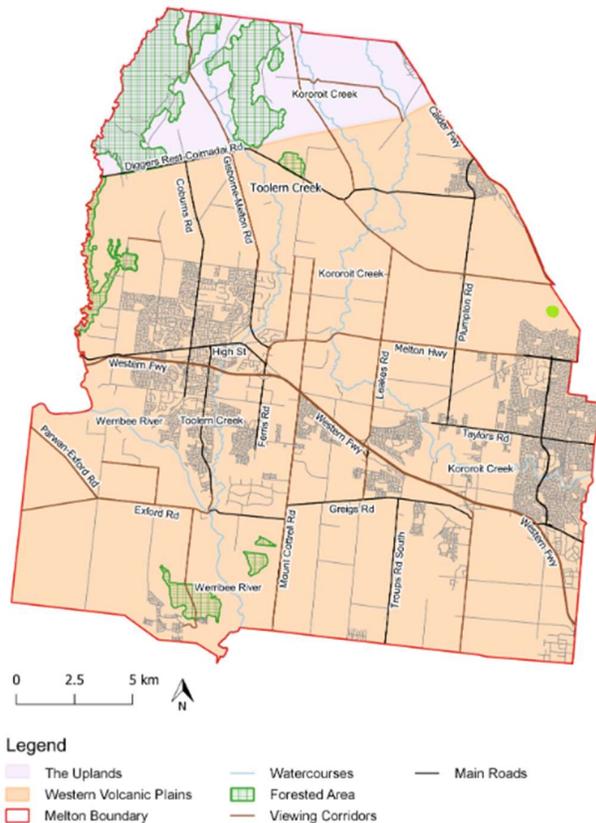
**Clause 11.01-1S 'Settlement'** seeks to deliver a network of settlements with choice and opportunity to facilitate the sustainable growth and development of the State.

**Clause 11.01-1R 'Green wedges – Metropolitan Melbourne'** seeks to protect the green wedges of Metropolitan Melbourne from inappropriate development. Strategies include:

- supporting development in the green wedge that proves for environmental, economic and social benefits
- planning and protecting major state infrastructure and resource assets
- providing opportunities for renewable energy generation

**Clause 12.01-1S 'Protection of biodiversity'** and **Clause 12.01-1L 'Protection of biodiversity'** seeks to protect and enhance Victoria's biodiversity. Strategies include avoiding impacts of land use and development on important areas of biodiversity.

**Clause 12.05-2L 'Rural landscape character'** is a policy that applies to an application for development on land shown on the Significant Landscape Features Plan to this clause and that is within the GWZ (amongst other areas). The subject site is located in the Western Volcanic Plains area shown on the plan (Figure 4). The subject site is set back approximately 1.4km to the south from the viewing corridor along Holden Road and 1.7km to the north from the viewing corridor along Melton Highway.



**Figure 4: Location of subject site (green dot) relative to key viewing corridors in Significant landscape features plan of Clause 12.05-2L Rural landscape character of the Melton Planning Scheme**

This clause seeks to ensure that development in rural areas and viewing corridors is sympathetic to the rural landscape character and significant landscape features of the area. Siting strategies include developing away from landscape features and setting development back from viewing corridors and roads to minimise visual impact. Design strategies aim to achieve development that is complementary to the landscape, responsive to climatic conditions, and does not visually overwhelm the landscape setting.

**Clause 13.02-1S 'Bushfire planning'** applies to land in a designated Bushfire Prone Area, which includes the subject site. These clauses prioritise the protection of human life to strengthen the resilience of settlements and communities to bushfire. Clause 13.02 includes a section entitled 'Use and development control in a bushfire prone area' which lists a series of uses and development where bushfire risk should be considered highlighting that utility installation is not specified in the list.

**Clause 13.04-1S 'Contaminated and potentially contaminated land'** seeks to ensure that such land is used and developed safely by ensuring a proposed use is suitable and remediation is facilitated where required.

**Clause 13.05-1S 'Noise management'** seeks to assist with managing the noise effects on sensitive land uses. Strategies include ensuring that amenity and human health are not adversely impacted by noise emissions.

**Clause 13.06-1S 'Air quality management'** seeks to ensure that land use planning and transport infrastructure provision contribute to improved air quality. Strategies include ensuring suitable separation between air polluting uses and sensitive uses, where possible.

**Clause 13.07-1S 'Land use compatibility'** seeks to protect community amenity, human health and safety while facilitating appropriate infrastructure or other uses with potential adverse off-site impacts. Strategies include:

- Ensure that use or development of land is compatible with adjoining and nearby land uses.
- Avoid or otherwise minimise adverse off-site impacts from commercial, industrial and other uses through land use separation, siting, building design and operational measures.
- Protect commercial, industrial and other employment generating uses from encroachment by use or development that would compromise the ability of those uses to function safely and effectively.

**Clause 14.01-1R 'Protection of agricultural land – Metropolitan Melbourne'** seeks to avoid the permanent loss of agricultural land by protecting it in Metropolitan Melbourne's green wedges and peri-urban areas. **Clause 14.01-1L 'Protection of agricultural land'** includes strategies such as preserving areas of broad acre farming and avoiding subdivisions that lead to land fragmentation.

**Clause 14.02-2S 'Water quality'** seeks to protect water quality strategies include siting and managing land use activities in a way that minimises contaminated runoff or wastes to waterways and discourage land use activities incompatible with soil and water conditions and cannot be sustainably managed.

**Clause 15.03-2S 'Aboriginal cultural heritage'** seeks to protect and conserve places of Aboriginal cultural heritage significance. Strategies include identifying, assessing and documenting places of Aboriginal cultural heritage significance, in consultation with relevant Registered Aboriginal Parties.

**Clause 19.01-1S 'Energy supply'** seeks to facilitate appropriate development of energy supply infrastructure. Strategies include:

- *Support the development of energy generation, storage, transmission, and distribution infrastructure to transition to a low-carbon economy.*
- *Develop appropriate infrastructure to meet community demand for energy services.*
- *Ensure energy generation, storage, transmission and distribution infrastructure and projects are resilient to the impacts of climate change.*
- *Facilitate the production and distribution of zero emission gases and fuels.*
- *Support energy infrastructure projects in locations that minimise land use conflicts and that take advantage of existing resources and infrastructure networks.*
- *Facilitate energy infrastructure projects that help diversify local economies and improve sustainability and social outcomes.*
- *Facilitate renewable energy generation and storage to meet on-site energy needs.*

**Clause 19.01-2S 'Renewable energy'** seeks to support the provision and use of renewable energy while ensuring that appropriate siting and design considerations are met.

## 4.3. Policy Documents

The following documents are policy documents in the Planning Scheme and are of most relevance to the Project.

### 4.3.1. Plan Melbourne

*Plan Melbourne 2017-2050* (DELWP, 2017) is the long-term metropolitan planning strategy to guide the growth and future shape of Melbourne over the next 30 years and is a Background Document in the Melton Planning Scheme. The plan aims to manage Melbourne's growth by integrating land use, infrastructure and transport planning, setting out strategies and policies to support jobs and growth while developing Melbourne's liveability and sustainability. In 2019, *Plan Melbourne 2017 – 2050: Addendum 2019* was released to provide an update on Melbourne's projected population, housing and employment growth, and supersedes the projections set out in Plan Melbourne.

### 4.3.2. City of Melton - Significant Landscape Features Strategy

The *City of Melton - Significant Landscape Features Strategy* (Planisphere 2016) is a Background Document in the Melton Planning Scheme. Pursuant to this Strategy, the subject site is located within the part of the municipality whose landscape character is classified as "Western Volcanic Plains". This landscape character is described in the document as including the following key characteristics, that are also found within the immediate surrounds of the subject site:

- Flat to undulating cleared agricultural plains.
- Extensive areas of grasslands, which are an intrinsic aspect of the Volcanic Plains character, and some of which have high environmental value.
- Largely underdeveloped character.
- Mostly sparse tree cover, with occasional trees scattered across paddocks.
- Rich, red volcanic soils.
- Exotic shelterbelts.

## 4.4. Zones

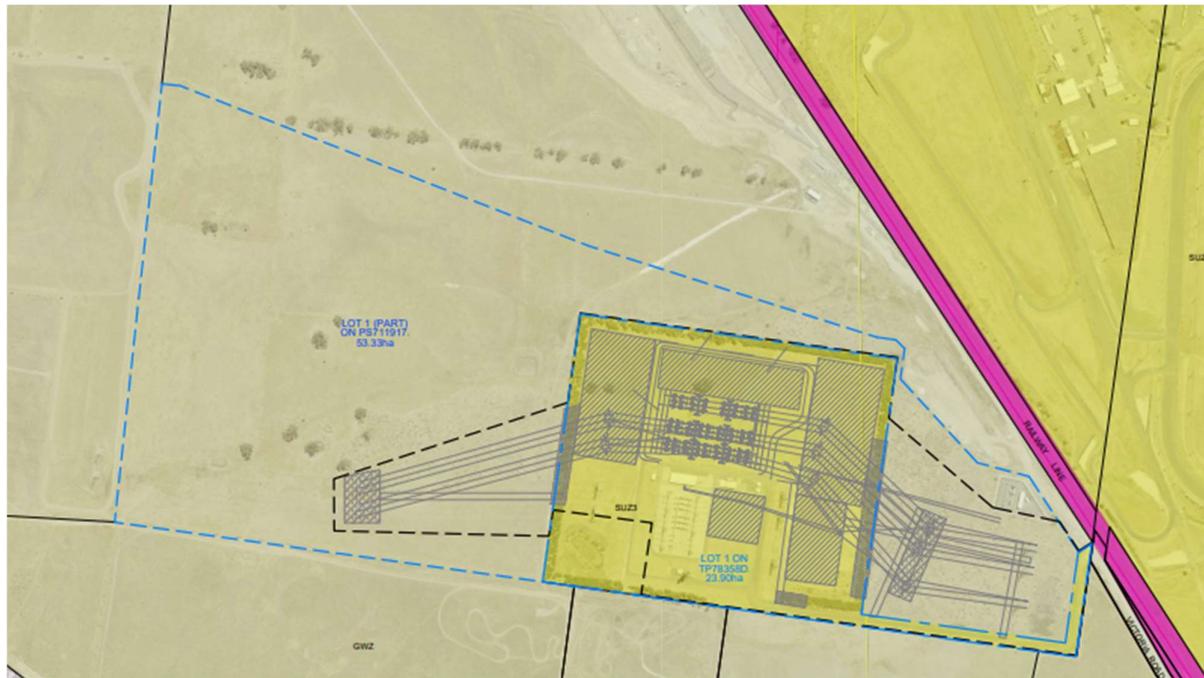
### 4.4.1. SUZ3 - 'Terminal Stations'

The existing SYTS is located on the land described as 67 Victoria Road, Plumpton. As previously discussed, this lot, also known as Lot 1 on Title Plan 78358, is subject to the SUZ3 of the Melton Planning Scheme as shown on Figure 5. The purpose of the SUZ3 is:

- To implement the Municipal Planning Strategy, the Planning Policy Framework and local planning policies.
- To provide for areas in private ownership to be used for the purposes of essential service utility installations.
- To ensure that the development of these facilities takes place in an orderly and proper manner and does not cause a loss of amenity to the surrounding neighbourhood.

Pursuant to Clause 37.01-1 a permit is required for any use in Section 2 of the schedule to the zone, or any other use not in Section 1 or 3 of the schedule to the zone. The table of uses included in Clause 1.0 of the SUZ3 lists a utility installation as a Section 1 use (permit not required) on the condition that the use is in accordance with an agreed Development Plan required by Sub-Clause 4.0. If there is no agreed Development Plan then the use becomes a Section 2 use (i.e. a permit is required). There is no existing Development Plan for the land.

It is considered that existing use rights apply to the SUZ3 lot given its use since the 1980s as a terminal station. However, a use permit is sought due to the potential need for a use permit under the GWZ. Pursuant to Clause 37.01-4 of the SUZ, a permit is required to construct a building or to construct or carry out works unless the schedule to the zone specifies otherwise. Clause 4.0 of the Schedule does not specify any requirements for buildings and works, therefore a permit is required for buildings and works under the existing SUZ3.



**Figure 5 - The parcels forming the subject site and their respective zoning under the Melton Planning Scheme (Source: VicPlan)**

Clause 6.0 of the SUZ3 addresses the Development Plan referenced in the Table of uses at Clause 1.0 and states that, "A Development Plan is required to be formulated in consultation with responsible authorities and include the following details and considerations:

- The layout and use of existing and proposed buildings and works, driveways, car parking and loading areas;
- Construction details of all drainage works, site access arrangements, vehicle parking and loading areas;
- Details of existing and proposed landscaping, including perimeter landscaping treatments;
- The appearance and bulk of buildings having regard to the adjoining zones, especially the relationship with residential areas; and
- The effect of the proposed buildings and works on the amenity of the neighbourhood, including the effects of noise, lighting, overshadowing and privacy".

As noted previously, there is no Development Plan for the SUZ3 lot, however, the information requirements for the Development Plan and the issues to be addressed have been considered in preparing this application.

#### 4.4.2. GWZ

The remaining part of the subject site is known as Lot 1 (Part) on Plan of Subdivision 711917. This land is subject to Clause 35.04 (GWZ) of the Planning Scheme as shown on Figure 5.

This zone seeks:

- *To implement the Municipal Planning Strategy and the Planning Policy Framework.*
- *To provide for the use of land for agriculture.*
- *To recognise, protect and conserve green wedge land for its agricultural, environmental, historic, landscape, recreational and tourism opportunities, and mineral and stone resources.*
- *To encourage use and development that is consistent with sustainable land management practices.*
- *To encourage sustainable farming activities and provide opportunity for a variety of productive agricultural uses.*
- *To protect, conserve and enhance the cultural heritage significance and the character of open rural and scenic non-urban landscapes.*
- *To protect and enhance the biodiversity of the area.*

In accordance Clause 35.04-1, a planning permit is required to use land for a utility installation in the GWZ. However, as discussed in relation to the SUZ3 lot, it could potentially be considered that the GWZ parcel has existing use rights due to the long term presence of the existing transmission lines on the site. Again, as per the SUZ3 lot discussion, taking a cautionary approach a use permit is still being sought.

In accordance with Clause 35.04-2, a permit is also required to:

- construct or carry out buildings or works associated with a use in Section 2 of Clause 35.04-1
- construct a building which is within 5 metres of a boundary.

Therefore, in accordance with Clause 35.04, a planning permit is sought for use of land for a utility installation and to carry out buildings and works in the GWZ, including within 5 metres of a lot boundary.

## 4.5. Overlays

### 4.5.1. Melbourne Airport Environs Overlay

The subject site is subject to Schedule 1 and Schedule 2 of the Melbourne Airport Environs Overlay (MAEO) (Clause 45.08 of the Planning Scheme) as shown on Figure 6. The purpose of the MAEO is:

- *To implement the Municipal Planning Strategy and the Planning Policy Framework.*
- *To ensure that land use and development are compatible with the operation of Melbourne Airport in accordance with the relevant airport strategy or master plan and with safe air navigation for aircraft approaching and departing the airfield.*
- *To assist in shielding people from the impact of aircraft noise by requiring appropriate noise attenuation measures in dwellings and other noise sensitive buildings.*
- *To provide for appropriate levels of noise attenuation depending on the level of forecasted noise exposure.*



**Figure 6: The site is subject to Schedule 1 and Schedule 2 of the Melbourne Airport Environs Overlay (MAEO) (Source: VicPlan 2024)**

The purpose of Schedule 1 to the MAEO (MAEO1) is “To identify areas that are or will be subject to high levels of aircraft noise based on the 25 Australian Noise Exposure Forecast (ANEF) contour and to restrict use and development to that which is appropriate to that level of exposure”. Clause 1.0 of the MAEO1 requires a planning permit for use of land generally relating to sensitive uses or uses that increase the presence of sensitive receptors. Clause 2.0 requires a planning permit for buildings and works associated with the uses included in Clause 1.0.

The purpose of Schedule 2 to the MAEO (MAEO2) is “To identify areas that are or will be subject to moderate levels of aircraft noise based on the 20-25 Australian Noise Exposure Forecast (ANEF) contours and to limit use and development to that which is appropriate to that level of exposure.” Clauses 1.0 and 2.0 of MAEO2 include similar planning permit requirements for use and development.

Accordingly, MAEO1 and MAEO2 do not trigger the need for a planning permit for the use or development of a utility installation.

#### 4.5.2. Specific Controls Overlay – Schedule 2

The GWZ -parcel is subject to Schedule 2 of the Specific Controls Overlay (SCO2) as shown on Figure 7. In accordance with the schedule to Clause 45.12 of the Planning Scheme, SCO2 relates to an incorporated document titled 'Calder Park Train Stabling and Maintenance Yards Incorporated Document' (September 2012) (the Incorporated Document).



**Figure 7 The site is subject to Schedule 2 of the Specific Controls Overlay (SCO2) (source: VicPlan, 2024)**

The Incorporated Document is the approval document for the Train Stabling project and enables its development without the need to comply with other planning controls contained in the Planning Scheme. In this respect, the Incorporated Document doesn't limit what can happen on the subject site, or trigger permit requirements, as it simply provides approval for the Train Stabling project and an exemption from provisions of the Planning Scheme applying to the Train Stabling project.

It is noted that the Incorporated Document includes a plan showing two areas being the 'project area' and the 'wider project area' (refer Figure 8 following) and that the subject site only intersects with the 'wider project area' of SCO2. In accordance with the Incorporated Document, the use and development of SCO2 land in the 'wider project area' is limited to ancillary activities to the train stabling and maintenance yards, comprising:

- Constructing and using temporary access roads.
- Constructing and carrying out works to create bunds, mounds and landscaping and excavate land.
- Constructing fences. - Removing, destroying and lopping trees and removing vegetation.
- Relocating and installing drainage, services and utilities.

The Project would therefore not interfere with the core scope of the stabling yard project, which is in any case understood to be complete.

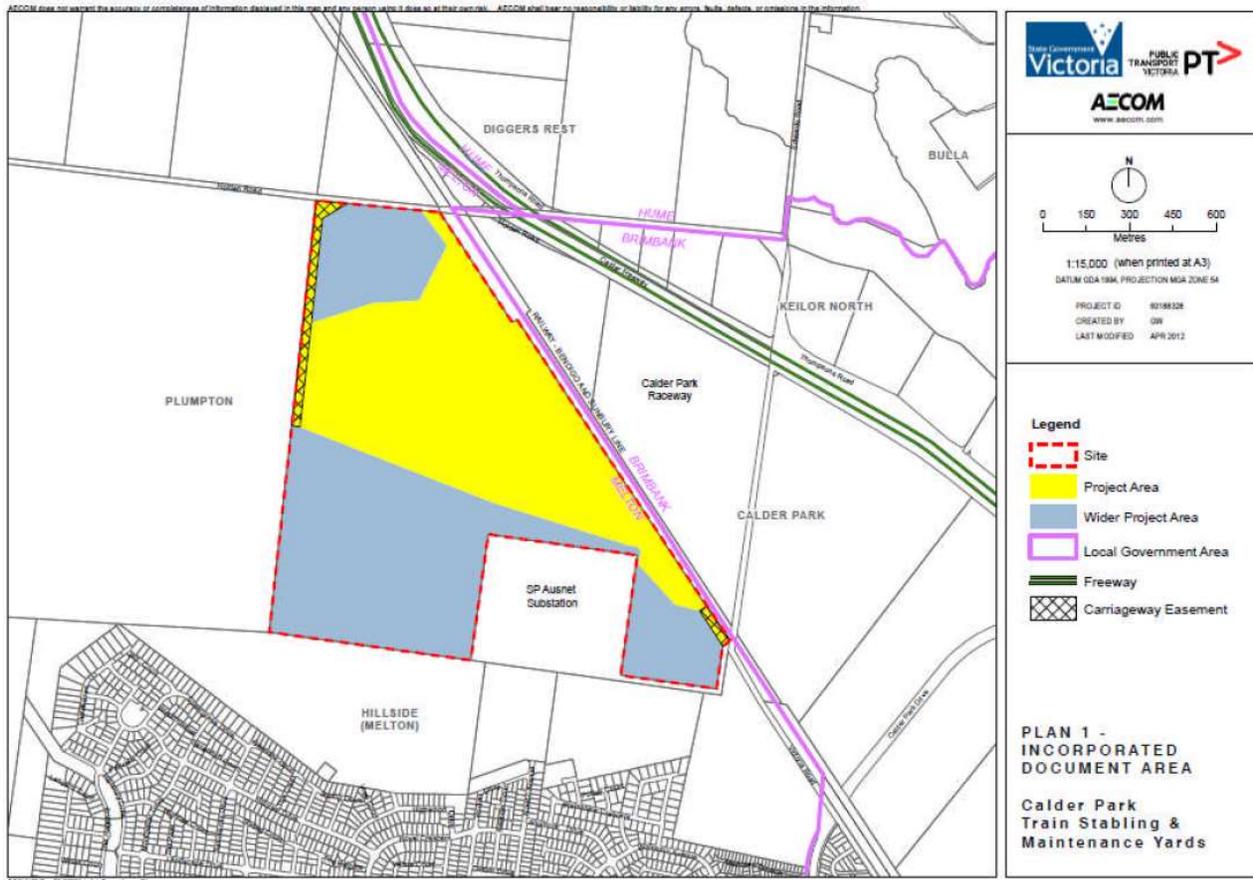


Figure 8 SCO2 Wider Project Area (source: VicPlan)

### 4.5.3. Specific Controls Overlay – Schedule 4

A small portion of the north of both parcels is also subject to Schedule 4 of the Specific Controls Overlay (SCO4) as shown on Figure 9. In accordance with the schedule to Clause 45.12 of the Planning Scheme, SCO4 relates to an incorporated document titled 'Melton Renewable Energy Hub (MREH) – 77-347 Holden Road and 67 & 77 Victoria Road, Plumpton Incorporated Document' (April 2021). As outlined in relation to the SCO2, the application of the SCO2 does not limit what can happen on the subject site, or trigger permit requirements, however it is in the interests of orderly planning that what is approved is consistent with the development that this control provides for.

To this end, it is noted that the works proposed as part of the Project do not overlap with the area affected by SCO4, and this is demonstrated on the submitted development plans.



Figure 9 Subject site on the context of Schedule 4 to the Specific Controls Overlay (SCO4) (source: VicPlan)

## 4.6. Particular, General and Operational Provisions

There are a range of Particular, General and Operational provisions that are of some relevance to the planning permit application for the Project, as discussed further below.

**Clause 52.06 'Car parking'** seeks to ensure that adequate car parking is provided for specific land uses. In the case of a utility installation land use, there is no car parking requirement specified. Accordingly, car parking is required to be provided to the satisfaction of the responsible authority in accordance with Clause 52.06-6. It is noted that there is ample space on site for parking during construction and operation. The SYTS will be operated remotely and will only require the occasional site visit for maintenance during operation.

**Clause 52.17 'Native Vegetation'** requires a planning permit to remove, destroy or lop native vegetation, including dead vegetation. The proposal includes only the removal of part of the existing planted vegetation around the boundary of the SUZ zoned land. Planted vegetation is one of the exemptions listed under Clause 52.17-7 where no planning permit is required for removal. Therefore, the requirements and provisions of Clause 52.17 do not apply.

**Clause 53.02 'Bushfire Planning'** seeks to ensure that the development of land prioritises the protection of human life and strengthens community resilience to bushfire, but only applies to an application under Clause 44.06 - Bushfire Management Overlay and is therefore not relevant to this application.

**Clause 53.22 'Significant Economic Development'** prioritises the assessment and delivery of projects that will make a significant contribution to Victoria's economy and provide substantial public benefit. Clause 53.22 allows an application for the use and development of a Utility Installation for the transmission or distribution of electricity to be assessed by the Department of Transport and Planning's Development Facilitation Program, and also allows the Responsible Authority to waive any information requirements it deems unnecessary. Applications assessed under this pathway are exempt from third party objector appeals.

AusNet is of the view that the application documents it has prepared adequately and comprehensively assess the expected and potential environmental impacts of the project. Nonetheless, if upon review of the application material the Responsible Authority considers that any information requirements remain unfulfilled by the application, AusNet requests that the Responsible Authority exercise its discretion to waive such information requirements. AusNet makes this request in recognition of the urgency of the Project commencing construction, but also in recognition of the fact that any omissions or shortcomings of development plans (as an example) can be rectified at the post-approval stage, pursuant to conditions of any permit issued.

**Clause 62.02-2 'Buildings and works not requiring a permit unless specifically required by the planning scheme'** exempt roadworks and other minor or temporary buildings or works from the requirement for a planning permit. Limited early works as discussed under Section 93 are proposed to be undertaken benefitting from these exemptions.

**Clause 62.02-3 'Vegetation removal'** exempts the removal of non-native vegetation (plants not indigenous to Victoria) from the requirement for a planning permit for works. 93

**Clause 62.05 'Demolition'** exempts the demolition or removal of buildings and works from the requirement for a planning permit unless specifically required by a relevant control of the planning scheme. No permit is required for demolition and decommissioning of buildings and works as part of the Project.

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**Clause 63.01 'Extent of Existing Use Rights'** deals with existing use rights, and states that an existing use right is established in relation to use of land if (inter alia):

- Proof of continuous use for 15 years is established under Clause 63.11.
- The use is a lawful continuation by a utility service provider or other private body of a use previously carried on by a Minister, government department or public authority, even where the continuation of the use is no longer for a public purpose.

**Clause 63.05 'Section 2 and 3 Uses'** states that a use in Section 2 or 3 of a zone for which an existing use right is established may continue conditionally.

**Clause 63.11 'Proof of Continuous Use'** states that if, in relation to an application or proceeding under the Act or this scheme, including an application for a certificate of compliance under Section 97N of the Act, the extent of any existing use right for a period in excess of 15 years is in question, it is sufficient proof of the establishment of the existing use right if the use has been carried out continuously for a period of 15 years at any time before the date of the application or proceeding.

**Clause 65.01 'Approval of an Application or Plan'** lists matters for the responsible authority to consider before deciding on an application or approval of a plan including:

- Matters relating to the environment (including but not limited to contaminated land, native vegetation, erosion and fire hazards).
- Matters relating to human health.
- Land use implications.
- The proposal's response to the Municipal Planning Strategy and the Planning Policy Framework.

**Clause 66.02 'Use and Development Referrals'** specifies the referral authorities for applications. This Clause assisted in identifying the relevant authorities to consult with for the **Project**. In accordance with Clause 66.02-4, the referral authority for a planning permit application "*to construct a building or construct or carry out works on land within 60 metres of a major electricity transmission line (220 Kilovolts or more) or an electricity transmission easement*") is 'the relevant electricity transmission authority' as determining referral authority. AusNet Transmission Group Pty Ltd, part of the Ausnet organisation that is the applicant for this permit application, is the relevant electricity transmission authority for the major electricity transmission lines and easements located within the subject site. Written advice from AusNet Transmission Group Pty Ltd will be sought by the Responsible Authority in the course of the application in accordance with Section 55(1) of the *Planning and Environment Act 1987* (Vic).

**Clause 66.05 'Notice of Permit Applications under State Standard Provisions'** specifies notice requirements for applications of a particular kind. This clause refers to the notice requirements included in Clause 45.08-6 for applications made to use or subdivide land, or to construct a building or construct or carry out works where such an application is required as a result of the overlay, and requires notice to be given to the airport lessee company of Melbourne Airport in accordance with the *Airports Act 1996* (Cth) in such circumstances. As discussed at Section 3.5.1, the MAEO does not trigger permit requirements for the proposal and thus technically this notice requirement does not apply. Nonetheless, consultation has taken place with Melbourne Airport, discussed further at Section 7.

**Clause 71.02-3 'Integrated Decision Making'** outlines that Planning aims to address aspects of economic, environmental and social wellbeing affected by land use and development to meet Victorians needs and expectations around settlement, the environment, economic and social needs, and proper management of resources and infrastructure. The clause also highlights that planning and responsible authorities should endeavour to integrate the range of planning policies relevant to the issues to be determined and balance conflicting objectives in favour of net community benefit and sustainable development for the benefit of present and future generations.

**Clause 72.01-1 'Minister is Responsible Authority'** outlines that the Minister for Planning is the responsible authority for matters under Divisions 1, 1A, 2 and 3 of Part 4 of the PE Act, and endorsement of, approval of or being satisfied with matters required by a permit or the scheme to be endorsed, approved or done to the satisfaction of the responsible authority, in relation to the use and development of land for a '*Utility installation used to Transmit or distribute*

electricity'. Consequently, any permit application for the proposed use and development (even if made outside of the provisions of Clause 53.22) would be made to the Minister for Planning.

**Clause 73.03 'Land Use Terms'** provides the meaning of land use terms used in the Planning Scheme. Pursuant to this clause the most relevant Land Use Term in relation to the proposal is 'Utility Installation' which is defined as follows.

'Land used:

- a. for telecommunications;
- b. to transmit or distribute gas or oil;
- c. to transmit, distribute or store power;
- d. to collect, treat, transmit, store, or distribute water; or
- e. to collect, treat, or dispose of storm or flood water, sewage, or sillage.

*It includes any associated flow measurement device or a structure to gauge waterway flow'.*

It is considered that the use associated with the proposed works, sits within this definition, as the project will result in the continued use of the subject site as a utility installation that will transmit and distribute power.

The proposed rebuilt terminal station does not fit the definition of 'minor utility installation', which only applies to power lines designed to operate at less than 220,000 volts or to an electrical sub-station designed to operate at no more than 66,000 volts, as the SYTS will operate at a maximum of 550,000 volts.

## 4.7. Planning Scheme Amendments

There are currently three amendments to the Melton Planning Scheme that are at various stages of preparation, however none concern the subject site or would have any bearing on the assessment of the Project.

## 4.8. Summary

### 4.8.1. Permit Triggers

In summary, a planning permit is sought for:

- Use of the land for a Utility Installation under Clause 37.01-1 (SUZ3)
- Buildings and works for a Utility Installation under Clause 37.01-4 (SUZ3)
- Use of the land for a Utility Installation under Clause 35.04-1 (GWZ)
- Buildings and works for a Utility Installation, and to construct buildings and works within 5 metres of a boundary under Clause 35.04-2 (GWZ)

### 4.8.2. Notice and Referral Requirements

The Melton Planning Scheme requires that the application is referred under s55 of the *Planning and Environment Act 1987* (Vic) to AusNet Transmission Group Pty Ltd, who are a determining referral authority in respect of the application.

There are no statutory notice requirements under s52(1)(c) to Melbourne Airport in respect of the Melbourne Airport Environs Overlay, however as previously discussed, consultation has taken place with Melbourne Airport. 5.4.1

# 5. Planning Assessment

The provisions of the Melton Planning Scheme require that the Responsible Authority decide whether a proposal will produce acceptable outcomes in terms of the Decision Guidelines of Clause 65 of the Planning Scheme. It's noted that for an application under Clause 53.22 of the Melton Planning Scheme, the Responsible Authority must still consider the application against the Decision Guidelines of the relevant clauses of the scheme that would otherwise apply.

Having regard to these Decision Guidelines, the key planning considerations raised by the proposed land use and development are:

- Is the proposal consistent with the Planning Policy Framework?
- Is the proposed development consistent with the requirements of the SUZ3?
- Is the proposed development consistent with the requirements of the GWZ?
- Is the proposed development acceptable in terms of specific issues that emerge from a review of all relevant planning controls comprising: aviation, biodiversity, visual, noise and vibration, transport and bushfire impacts?
- Is the proposed land use and development acceptable in relation to the comments of Ausnet Transmission Pty Ltd as a determining referral authority?
- Is the proposal consistent with the purpose of Clause 53.22 "Significant Economic Development"?

These matters are considered in further detail in the following sections of this report.

## 5.1. Is the proposal consistent with the Planning Policy Framework?

### 5.1.1. Planning Policy Framework

**Clause 11.01-1S 'Settlement'** seeks to facilitate the sustainable growth and development of the State by delivering a network of settlements with choice and opportunity. Consistent with this policy direction, the rebuild of SYTS will play an integral role in providing power supply to Melbourne and is a connection point between western Victoria to Melbourne and beyond to South Australia.

**Clause 11.01-R 'Green wedges – Metropolitan Melbourne'** seeks to protect the green wedges of Metropolitan Melbourne from inappropriate development. The portion of the subject site that is currently subject to the GWZ (1 Holden Road) is located directly adjacent to the existing SYTS, on land zoned SUZ3. The GWZ zoned land is already encumbered with transmission infrastructure. Thus, while it is proposed to further develop the land for utility installation purposes, the planning application does not propose a change of land use or loss of land used for agricultural purposes.

**Clause 12.01-1S 'Protection of biodiversity'** and **Clause 12.01-1L 'Protection of biodiversity'** seek to protect and enhance Victoria's biodiversity. The Project is located in an area of low biodiversity values and is consistent with this clause as it will not impact any native vegetation as defined under the Victorian State Government's Guidelines.

**Clause 12.05-2L 'Rural landscape character'** applies to land within the Significant Landscape Features Plan and which is subject to the GWZ, as is the case with the portion of the subject land in the GWZ. Only new transmission line towers are proposed to be constructed on the GWZ parcel. This clause seeks to ensure that development in rural areas and viewing corridors is sympathetic to the rural landscape character and significant landscape features of the area and outlines a series of siting strategies to achieve that objective including siting buildings away from landscape features and setting development back from main roads and viewing corridors.

Other than indistinct views of the top of the communications tower to the west of the urbanised areas of Hillside, the transmission infrastructure associated with the SYTS is not visible from Melton Hwy. Therefore, no aspect of the proposed new transmission towers will be visible from this road.

The existing SYTS is visible at a distance from Holden Road, however only peripherally in relation to views directly east along this road and along a short length of this road not otherwise screened by vegetation. The Project will result in construction of a further 3 transmission towers on the existing transmission line route. From this distance this change would not be perceptible from Holden Road.

Accordingly, it is considered that the Project would not detract from any of the elements that contribute to the site's Western Volcanic Plains landscape character as defined in the local policy, consistent with this clause.

**Clause 13.02-1S 'Bushfire planning'** and **Clause 13.02-1L 'Bushfire planning'** include policy directions for land that is located within a designated bushfire prone area. As noted above the proposed development is of land that is already encumbered with utility installation infrastructure. As is the case of the existing infrastructure located on the land, the proposed development will be required to operate in accordance with the *Energy Safe Victoria Act 2005* (Vic) inclusive of the *Electricity Safety (Bushfire Mitigation) Regulations 2023* and *Electricity Safety (Bushfire Mitigation Duties) Regulations 2017*. To satisfy the requirements of this legislation, an Electrical Safety Management System (ESMS) is maintained by AusNet and, as part of the ESMS, a Bushfire Mitigation Plan is prepared by AusNet and audited periodically by Energy Safe Victoria, the regulator of the *Energy Safe Victoria Act 2005* (Vic). Accordingly, consistent with the objective and policy directions of this clause the redevelopment of the infrastructure on the subject site continues to prioritise the protection of human life through the application of appropriate bushfire mitigation measures, and as also confirmed in the Bushfire Assessment discussed further at Section 5.4.4.

**Clause 13.04-1S 'Contaminated and potentially contaminated land'** seeks to ensure that contaminated or potentially contaminated land is appropriately used and developed. This application does not concern any development or use of potentially contaminated land for sensitive land uses.

**Clause 13.05-1S 'Noise management'** seeks to ensure that sensitive uses are not adversely impacted by noise emissions. The nearest noise sensitive receivers are residential land uses (houses) located approximately 350 metres to the south of the subject site boundary in the suburb of Hillside. Consistent with the policy directions of this clause, the proposed development will not result in any significant noise impacts to the residential area to the south both during the construction phase and the operational phase, noting that the proposed works are located further away than the existing terminal station from the closest residential receivers. This is also discussed further at Section 5.4.4.

**Clause 13.06-1S 'Air quality management'** seeks to ensure that sensitive uses are not adversely impacted by poor air quality. Consistent with the policy directions of this clause, the proposed development will not result in unreasonable air quality impacts, once again highlighting that the proposed rebuilt terminal station infrastructure is located further away from sensitive receptors than the existing terminal station.

**Clause 13.07-1S 'Land use compatibility'** seeks to facilitate appropriate infrastructure with potential off-site impacts while protecting community amenity, human health and safety. The existing terminal station site and adjoining land are already developed for transmission line purposes and are well separated from the nearest residential development to the south, as discussed above. Given the separation of the subject land from the residential area, combined with the proposed relocation of the terminal station infrastructure further north compared to its existing location, it is considered that the Project is entirely consistent with this policy direction.

**Clause 14.01-R 'Protection of agricultural land – Metropolitan Melbourne'** seeks to protect agricultural land in Metropolitan Melbourne's green wedges and peri-urban areas to avoid permanent loss whilst **Clause 14.01-1L 'Protection of agricultural land'** includes strategies such as preserving areas of broad acre farming and avoiding subdivisions that lead to land fragmentation. There is no change proposed to the nature of the way in which the land is/will be used, given the existing infrastructure already located on it, and noting the future MREH infrastructure in the north west corner approved via SCO4. On the land zoned GWZ, the proposal is effectively for the re-routing of the existing high voltage transmission lines to lead them into the newly rebuilt SYTS **noting that** it is not proposed to more densely occupy this land with transmission lines than is already the case. Accordingly, it is considered that the Project is consistent with these policy directions and will not impact agricultural land use

**Clause 14.02-2S 'Water quality'** has as its objective to protect water quality. Consistent with this policy direction, the proposed buildings and works are not expected to have any significant adverse effects on surface water quality, flow regime or waterway or floodplain function. This is subject to appropriate measures being put in place during the construction of the Project (as well as its subsequent decommissioning), noting that any construction will be required to comply with the requirements of the EPA as outlined in EPA Publication 1834.1 (Civil construction, building and demolition guide).

**Clause 15.03-2S 'Aboriginal cultural heritage'** seeks to protect places of aboriginal cultural heritage significance. The proposal responds appropriately to this policy direction, noting that Cultural Heritage Management Plan 19659 has been prepared in consultation with Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung Cultural Heritage Aboriginal Corporation (the Registered Aboriginal Party) to identify, assess and manage aboriginal cultural heritage and will be applicable to the land, as relevant to the activity area and Project.

**Clause 17.01-1S 'Diversified economy'** seeks to strengthen and diversify the economy by facilitating growth in a range of employment sectors. The proposed development will facilitate necessary rebuild works to the existing utility installation, thereby generating employment opportunities in the electricity and construction industries and in the broader area, consistent with this policy direction.

**Clause 17.01-1R 'Diversified economy – Metropolitan Melbourne'** seeks to support the Central City in its growth towards being Australia's largest commercial and residential centre. Consistent with this policy, the proposed development supports the main 500kV transmission network in Victoria and is integral to power supply to Melbourne. Thus, looking at the 'bigger picture', the proposed development supports economic growth through its facilitation of

necessary infrastructure to continue to ensure a reliable and robust transmission network supplying Melbourne and the regions.

**Clause 19.01-1S 'Energy supply' and Clause 19.01-2S 'Renewable energy'** seek to facilitate appropriate development of energy supply infrastructure and the provision and use of renewable energy respectively. Key strategies include developing appropriate infrastructure to meet community demand for energy and supporting energy projects in locations that minimise land use conflicts and take advantage of existing resources and infrastructure networks.

The Project is consistent with the key policy directions of these clauses and their associated strategies. The replacement terminal station is proposed to be developed at a site that is already used and developed for this purpose, minimising land use conflicts and taking advantage of the existing infrastructure network.

In terms of renewable energy, the Project is also supportive of the key policy objectives and strategies, providing for the rebuild of a terminal station that plays an integral role in supplying renewable energy from Victoria's west to Melbourne and which will also be directly linked to the neighbouring MREH.

### 5.1.2. Municipal Planning Strategy (MPS)

The proposal responds to the objectives of **Clause 02.03-2 'Environmental and landscape values'** and will not impact any areas of significant landscapes or view lines noting again the existing infrastructure that is already present on the site and thus the existing visual presence of transmission lines and the terminal station. The proposal also responds to the objectives of **Clause 02.03-3 'Environmental risks and amenity'** in terms of surface water impacts which can be managed through the implementation of a Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) for the Project.

**Clause 02.03-3** also includes the subheading **Bushfire** recognising that a significant part of the municipality is bushfire prone, especially at the urban/grassland interface of townships, and recognising that proper planning minimises the risk to life and property from bushfire. The proposal responds appropriately to this policy direction and seeks to minimise risk to life and property, as discussed further at Section 5.4.6.

The proposal has regard to **Clause 02.03-4 'Natural resource management'** of the Planning Scheme. As previously discussed, the proposed development is located on land that currently hosts significant electricity transmission infrastructure, which is not proposed to be intensified as a result of the proposed development. The GWZ-zoned land could also continue to be used for agricultural purposes such as grazing, if required.

**Clause 02.03-7 'Economic development'** recognises that major proposed infrastructure investments further expand the local economic opportunities. The proposal is consistent with this policy direction as it will create jobs by through construction of the necessary infrastructure to rebuild the existing asset, as well as supporting the economy more broadly through the provision of essential infrastructure to ensure the on-going supply of electricity to the State.

**Clause 02.03-8 'Transport'** seeks to protect Melbourne Airport's operations from incompatible land uses and seeks to maintain community amenity. The proposal is consistent with this clause and does not seek to introduce sensitive uses to the subject land which is affected by the Melbourne Airport Environs Overlay.

**Clause 02.03-9 'Infrastructure'** recognises that the provision of major infrastructure is an important public investment and infrastructure must be protected from the encroachment of incompatible development. Consistent with this clause the proposal seeks to redevelop important energy infrastructure on land that is already encumbered with transmission infrastructure and that is appropriately separated from existing residential land.

## 5.2. Is the proposed development consistent with the requirements of the SUZ3?

There are no decision guidelines specified under Schedule 3. However, the Schedule has the following purposes against which the proposed redevelopment of the SYTS has been assessed, as outlined below:

- 'To provide for areas in private ownership to be used for the purposes of essential service utility installations'.

The proposed development facilitates the continued use of the land as a crucial terminal station on Melbourne's high voltage electricity transmission network. This accords with this purpose of the zone.

- 'To ensure that the development of these facilities takes place in an orderly and proper manner and does not cause a loss of amenity to the surrounding neighbourhood'.

The proposed development will be undertaken in an orderly and proper manner and is not expected to result in any unreasonable amenity impacts, highlighting the following.

- The distance between the proposed works and the nearest residential dwelling to the south ensures no overshadowing or overlooking effects on nearby properties.
- The Project will place infrastructure slightly further from sensitive receptors, preventing light spill impacts. Lighting will comply with standards, including Australian Standard 4282 for controlling outdoor lighting effects.
- There will be no impacts from noise as a result of the operation of the new terminal station. In relation to construction noise, whilst it may be slightly audible to nearby dwellings it will be similar in volume to existing daytime ambient noise in the Hillside General Residential Zone. Accordingly, the Project will not result in unreasonable noise impacts, as discussed further at Section 5.4.4. 6.
- There will be no vibration impacts as a result of the Project due to sufficient distances between the proposal and to sensitive receivers to the south.

### 5.3. Is the proposed development consistent with the requirements of the GWZ?

The GWZ contains a series of Decision Guidelines. Relevant guidelines are included below with an accompanying brief response on how the part of the Project within the GWZ (i.e. construction of three new lattice type transmission towers) responds.

#### General Issues

- Any Regional Catchment Strategy and associated plan applying to the land.

The Port Phillip and Western Port Regional Catchment Strategy applies to the subject site. No perennial watercourses cross the site, with those mapped being only ephemeral drainage lines. Development on GWZ zoned land is limited to lattice transmission towers, which only require minor earthworks for footings. The earthworks can be managed in a way that doesn't risk harming water quality – for example through compliance with a CEMP during development with measures to avoid any sediment leaving the site.

- The capability of the land to accommodate the proposed use or development.

The land hosts existing transmission lines and towers and the density of development is not proposed to change as a result of the terminal station rebuild, other than the addition of three lattice towers along the existing route of the high voltage transmission lines.

- How the use or development relates to rural land use, rural diversification, natural resource management, natural or cultural heritage management, recreation or tourism.

The development constitutes vital infrastructure and is entirely appropriate for land in a rural zone, along a major transmission line, noting that only a few of these types of utility installations are required to service the entire Melbourne metropolitan area.

- Whether the site is suitable for the use or development and the compatibility of the proposal with adjoining land uses.

The site is highly suitable highlighting the existing long standing infrastructure that already occupies the site and its' significant distance to any neighbouring residential areas.

- Whether the use or development is essential to the health, safety or well-being of the State or area but is not appropriate to locate in an urban area because of the effect it may have on existing or proposed urban areas or the effect that existing or proposed urban areas may have on the proposed use or development.

The Project features the construction of three additional lattice type transmission towers along an existing high voltage transmission line, which is not proposed to be re-sited.

- The need to minimise adverse impacts on the character and appearance of the area or features of architectural, scientific or cultural heritage significance, or of natural scenic beauty.

The Project will not significantly alter the existing appearance of the transmission lines in this location. The Project has been assessed as being acceptable in the context of the rural landscapes of this part of the Melton municipality, as summarised in the following sections of this assessment pertaining to visual impacts.

#### Rural issues

- The maintenance of agricultural production and the impact on the rural economy.

On the land zoned GWZ, the Project is effectively for the re-routing of the existing high voltage transmission lines to lead them into the newly rebuilt SYTS. It is not proposed to more densely occupy this land with transmission lines than is already the case. Accordingly, the Project will not impact agricultural production or the rural economy.

- The environmental capacity of the site to sustain rural enterprise.

See previous comment above.

- The need to prepare an integrated land management plan.

This is not required given the continued and unchanged use of GWZ zoned land.

- The impact on the existing and proposed rural infrastructure.

No impacts on existing and proposed rural infrastructure are foreseen. The wider project (not the subject of this planning permit application) does in fact include the upgrading of Victoria Road, which will benefit other rural land users in the area.

- The potential for the future expansion of the use or development and the impact of this on adjoining and nearby agriculture and other land uses.

The scope of this application on the GWZ parcel relates to the rerouting of an existing transmission line. It does not establish a new land use in a manner that could impact nearby land uses.

- The protection and retention of land for future sustainable agricultural activities.

On the land zoned GWZ, the proposal is effectively for the re-routing of the existing high voltage transmission lines to lead them into the newly rebuilt SYTS. It is not proposed to more densely occupy this land with transmission lines than is already the case. Also, as previously noted, it would be possible for agricultural activities such as grazing to continue even with the presence of the rerouted transmission lines. Accordingly, it is considered that the Project is consistent with this policy direction.

#### **Environmental Issues**

- The impact of the use or development on the flora and fauna on the site and its surrounds.

No native vegetation will be impacted by the proposal on the GWZ parcel. The landscape is a highly altered agricultural landscape that has long been used for cropping and grazing. No part of the GWZ parcel features habitat that is considered likely to support endangered fauna.

- The need to protect and enhance the biodiversity of the area, including the retention of vegetation and faunal habitat and the need to revegetate land including riparian buffers along waterways, gullies, ridgelines, property boundaries and saline discharge and recharge area.

See previous comment.

- How the use or development relates to sustainable land management and the need to prepare an integrated land management plan.

This is not considered necessary given the continued and unchanged use of GWZ zoned land.

#### **Design and Siting Issues**

- The need to minimise any adverse impacts of siting, design, height, bulk, and colours and materials to be used, on landscape features, major roads and vistas.

As discussed in Section 5.4.3, the addition of three new transmission towers will not cause the transmission line to become significantly more visually prominent and will not cause amenity impacts to nearby sensitive receivers. New towers will not be prominently visible from any key viewing corridor of the Western Plains Grasslands as highlighted in the local policy at Clause 12.05-2L 'Rural landscape character' of the Melton Planning Scheme.

- The location and design of existing and proposed infrastructure services which minimises the visual impact on the landscape.

See previous comment.

- The need to minimise adverse impacts on the character and appearance of the area or features of archaeological, historic or scientific significance or of natural scenic beauty or importance.

See previous comment. As discussed in section 5.4.3, the proposed development is not expected to impact the character and appearance of the surrounding area.

## **5.4. Is the proposed development acceptable in terms of aviation, biodiversity, visual, noise and vibration, transport and bushfire impacts?**

A report entitled "Technical Assessments for Sydenham Terminal Station Rebuild Project" has been prepared by Jacobs to address key matters raised by the relevant policy, zoning and overlay controls that apply to the site.

A separate supporting report has also been prepared by Jacobs in relation to bushfire matters given the site's location in a bushfire prone area and Clause 13.03's policy directions.

The following section provides an overview of the key findings of the Technical Assessment document as well as the Bushfire Risk Assessment.

### 5.4.1. Aviation

An aviation study has been undertaken by Chiron Aviation Consultants in relation to potential aviation impacts associated with the Project. The aviation study includes consideration of two certified Aerodromes within 30nm of the subject site (Melbourne Airport and Essendon Airport) and four uncertified aerodromes located within 30km of the subject site.

The study notes at the outset that because the Sydenham Terminal Station is located within the Melbourne Airport Control Zone (CTR), any aircraft movements over the subject site are controlled by Melbourne Air Traffic Control and thus must operate in accordance with Air Traffic Control instructions. Accordingly, any movements associated with the other certified and uncertified airports are also required to comply with the Melbourne Airport Control Zone and so will not be impacted by the Project, as they must be approved by Melbourne Airport in any case.

"The study concludes that:

*"the proposed structure heights associated with the Project are below the protected airspace surface heights and therefore do not impact on the Melbourne Airport protected airspace associated with the gazetted four runway design.*

*As noted above, construction works using cranes and helicopters for the erection of the Project towers will need to be coordinated with Melbourne Airport Airspace Protection and Melbourne Air Traffic Control as required."*

Written advice from Melbourne Airport obtained on 29 February 2024 confirms that the Project will not penetrate Melbourne Airport's prescribed airspace, although any temporary cranes will need to be separately assessed.

AusNet anticipates that a condition of any permit issued will require preparation of a CEMP that acknowledges the requirement for agreement from Melbourne Airport prior to any construction activity involving incursions into its prescribed airspace. This is discussed further at Section 6.

### 5.4.2. Biodiversity

A biodiversity assessment of the site has been undertaken by Jacobs' ecologists involving both desktop data collation and review and field surveys. The assessment divided the subject site into two areas for the purpose of ecological assessment, comprising:

- Area 1: The existing SYTS land at 67 Victoria Road, Plumpton.
- Area 2: Land abutting the existing SYTS land on either side, at 1 Holden Road, Plumpton.

The biodiversity assessment also assesses an area outside but adjacent to the subject site known as Area 3: Victoria Road, along the access road to the subject site, to verify that no vegetation removal was necessary, that would have otherwise required planning approval and therefore inclusion in the planning permit application.

For Area 1, the biodiversity assessment found as follows.

- The area contains exotic 'lawn', is dominated by Chilean Needle Grass, is kept slashed and has no notable flora or fauna values. Approximately half the area has been subject to significant ground disturbance due to the existing development on the site. There is a vegetated dam in the southwest corner of Area 1 which has the only potential threatened species habitat (Growling Grass Frog). However, the dam is beyond the area associated with the proposed works for the terminal station and is not connected to local waterways, so is considered to present limited potential of occurrence for the species.

For Area 2, the biodiversity assessment found that:

- The small areas on the eastern and western side of the existing terminal station land, associated with the change in approach from the existing power lines is also dominated by exotic species (although these areas are not maintained in the same manner as within the existing terminal station site).
- To the west of the existing terminal station, these are largely exotic grass species (including Chilean Needle Grass and serrated Tussock Grass) in an area subject to light grazing.
- To the east of the existing terminal station is a variety of grassy (Chilean Needle Grass) and woody (African Box Thorn) weed species that have established on a large area of fill.

For Area 3, the biodiversity assessment found that:

- Along the access road to the existing terminal station, the road verge is mostly exotic, with small patches of native species that do not meet the minimum extent (patches less than 0.05 and not meeting the 25% perennial cover) to qualify as native vegetation under the Victorian Guidelines for the removal, destruction, lopping of native vegetation (DELWP 2017) or the Commonwealth EPBC grassland definitions.
- Large amounts of refuse, including domestic and construction rubbish, has been dumped along Victoria Road, in part contributing to the weed infestations present.

Overall, the assessment concludes that the subject site does not support native vegetation assessable under the Victorian Guidelines for the removal, destruction or lopping of native vegetation (DELWP 2017), nor does it provide important likely habitat for threatened species (in this case, the Growling Grass Frog). Accordingly, the Project does not trigger approvals under Clause 52.17 (Native Vegetation) of the Melton Planning Scheme. In addition, it is noted that whilst some existing fringe planting of Sugar Gums and Melaleuca sp. will be impacted by the proposed works, approval is not required for their removal due to Clause 52.17 exemptions for planted vegetation.

In addition, the biodiversity assessment confirms that there will be no impact to biodiversity values protected under the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (Cth) (EPBC Act) and/or *Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act 1988* (Vic) (FFG Act).

The biodiversity assessment also highlights that care should be taken not to disperse weed species and harmful pathogens as a result of construction. AusNet anticipates that a condition of any permit issued will require preparation of a CEMP that includes provisions relevant to preventing the spread of weeds and soil borne pathogens during construction.

### 5.4.3. Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment

A landscape and visual impact assessment was undertaken by Landform Architects which involved the following:

- An assessment of landscape character based on the physical and natural attributes.
- A viewpoint assessment which considers the impact on views from the public domain and residential properties.
- Consideration of options in terms of the need or otherwise to implement any management measures, such as screening, to limit visual impacts.

The findings of the landscape and visual impact assessment can be summarised as follows.

- Views from public locations in Hillside towards the SYTS are mostly screened by dwellings, fences, and vegetation. Some views are available from public open space north of Veridian Drive, interspersed with vegetation.
- No nearby sensitive receptors have views of the SYTS from the west, north, or east. Views from northern Hillside are across modified, cleared land used for farming.
- Existing views include high-voltage transmission lines, the SYTS, and communications infrastructure, partially screened by topography and vegetation. The overhead gantry and transmission lines are clearly visible.
- New infrastructure will be mostly north of the existing SYTS, with some components slightly taller than existing structures. Visual changes will not be easily noticeable to most viewers.
- Some perimeter vegetation will be removed along the east and west boundaries for transmission lines, with no impact on nearby sensitive receptors. Limited removal along the south boundary is also proposed, with additional planting to provide screening from the south.

The assessment concludes that the visual changes proposed by the Project would not be discernible for most people. This can be further reduced by ensuring that any lighting on the site is designed and installed in accordance with relevant standards, including Australian Standard 4282 – Control of the obtrusive effects of outdoor lighting (AS 4282 – 1997).

### 5.4.4. Noise and Vibration

A noise and vibration assessment was undertaken by Resonate and involved the following:

- Characterisation of the existing environment based on a desktop analysis of residential land uses supported by attended noise monitoring results at key locations;
- Establishment of applicable noise limits in accordance with applicable legislation and guidelines;
- Preparation of a predictive impact assessment for the construction and operational phases of the Project; and

- Preparation of recommendations for noise and vibration management measures during the construction and operational phases.

In relation to potential noise issues, the assessment concludes that during operation there are no noise or vibration impacts expected to nearby sensitive receivers. Sensitive receivers are considered to be the nearest residential dwellings located on residentially-zoned land within Melbourne's Urban Growth Boundary, near Hillview Court and Kinetic Avenue to the south, as well as the dwelling in the Green Wedge Zone at 5 Glencapel Court, Hillside. The highest predicted noise level at any dwelling modelled was 27dB, compared to a noise limit of 38dB in the most restrictive instance, as calculated from the EPA's guidelines.

During the construction phase, these nearby dwellings to the south may experience construction noise levels of up to 55 dB LAeq, 30min for up to 34 weeks, only reaching this level during the noisiest periods of activity on the site across this period. Whilst this level of noise is expected to be audible, it is comparable to the existing daytime ambient noise level in the Hillside General Residential Zone and so is not expected to result in unreasonable amenity impacts. It's also noted that some of the works that are the subject of the assessment, that produce the highest levels of predicted noise, include the upgrade of Victoria Road, which do not form part of this planning permit application. In relation to potential vibration issues the assessment also concludes that there are no vibration impacts expected as part of the operation or construction works for the Project, given sufficient distances to sensitive receivers. These conclusions are based off an intention to manage construction by carrying out the works in accordance with EPA Victoria Publication 1834.1 "*Civil construction, building and demolition guide*".

The assessment concludes that the construction and operation of the Project can occur in accordance with EPA Guidelines.

It is expected that the mitigation measures outlined in the noise and vibration assessment for the construction and operations phase will be addressed (respectively) as part of any CEMP prepared for the Project, and via the detailed engineering design work that will be undertaken for the project.

### 5.4.5. Transport

A transport assessment was carried out for the project by Jacobs and involved the following work:

- Assessment of the existing conditions of the site and surrounds via both a site visit and desktop review.
- Definition of the existing conditions of the transport network in terms of operating performance and asset conditions to determine a baseline assessment of the network.
- Identification and assessment of the potential impacts of the Project on the existing transport network, including road network operating performance, road pavement conditions, public transport impacts and active transport impacts (pre-mitigation).
- Identification of any design and mitigation measures that could, so far as reasonably practicable, avoid, substantially reduce and/or mitigate the likelihood, extent and/or duration of potential impacts.

The transport assessment proposes the main delivery route to the site from the Port of Melbourne via CityLink (M2), starting from the Footscray Road interchange and travelling north to the Calder Freeway (M79). Vehicles will then exit the Calder Freeway onto Calder Park Drive and access the Sydenham Terminal Station via Victoria Road. The route uses primarily arterial roads managed by the Department of Transport & Planning (DTP) which are also approved heavy vehicle routes. An alternative route for the transport of Over Size Over Mass (OSOM) items is available via the C754/ Melton Highway exit from the Calder Freeway and Calder Park Drive.

The transport assessment concludes that construction impacts as a result of the Project are expected to be minimal subject to the implementation of appropriate mitigation measures via any Construction Traffic Management Plan that is prepared. Of primary concern is the interaction between public and active transport users, including the presence of school bus routes operating along the Melton Highway (alternative OSOM route). However, these concerns can be mitigated by using an alternative route or curfew times for heavy vehicle movements to avoid peak periods.

The upgrade of Victoria Road (works related to the project, but not necessary for it, nor forming part of this planning permit application) will allow for improved heavy vehicle access to the site from Calder Park Drive. In terms of operation, the traffic impacts of the operation of the utility installation are expected to be no different from the present use of the land.

### 5.4.6. Bushfire

A bushfire assessment was undertaken by Jacobs, the conclusions of which are summarised in this section.

SYTS is located on bushfire prone land, but in a relatively low bushfire risk area. The bushfire assessment confirms that through construction and operation of the Project, there is a low chance of a grassfire being ignited on-site and / or a landscape fire damaging the infrastructure.

The bushfire assessment also concludes that the proposal is consistent with the requirements of the bushfire planning strategies listed at Clause 13.02-1, given the following

- In relation to protection of human life, the proposal does not introduce a new use or increase the ongoing fire risk through the proposed use and development of the land. Preservation of human life is paramount and will be ensured through the construction contractor's CEMP and by business-as-usual management under AusNet's ESMS and Bushfire Mitigation Plan, which are mandated by legislation
- In relation to bushfire hazard identification and assessment, the proposal has been determined to be located in a relatively low-risk bushfire area that is suitable for the ongoing use of the site by the rebuilt SYTS. Bushfire hazards have been identified and measures within the construction contractor's CEMP will appropriately mitigate these risks, for example through vegetation management, safe work procedures (such as special controls for high fire danger days) and evacuation procedures.
- In relation to areas of biodiversity conservation values, the proposal is not near such a location and no native vegetation was found when the site was surveyed. Therefore any vegetation clearance needed to maintain fire safety measures wouldn't conflict with biodiversity conservation prerogatives.
- In relation to settlement planning, the proposal would not cause any additional risk to nearby residential areas, compared to the existing way in which the subject site is used and developed. The project would not influence settlement patterns and population growth.
- In relation to use and development control in a Bushfire Prone Area, the proposed land use is a continuing one, and is not one that would cause large numbers of people to gather, as signalled by the policy as requiring particular assessment of bushfire risk.

The bushfire assessment subsequently concludes that the Project satisfies the requirements of Clause 13.02-1S *Bushfire planning* of the Melton Planning Scheme. Mitigations for bushfire risk associated with the Project will be addressed in implementation of the construction contractor's CEMP and by business-as-usual management under AusNet's ESMS and Bushfire Mitigation Plan. The ESMS and Bushfire Mitigation Plan are legislatively mandated and require AusNet to identify and implement all practicable measures to minimise and mitigate risks from bushfires.

## **5.5. Is the proposed development acceptable in relation to the comments of AusNet Transmission Group Pty Ltd as a determining referral authority?**

AusNet Transmission Group Pty Ltd, part of the same AusNet organisation as the permit applicant, is a referral authority for the application under s55 of the PE Act. AusNet Transmission Group will comment on the application in accordance with its statutory obligations under s55 of the PE Act, and it is not anticipated that it will object to the proposal or impose any conditions on any permit issued, that would result in a redesign of the proposal being necessary.

## **5.6. Is the proposed development consistent with the purpose of Clause 53.22 “Significant Economic Development”?**

Clause 53.22 of the Melton Planning Scheme has the following two purposes:

- To prioritise and facilitate the planning, assessment and delivery of projects that will make a significant contribution to Victoria's economy and provide substantial public benefit, including jobs for Victorians.
- To provide for the efficient and effective use of land and facilitate use and development with high quality urban design, architecture and landscape architecture.

The Project would make a significant contribution to Victoria's economy through ensuring the continued supply of affordable electricity to power Victorian homes and businesses. The Project efficiently and effectively continues to use the existing SYTS site for the purpose of a Utility Installation. The Project is appropriately designed and landscaped to the extent required, given its location within one of Melbourne's green wedges, and is set back a significant

distance from the closest sensitive receivers. The project therefore fulfills the purposes of Clause 53.22 "Significant Economic Development".

## 6. Proposed permit conditions

The specialist technical reports prepared for the Project identify a number of different recommendations to address and minimise potential environmental and amenity impacts. This section seeks to capture those recommendations and identify how they can be addressed as part of any permit that issues for the Project.

It is considered that the two key ways to capture any recommendations is via planning permit conditions or via the preparation and implementation of a CEMP – to be required via a condition.

Recommendations that are considered to be appropriate for inclusion as conditions include the following. <sup>4</sup>

- The requirement for any lighting be designed and installed in accordance with relevant standards, including but not limited to Australian Standard 4282 – Control of the obtrusive effects of outdoor lighting (AS 4282 – 1997).
- The requirement for the establishment and ongoing maintenance of new perimeter landscaping in accordance with the maintenance schedule on the endorsed landscaping plan.
- The requirement for the preparation of a CEMP.

In terms of what could be addressed in a CEMP, the following matters have been identified in the Jacobs Technical Assessment:

### General

- The requirement for the CEMP to be prepared in accordance with EPA Victoria's guidelines and requirements in relation to construction management, working hours, noise and vibration, and other relevant matters.

### Biodiversity

- The requirement for pest and weed hygiene measures to be used during construction.

### Traffic

- The requirement for a Traffic Management Plan (TMP) to be prepared to mitigate construction traffic impacts on the safety and amenity of local road users. The TMP could include, should the Responsible Authority deem necessary:
  - A curfew/alternative route for construction traffic during peak commuting/school traffic times
  - Inspection and repair of road damage caused by construction traffic.

### Aviation

- The requirement for coordination with Melbourne Airport regarding construction works using cranes and helicopters temporarily penetrating the Melbourne Airport OLS and PANS-OPS

### Noise and Vibration

- Engagement with nearby residents and other sensitive receivers, including advance consultation and notification of noisy works, and establishment of a complaint response procedure.
- Adoption of measures to systematically reduce noise emitted from the site, including non-tonal reversing alarms on mobile construction equipment, rental of quieter plant and equipment, physical shielding of any particular works likely to result in severe noise impacts.
- Training of staff to manage noise impacts, including through behaviour – e.g. no swearing or unnecessary shouting or loud stereos/radios on-site.
- Monitoring and auditing of actual noise and vibration to verify compliance with EPA regulations.

## 7. Stakeholder Engagement

Prior to the preparation of this planning permit application, when a rezoning of the subject land was being contemplated, consultation was undertaken with a number of different government agencies. The agencies with whom consultation was undertaken, and a summary of the feedback given as part of that consultation, is included in Table 1 below.

Table 1 Summary of Stakeholder Engagement

Agency	Date	Key Agency Messages	Response
EPA	27/10/2023	No concerns raised.	No response required.
Melton Shire Council	22/11/2023	<p>Council suggested particular consideration of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• potential impacts to Melbourne Airport;</li> <li>• amenity impacts including visual amenity; and</li> <li>• any off-site amenity impacts as a result of construction (noise, dust etc)</li> </ul>	<p>Response provided to Council included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pre-lodgement discussions with Melbourne Airport and the preparation of an aviation safety assessment by Chiron Aviation in relation to Melbourne Airport issues had been undertaken;</li> <li>• The requirement for the consideration of any potential amenity impacts and subsequent management measures that may be required to minimise any such impacts.</li> <li>• The anticipated requirement for the preparation of a construction environmental management plan to ensure any potential environmental impacts as part of the construction phase are managed.</li> </ul>
Melbourne Airport	15/11/2023	Melbourne Airport requested completion of a Proposed Activity Airspace Application Form to enable Melbourne Airport to undertake its own assessment of the development facilitated by the amendment.	The application form was completed and sent to Melbourne Airport. A response was received confirming no objection from Melbourne Airport.
Fire Rescue Victoria	30/11/2023	No concerns raised. Acknowledged that it is an existing terminal station, that this is an expansion and the expansion will need to continue to comply with the Electrical Safety Management System (ESMS) that is maintained by AusNet and which requires as part of the ESMS a Bushfire Mitigation Plan.	No further response required.

Melbourne Water	1/6/2022	Confirmed the site is not subject to flooding. Identified the need for development to preserve, and if possible enhance, the social and environmental values and benefits of floodplains and waterways	No further response required.
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## 8. Conclusion

As the owner and operator of the SYTS, AusNet seeks planning permission for the replacement of the terminal station's gas insulated switchgear (GIS), a project known as the Sydenham Rebuild Project

The SYTS 500kV outdoor GIS is approaching its end of life and must be replaced as soon as possible. The 500kV GIS is integral to the existing terminal station as it performs the function of switching, measuring and distributing electrical energy. The terminal station is a key link in the electricity transmission chain between rural based generation facilities and urban energy consumers.

The SYTS needs to be rebuilt, to be in service by 2026, to manage this. Planning approval is required for the rebuild and for it to be constructed in time, works need to commence on the Project in early 2025.

AusNet seeks approval for the Project under the Clause 53.22 'Significant Economic Development' "fast-track" process, recognising that this Project would make a significant contribution to Victoria's economy and provide substantial public benefit. The Project represents an appropriate planning outcome based on a balanced assessment of the relevant policy objectives of the Melton Planning Scheme and will result in net community benefit and a sustainable development for the benefit of present and future generations.

If approved, the proposed use and development of the land will facilitate the rebuild of an important utility asset that contributes to securing a more sustainable, efficient, reliable, affordable energy system. This will, in turn, bring economic benefits to Victoria and will enable continued use of the energy-consumptive services and facilities that support a pleasant, efficient and safe working, living and recreational environment for all Victorians and visitors to Victoria.

The preceding report has demonstrated that the proposed use and development:

- is consistent with the relevant provisions of the Victoria Planning Provisions, including the Planning Policy Framework
- is consistent with the requirements of the SUZ3 and the GWZ of the Melton Planning Scheme
- is acceptable in terms of aviation, biodiversity, visual, noise and vibration, transport and bushfire impacts
- is acceptable in relation to the comments of Ausnet Transmission Pty Ltd as a determining referral authority

Accordingly, we respectfully request that a planning permit is issued for the Use and Development of the land for a Utility Installation, subject to appropriate conditions.

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