

**To:** Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning  
**From:** Ben Roberts (Principal Ecologist), Aime Bigornia (Senior Environmental Engineer)  
**CC:** Brett Purcell, Andy Choi  
**Date:** 23/07/2021  
**Subject:** Western Portal Stage 3 Ecological Assessment

## Purpose

The purpose of this memo is to provide supporting evidence for a planning permit application to facilitate the works known as Western Portal Stage 3. The works include the removal of Sunbury Line infrastructure made redundant by the commencement of use of the Metro Tunnel Project. The memo provides an overview of the ecological conditions of the subject site in accordance with Clause 52.17 of the Melbourne Planning Scheme.

This memo is supported by a review of spatial information containing ecological values and a site walkover to confirm the ecological values within the subject site. The review of information and on-ground validation survey ensures species and ecological communities listed under the provisions of the Commonwealth *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (EPBC Act), the Victorian *Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act 1988* (FFG Act) and the Victorian *Planning and Environment Act 1987* (P&E Act) are protected and considered in the management of the subject site during construction and operation.

## Background

The Rail Infrastructure Alliance (RIA) is responsible for delivery of scope that will support Day One operations of the Metro Tunnel Project. To support the Metro Tunnel Project, RIA is also delivering part of the Sunbury Line Upgrade (SLU). The RIA scope of SLU includes:

- Platform and stabling upgrades
- Traction Power Upgrades
- Western Portal Stage 3.

## Proposed Works

RIA is delivering Western Portal Stage 3 which proposes to remove rail assets made redundant by the operation of the Metro Tunnel and reconfigure rail assets between South Kensington and Mooney Ponds Creek on the redundant part of the Sunbury Line. The Western Portal Stage 3 works (the works) include:

- the removal of redundant Sunbury Line infrastructure
- utility services protection and relocation
- track and civil infrastructure works
- overhead wiring and structure works
- rail control and communications systems works.

The subject site is located entirely within the rail corridor and is shown below.



Figure 1: Extent of works area (VicPlan 2021)

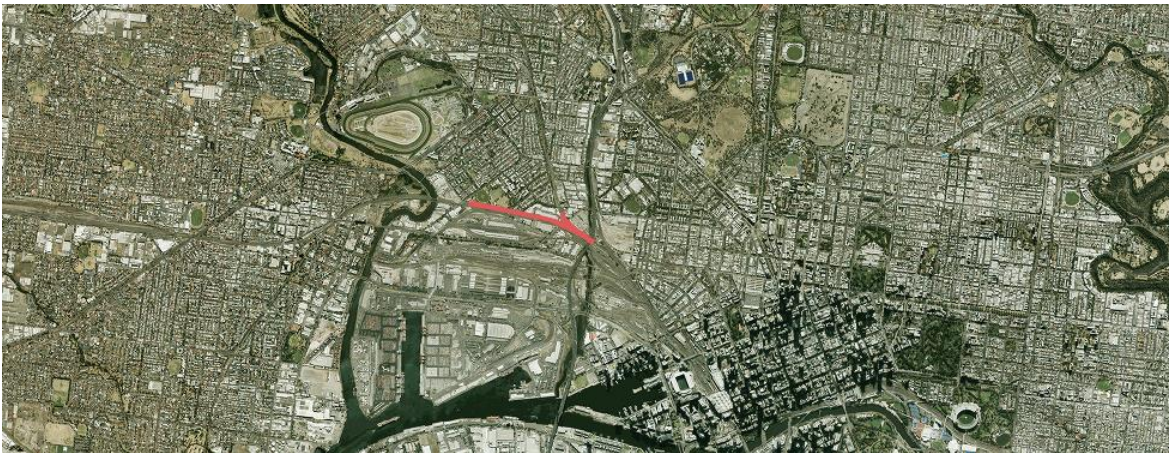


Figure 2: Site location context map (VicPlan 2021)

## Method

The ecological site assessment of the vehicle turnaround was completed by an RIA ecologist on 30 March 2021. The ecologist is a Vegetation Quality Assessment (VQA) or 'Habitat Hectares' assessor accredited by the Victorian Government Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP).

The site assessment included a site walkover to identify and map ecological values, focusing on works area shown in Figure 1, entirely within the rail corridor.

The purpose of the search was to determine if any native vegetation, as defined under Clause 52.17 of the Victorian Planning Provisions (VPP) was present to inform the requirements of a planning permit for the works and to inform any potential construction management measures to be implemented.

## Ecological Assessment

The site assessment did not record native vegetation as described in the VPP within the extent of the works area.

The works area consisted primarily of a mixture of exotic grassy and herbaceous weed species including Cock's-foot grass *Dactylis glomerata*, Broom-grass *Bromus sp.* and Wild Raddish *Raphanus raphanistrum*. Planted exotic trees such as Pepper Trees *Schinus mole* were recorded at Radcliffe St, West Melbourne and a single Canary Date Palm *Phoenix canariensis* was recorded

Rail Infrastructure Alliance delivered by:

at Lloyd St, Kensington. There are no environmental or tree protection planning overlays that cover the works area.

## Legislative implications

Relevant Federal and State legislation are discussed below, as well as the legislative requirement for each substation.

Federal	Relevance	Legislative requirement
<i>Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999</i> (EPBC Act)	No EPBC Act-listed species or communities were identified within the proposed location of the vehicle turnaround.	No requirements.
State	Relevance	Legislative requirement
<i>Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act 1988</i> (FFG Act)	No FFG Act-listed species or communities were identified within the proposed location of the vehicle turnaround.	No requirements
<i>Guidelines for the removal, destruction or lopping of native vegetation (DELWP 2017)</i> (Guidelines) And <i>Planning and Environment Act 1987</i> (P&E Act)	No patches of vegetation or scattered trees were recorded in the proposed turnaround location	No requirements.

## Conclusion and Recommendations

No native vegetation was recorded in Western Portal Stage 3 area. The following recommendations are made to ensure ecological values are maintained:

- tree removals and lopping (if any – unlikely to be required) to be undertaken by a suitably qualified arborist
- if exotic trees are to be retained, establish adequate Tree Protection Zone fencing prior to undertaking works.
- ensure a suitably qualified wildlife handler is on site to manage the relocation of any common fauna species that may use any trees to be removed (if any) as habitat.