

APPENDIX U RELEVANT PLANNING SCHEME AMENDMENTS

As outlined in the Planning Report, there have been several planning scheme amendments relevant to solar farm development in recent years. These amendments have resulted in changes to the Victorian Planning Provisions (VPP) and the Moorabool Planning Scheme which relate to aspects including renewable energy facilities, battery storage systems, energy supply and climate change strategies. These amendments are relevant to the proposed development and should be considered as relevant to this application.

The relevant amendments are outlined below.

1. AMENDMENT VC216

The Minister for Planning approved Amendment VC216 to the VPP and all planning schemes in Victoria on June 10, 2022. The Amendment made changes to support Environmentally Sustainable Development (ESD). The relevant amendment changes the VPP and all planning schemes by amending:

- Clause 11.01-1S (Settlement) to include strategies that contribute to net zero emission outcomes;
- Clause 11.02-2S (Structure planning) to include strategies that contribute to net zero emission outcomes and support metropolitan and regional climate change strategies;
- Clause 12.01-1S (Protection of biodiversity) to update the objective, include a new strategy focussed on enhancing biodiversity in urban areas and add a policy guidance document;
- Clause 13.01-1S (Natural hazards and climate change) to add consideration of climate change and health and include new policy guidelines and a policy document;
- Clause 19 (Infrastructure) to include planning policy relating to minimising environmental impacts and increasing resilience to climate change risks;
- Clause 19.01-1S (Energy supply) to introduce a new strategy supporting resilience of energy infrastructure to impacts from climate change, modify strategies to better align with Victorian energy policy, support investment in energy supply infrastructure and include policy documents; and
- Clause 19.01-2S (Renewable energy) to clarify policy intent of the objective and strategies and include additional policy documents.

Amendment VC216 embeds ESD more comprehensively in the PPF (Planning Policy Framework), adding consideration of ESD into relevant planning policy themes and including the consideration of climate change into the purpose of the VPP and all planning schemes. The amendments focus on improving and strengthening how ESD is addressed to better reflect state policies in important areas such as climate change and energy.

Notably, relocating existing Clauses 15.02 (Sustainable development) and 15.02-1S (Energy and resource efficiency) to their most relevant sections in the PPF minimises duplication and ensures that ESD is considered a key aspect of decision-making across the PPF.

2. AMENDMENT VC221

The Minister for Planning approved Amendment VC221 to the VPP and all planning schemes in Victoria on August 4, 2022. The Amendment made changes by facilitating all-electric developments to support the implementation of Victoria's *Climate Change Strategy 2021* and *Gas Substitution Roadmap 2022*. VC221 amends clauses that require developments to be connected to reticulated gas and amends referral requirements. The amendment specifically supports the following relevant clauses:

- Clause 15 (Built environment and heritage) to support the transition to net zero greenhouse gas emissions; and
- Clause 19.01-1S (Energy supply) which seeks to facilitate appropriate development of energy supply infrastructure.

The Strategy and Roadmap define Victorian government policy which seeks to reduce emissions, transition to clean energy and decarbonise Victoria's economy. The Roadmap prioritises to deliver more all-electric precincts and remove regulatory barriers in 2022 to new developments, which promotes consumer choice about how they can meet their energy requirements.

Determining referral authority requirements and existing planning provisions that require or encourage reticulated gas to be connected where it is readily available limit the opportunity for developers to develop an all-electric development.

Changes to the VPP ensures the VPP facilitates transition towards electrification and supports the Victorian Government's emissions reduction target achievements.

The positive environmental, social, and economic benefits to the amendment include:

- Removing the effective mandate to connect developments to reticulated gas where it is available, providing consumers greater choice about energy sourcing.
- Creation of jobs, attracting investment in technology which supports the transition to renewable energy, and growing the economy.
- Consumers may have the choice to live in all-electric developments and unlock energy efficient and renewable electricity technologies for Victorian energy consumers.
- Help achieve the state's emissions reduction targets.

3. AMENDMENT VC224

The Minister for Planning approved Amendment VC224 to the VPP and all planning schemes on 28 October 2022. The amendment clarifies the Victorian Government's policy for the protection of declared irrigation districts and updates references to the Solar Energy Facilities Design and Development Guideline which has been revised (from August 2019 to October 2022).

The amendment changes the VPP and all planning schemes by amending:

- Clause 14.02-3S (Protection of declared irrigation districts) to clarify the Victorian Government's policy for the protection of declared irrigation districts.
- Clause 19.01-2S (Renewable energy) to update the reference to the Solar Energy Facilities Design and Development Guideline.
- Clause 53.13 (Renewable energy facility - other than wind energy facility) to clarify the Victorian Government's policy for the protection of declared irrigation districts and update the reference to the revised Solar Energy Facilities Design and Development Guideline.

The revised Design and Development Guideline contains clarified guidance for solar energy facility proponents on identifying suitable sites within declared irrigation districts, including how the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning's Water and Catchments Group and rural water corporations can assist.

4. AMENDMENT VC226

The Minister for Planning approved Amendment VC226 to the VPP and all planning schemes on 4 November 2022. The Amendment inserts a new strategy at Clause 19.01-1S (Energy supply) to facilitate renewable energy generation and storage to meet on-site energy needs, which further supports the objective of the clause.

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