

# Planning Report

Overhaul at Clover Power Station and Distribution line works  
(66kV), Bogong High Plains Road, Bogong

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## 1. Introduction

AGL Energy Limited (AGL) has prepared this planning report to seek planning approval for proposed overhaul works at Clover Power Station and works to the existing distribution line (running between Mount Beauty Terminal Station and Clover Switch Yard), both located off the Bogong High Plains Road, Bogong.

The works are required to ensure the ongoing efficient operation of the Clover Power Station, which plays a crucial support role in the event of peak demand periods and other outages in the provision of reliable energy. The ongoing efficient operation of the station is also vital to support Australia's clean energy supply.

A summary of the application details is provided in **Table 1** below.

**Table 1: Summary Application Details**

Application Details	
Local Government Area	Alpine Shire Council
Application location	<p>Address: Bogong High Plains Road Bogong 3699</p> <p>The site is located off Bogong High Plains Road, Bogong. Works associated with the Clover Power Station are within the following Crown Allotments (managed by DEECA)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Allot. 11A Parish of Carruno, SPI: 11A\PP2361</li><li>• Allot. 11B Parish of Carruno, SPI: 11B \PP2361</li><li>• Allot. 11 Parish of Curruno, SPI 11\PP2361</li></ul> <p>Works associated with the distribution line are within the following Crown Allotments (managed by Parks Victoria)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Allot. 2008 Parish of Werमतong, SPI: 2008\PP3795</li><li>• Allot. 2009 Parish of Werमतong, SPI: 2009\PP3795</li><li>• Allot. 2001 Parish of Carruno, SPI: 2001\PP2361</li><li>• Allot. 2011 Parish of Carruno, SPI: 2011\PP2361</li><li>• Allot. 2002 Parish of Curruno, SPI: 2002\PP2361</li></ul>
Total Project Area	Approximately 2,500 m <sup>2</sup> for works at the Clover Power Station and approximately 50 m <sup>2</sup> for the distribution line work
Proposal	<p>Works at Clover Power Station, including replacement of internal components, an extension to the tail bay and laydown/storage area.</p> <p>Works to the existing distribution line to upgrade access tracks, replace two existing poles and replace a cross arm on one pole to increase clearance to the conductors by 1m.</p>

Application Details	
Zone	Public Conservation and Resource Zone (PCRZ) clause 36.03
Overlay	Bushfire Management Overlay (BMO) clause 44.06
Definitions	<p>Pursuant to clause 73.03 Clover Power Station is defined as a 'renewable energy facility'.</p> <p>The 66kV distribution line is defined as a 'minor utility installation'.</p>
Responsible Authority	Under clause 72.01-1 the Minister for Planning is the responsible authority.
Planning Permit Triggers	Clause 36.03-2 – PCRZ - A permit is required to construct a building or carry out works in the zone.
Other relevant Planning Requirements	<p>Clause 53.13 Renewable Energy Facility (other than wind energy facility) outlines information required to support an application.</p> <p>Clause 53.22 Significant Economic Development – applies to renewable energy facilities with an installed capacity of 1MW (Clover has an existing capacity of 29MW)</p>

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## 2. Project Background

AGL Energy Limited (AGL) operates Australia's largest private electricity generation portfolio, comprising coal and gas-fired generation, renewable energy sources such as wind, hydro, solar and batteries.

Part of AGL's energy portfolio is the Kiewa hydro-electric scheme comprising McKay Creek, Bogong, Clover and West Kiewa Power Stations which are located in the Kiewa Valley in Victoria's North East approximately 360km from Melbourne.

The Kiewa scheme has four power stations. Clover Power Station (CLPS) is the third station in the Kiewa Hydroelectric Scheme and was the first station built, commissioned in 1945. CLPS is now causing a bottleneck in the scheme and most of the CLPS major components have reached end of life and are to be replaced.

The work to be undertaken includes the replacement of turbines, generators and inlet valves to allow reliable operation of the asset and to debottleneck the scheme by increasing the throughput at Clover from 120 Megalitres per hour (ML/h) to 140 ML/h to match the rest of the Kiewa scheme.

To accommodate a minor increase in generation capacity from the newer generator and turbines (approx. 5.8 MW increase to 34.8 MW) minor upgrades are required to the existing 66kV distribution line between CLPS and Mount Beauty Terminal Station, to increase the clearance to the conductors by 1m. The distribution line between Mt Beauty Terminal Station and Clover Power Station is owned by Ausnet Services.

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## 3. The Site

### 3.1. The site and surrounds

Both the Clover Power Station and the distribution line are located approximately 6.5 km to the south of Mount Beauty, off the Bogong High Plains Road, Bogong, and are located within Crown Land described as follows:

#### **Crown Land Managed by DECCA**

Crown Description: Allot. 11A Parish of Carruno  
Address: Bogong High Plains Road Bogong 3699  
SPI: 11A\PP2361

Crown Description: Allot. 11B Parish of Carruno  
Address: Bogong High Plains Road Bogong 3699  
SPI: 11B\PP2361

Crown Description: Allot. 11 Parish of Carruno  
Address: Bogong High Plains Road Bogong 3699  
SPI: 11\PP2361

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#### **Crown Land Managed by Parks Victoria**

Crown Description: Allot. 2008 Parish of Werमतong  
Address: Bogong High Plains Road, Mount Beauty, 3699  
SPI: 2008\PP3795

Crown Description: Allot. 2009 Parish of Werमतong  
Address: East Kiewa Firetrail Mount Beauty 3699  
SPI: 2009\PP3795

Crown Description: Allot. 2001 Parish of Carruno  
Address: Bogong High Plains Road Bogong 3699  
SPI: 2001\PP2361

Crown Description: Allot. 2011 Parish of Carruno  
Address: Bogong High Plains Road Bogong 3699  
SPI: 2011\PP2361

Crown Description: Allot. 2002 Parish of Carruno  
Address: Bogong High Plains Road Bogong 3699  
SPI: 2002\PP2361

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Copies of the Titles are attached in **Appendix 1**.

The Clover Power Station is located to the east of the Bogong High Plains Road and directly to the east of the Clover Dam and the Kiewa River East Branch.

Locations of the Clover Power Station and 66kV distribution line are provided below in **Figure 1** and **Figure 2**.



*Figure 1 Location of the Clover Power Station*

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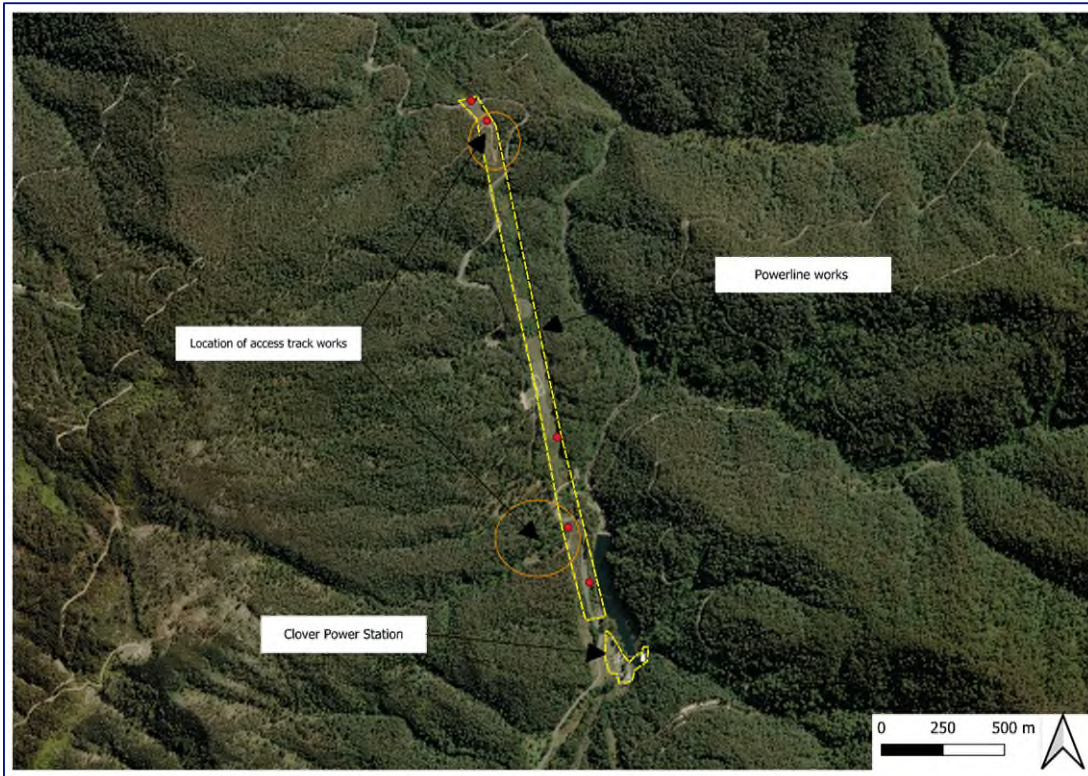


Figure 2 - Location of Clover Power Station and the 66kV Distribution Line and the access works.

The Clover Power Station is surrounded by the Alpine National Park, characterised by heavily vegetated hills and steep topography. The closest residential properties are located approximately 2 km to the south in the Bogong Village. The Clover Power Station site itself was commissioned in 1945 and as such the site is highly modified, with vegetation having been cleared previously and the site containing existing access, switchyard and other power generation infrastructure. The Kiewa River East branch has also been modified in this area to support the hydro power generation at the site, with dam infrastructure, inlet and outlet (tail bay) infrastructure constructed within the water way.

The distribution line, runs north from the Clover Power Station 66kV Switchyard to the Mount Beauty Terminal Station (MBTS), generally following the Bogong High Plains Road to the north and then west to the MBTS located to the south of the Mount Beauty township. The distribution line consists of wooden power poles located in a 50 m wide alignment, which is generally cleared of all mid to higher level vegetation. There are also a number of access tracks running from the Bogong High Plains Road for ongoing access to the distribution line.

Views from the Bogong High Plains Road is provided in **Pictures 1 and 2**. Site photos of the power station are provided in **Pictures 3 and 4**.

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*Picture 1 View from Bogong High Plains Road*



*Picture 2 View from Bogong High Plains Road*

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*Picture 3 View north towards Clover Power Station*



*Picture 4 View across existing Tail Bay from Power Station*

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## 4. Proposed Works

### 4.1. Proposed Works – Clover Power Station

The proposed works at the Clover Power Station comprise:

- Extension and raising of the existing tail bay (raised by 2.4m and extended by 3m). A temporary rock windrow will be located adjacent to the tail bay area along with deepening of the stream bed to enable segregation of the work area from river flow for access and construction.
- Creation of a hardstand laydown area to facilitate the segregation of pedestrian and machinery movements for safety.
- Minor native vegetation clearing to facilitate the hardstand laydown area (scattered individuals only).

Plans illustrating the work elements and proposed construction layout are provided in **Figure 3** below with further details provided in **Appendix 2**.

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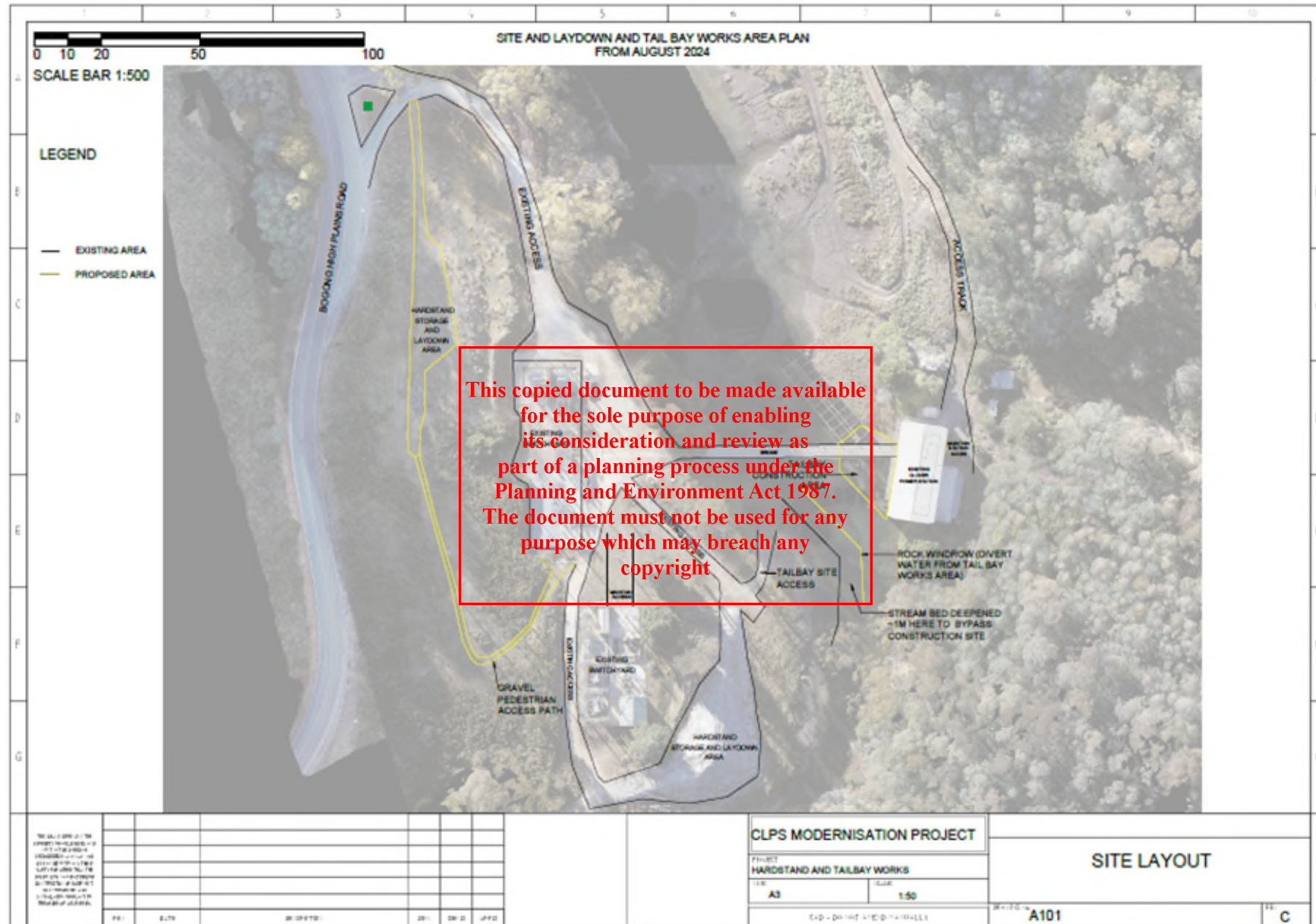


Figure 3 Work locations at Clover Power Station

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Works will be generally carried out in the following stages:

- Work staging:
  - Mobilisation – From Aug-24
  - Station Outage (11kV works & Station Service Transformer replacement) – From Aug to Nov-24
  - Unit 2 replacement – Nov-24 to Aug-25
  - Unit 1 replacement – Apr-25 to Jan-26
- Work hours:
  - Monday to Friday 7am to 5pm Aug to Nov -24
  - Monday to Saturday 7am to 5pm Nov-24 to Jan-26
- Traffic:
  - Minimal change. A maximum of twenty cars for staff and workers
  - Deliveries will be intermittent with a maximum of 1 to 2 truck deliveries per day
- Worker numbers: 15 to 30 people
- Duration of work – Aug-24 to Jan-26

## 4.2. Proposed Works – Distribution Line

The 66kV distribution line between CLPS and MBTS is existing and has been in place since approximately 1942. The line is owned and maintained by AusNet Services.

Works to the powerline include the following:

- Replacing two distribution poles with two new poles of increased height.
- Raising the height of the cross arm of one pole.
- Maintenance and upgrades to access tracks to facilitate construction access to pole locations

Plans illustrating the work elements and proposed construction layout are provided in **Figure 4**.

There are no new sections of powerline as part of this project. There are no new access tracks to be constructed as part of this project, however additional access is required to facilitate construction access.

The 66kV distribution line is the key power supply line between CLPS and MBTS. It is important that dispatchable renewable energy can be delivered to the grid, with hydro power being critical in assisting to provide peak power when photovoltaic power is not available.

Works will be generally carried out in the following stages:

- Work staging:
  - Access track and crane pad preparation – Feb-Mar 25
  - Pole replacements Mar 25
- Outages – 3-day line outage during daytime. Re-energised after hours each day
- Work hours: 7am to 5pm
- Traffic: Several light vehicles, delivery truck, crane and small earthing moving equipment
- Worker numbers: 5 to 15

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- Duration of work: Access tracks/pad prep – 2 weeks. Pole replacements 3 days.

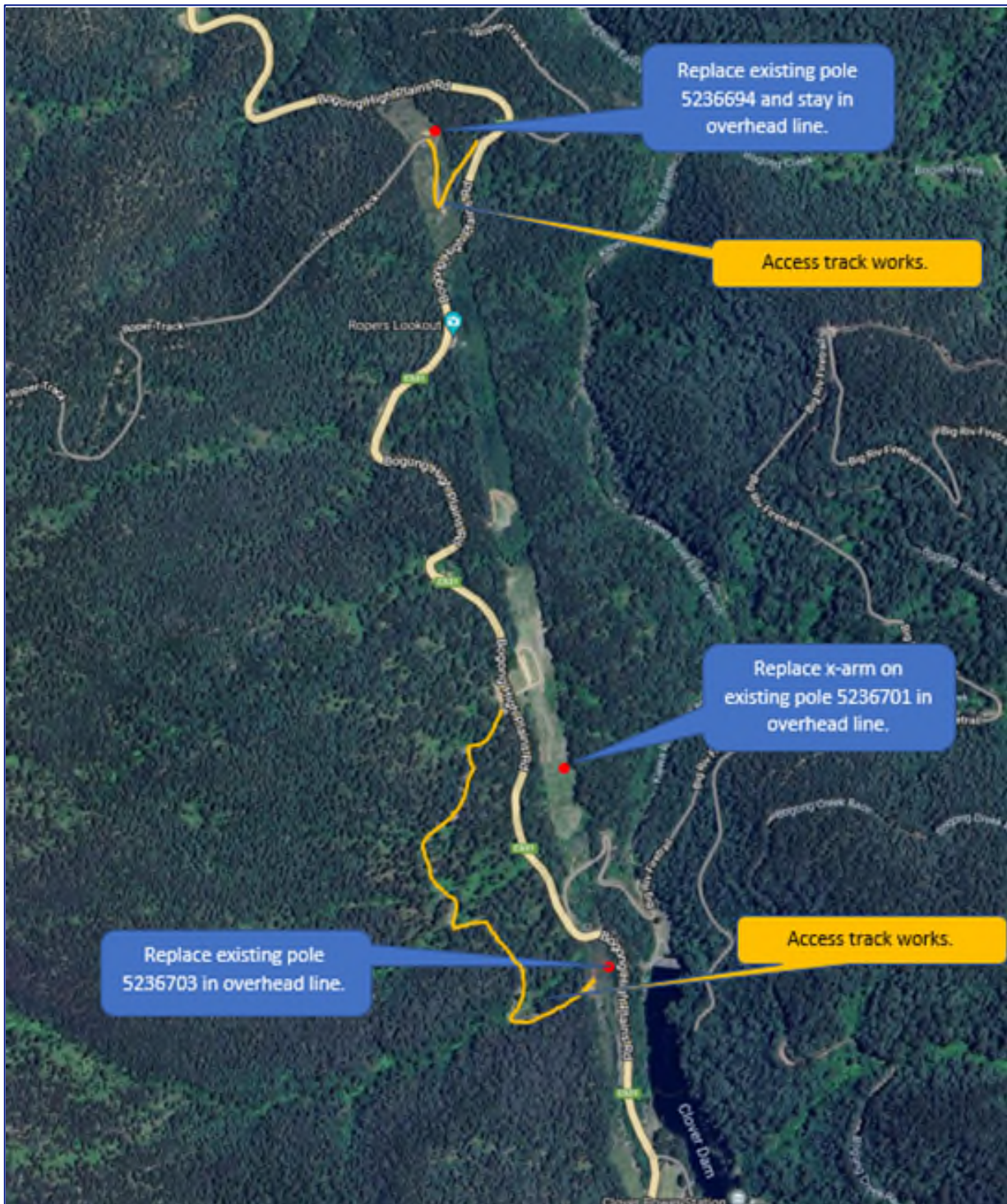


Figure 4 Work locations along the Power Line (in blue).

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## 5. Consultation

### 5.1. Alpine Shire Council

The Alpine Shire Council was contacted and offered a briefing on the proposed works as follows:

A pre-planning general enquiry (GE.2024.039) was made through the Alpine Shire Planning Portal on 20<sup>th</sup> June 2024. Preliminary project description and design documentation was provided and uploaded to the system.

In addition, AGL offered a briefing on the project to the relevant Council officers on July 4 and followed up on July 9 and July 23. At this stage we have been unable to coordinate suitable times for the briefing.

Council has previously been consulted on the proposed powerline work and in an email dated 12 December 2024, confirmed that any native vegetation clearing associated with the powerline work would be able to be undertaken in accordance with the exemption provided for utility providers.

AGL will continue to coordinate an appropriate time to discuss the application with Council to address any issues that the Shire may raise in relation to the proposed works.

### 5.2. Pre application meeting with DTP

An initial meeting was held with Department of Transport and Planning's (DTP's) Development Approvals and Design Renewables team on the 17<sup>th</sup> of June 2024. Specific feedback included that the application must include:

- clear information on the proposed native vegetation clearing that is required to facilitate the development; and
- clear information on potential impacts from the proposed works in the water way and clarify changes to the tail bay.

### 5.3. Land managers

The Clover Power Station and 66kV distribution line are located on Crown Land. The Clover Power Station operates under a Crown Land lease and license. The lease includes a land management agreement, known as the 'Kiewa Agreement', that allows for operational and maintenance activities to take place.

The Crown Land parcels that are the subject of the works are managed by DEECA and Parks Victoria.

Land managers consent was sought to submit the planning application in accordance with Clause 36.03-3.

Comments provided by the land managers and a copy of their consent are provided in **Appendix 3**.

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#### 5.4. Northeast Catchment Management Authority

The North-East Catchment Management Authority (NECMA) were engaged in early discussions surrounding tail bay extension works requiring a works on waterways permit.

In reviewing the initial design proposal and work methodology NECMA noted the fundamental nature of the works and expressed no intention to refuse an application provided effective and wholistic environmental controls and safeguards are captured as part of the permit application and a site-specific environmental management plan.

A site visit to Clover Power Station with a NECMA representative and the AGL Hydro Environment Advisor and AGL Hydro Project Manager was undertaken on the 9th of August to discuss and scope best practise work methodology and appropriate environmental controls for works proposed within the waterway.

NECMA has now issued a works on water way permit (NECMA-W-2024-00278), outlining required measures to manage impacts to the waterway consistent with the *Water Act 1989* (a copy of the permit is included in **Appendix 3**). All conditions in the permit will be implemented through an environmental management plan.

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## 6. Planning Policies and Assessment

### 6.1. State Legislation and Policy

The following State legislation is considered relevant to the proposed works and is summarised in **Table 2**.

**Table 2** Overview of relevant State legislation

Legislation	Objectives	Relevance to the proposal
Planning and Environment Act 1987 (P&E Act)	The (P&E Act) establishes a framework for planning the use, development and protection of land in Victoria.	The P&E Act and associated planning schemes provide the zones and overlays which trigger the requirements for planning approval for the project and identify the responsible authority (in this instance the Minister for Planning).  The relevant planning policy, zones and overlays are discussed below in sections 6.2 and 6.3.
Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006 (AH Act)	The AH Act is the principal piece of legislation defining Aboriginal cultural heritage management requirements in Victoria.	The Clover Power Station is within a site identified as being of potential cultural heritage sensitivity. A cultural heritage due diligence assessment was undertaken for the proposed works, and this identified that a Cultural Heritage Management Plan is not required (see section 6.4)
Catchment and Land Protection Act 1994 (CaLP)	The CaLP controls noxious weeds and also sets out the framework for the integrated management and protection of catchments	An ecological due diligence assessment has been undertaken for the proposed works, which identified CaLP listed weed species on the site. The assessment recommends that reasonable steps must be undertaken to prevent the growth and spread of these weeds (section 6.4).  The subject site is within a 'declared special water supply catchment'. An assessment on potential impacts on water quality and discussions with the North East Catchment Management Authority (NECMA) are provided in Section 5.4 and 6.4
Water Act 1989 (Vic)	The WA aims to conserve and properly manage Victoria's water resources.	The Kiewa River East Branch is a declared waterway under the WA and as such a works on water way permit is required for the extension to the tail bay. Consultation with NECMA and an assessment of the potential impact to water quality are provided in sections 5.4 and 6.4.
Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act 1988	The FFG Act aims to conserve Victoria's native flora and fauna.	Removal of scattered individuals is proposed in the area to be utilised as a hard stand area. An ecological due diligence assessment has been provided which concludes that there are no significant impacts on ecological values in section 6.4. In addition, as no protected flora species are present – a permit under the FFG Act is not required.

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Legislation	Objectives	Relevance to the proposal
Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act 1988		Limited vegetation clearing is also required to facilitate access to the distribution line. An ecological due diligence assessment has been provided for this work, which concludes that there are no significant impacts on ecological values in section 6.4. In addition, as no protected flora species are present – a permit under the FFG Act is not required.
Environment Protection Act 2017 (EP Act)	The EP Act requires the protection of the environment and human health and requires a general environmental duty to ensure all activities reduce the potential harm and environmental health risks of their activities.	AGL, partnering with AusNet Services, will undertake the works in accordance with an environment management plan (EMP). The EMP will incorporate specific mitigation measures to manage and reduce the risk of harm to the environment and human health during construction of the project.

## 6.2. Planning Policy Framework

The Planning Policy Framework (PPF) seeks to improve the operation of planning policy in Victoria by aligning State and local policies. The PPF applies to the Alpine Shire Council area and the following policies are relevant to the proposal:

- **Clause 12.01 Biodiversity and clause 12.01-2S Native vegetation management** Both of these policies seek to protect Victoria's biodiversity and ensure no net loss to biodiversity as a result of the removal, destruction or lopping of native vegetation consistent with the *Guidelines for the removal, destruction or lopping of native vegetation* (Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning, 2017)
- **Clause 12.03-1L River Corridors and Waterways** aims to protect and enhance waterway systems.
- **Clause 14.02-1S Water - Catchment planning and management and clause 14.02-2L Water Quality** aims to protect water quality in a number of catchments and includes the Upper Kiewa Water Supply Catchment Areas. The policy encourages and protects water quality in special water supply catchment areas.
- **Clause 15.03 Heritage Conservation** aims to ensure the conservation of places of heritage significance and provides for the conservation and enhancement of those places including, among other elements, areas of archaeological significance.
- **Clause 19.01 Energy** aims to facilitate the appropriate development of energy supply infrastructure and, of relevance, to support the development of energy generation to transition to a low carbon economy.

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## 6.3. Land Use and Development

### Land Use Definition

The proposed buildings and works associated with the Clover Power Station are consistent with the land use as a 'renewable energy facility' at clause 73.03 of the Alpine Planning Scheme, which is defined as '*Land used to generate energy using resources that can be rapidly replaced by ongoing natural processes. Renewable energy resources include .... water flows...*'

The proposed buildings and works associated with the distribution line are consistent with the land use term 'Minor Utility Installation' at clause 73.03 of the Alpine Planning Scheme, which is defined as '*land used to transmit, distribute or store power*'. The line operates at less than 220,000 volts and it is utilised to distribute power to 701 customers, as confirmed by AusNet via email dated 22 July.

Under Clause 63.01, existing use rights apply to the use of land if proof of continuous use is established under Clause 63.11.

- The Kiewa Agreement clearly establishes the Clover Power Station has been operating continuously for more than 15 years prior to this application proceeding; and
- AusNet has confirmed that the 66 kV distribution line has been installed since 1942 via email dated July 17, 2024.

Copies of the Kiewa Agreement and advice from AusNet service is provided in **Appendix 4**.

### Responsible Authority

The responsible authority is the Minister for Planning in accordance with Clause 72.01-1, as the proposed involves

- '*An energy generation facility....of 1MW or greater*'. The Clover Power Station currently generates 29 MW.
- '*A utility installation used to - transmit or distribute electricity...*'

### Zones

The proposed works are located within the Public Conservation and Resources Zone (PCRZ) in the Alpine Planning Scheme (**Figure 5 and 6**)

The relevant objectives of the PCRZ are:

- To protect and conserve the natural environment and natural processes for their historic, landscape, habitat or cultural values.
- To provide for appropriate resource-based uses.

A permit is required in accordance with Clause 36.03-2 for buildings and works within the PCRZ.

**NOTE:** Two additional power poles which require replacement are located in the Transport Zone, which does not trigger a planning permit requirement for works associated with a 'minor utility facility' (exempted at clause 62.02 – 1).

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Elements of the internal replacement works of 'end of life' components (replacement of valves, generators and turbines) are not considered to constitute 'buildings or works' as they do not form structural elements of the building. As such planning permission is not sought for these works.

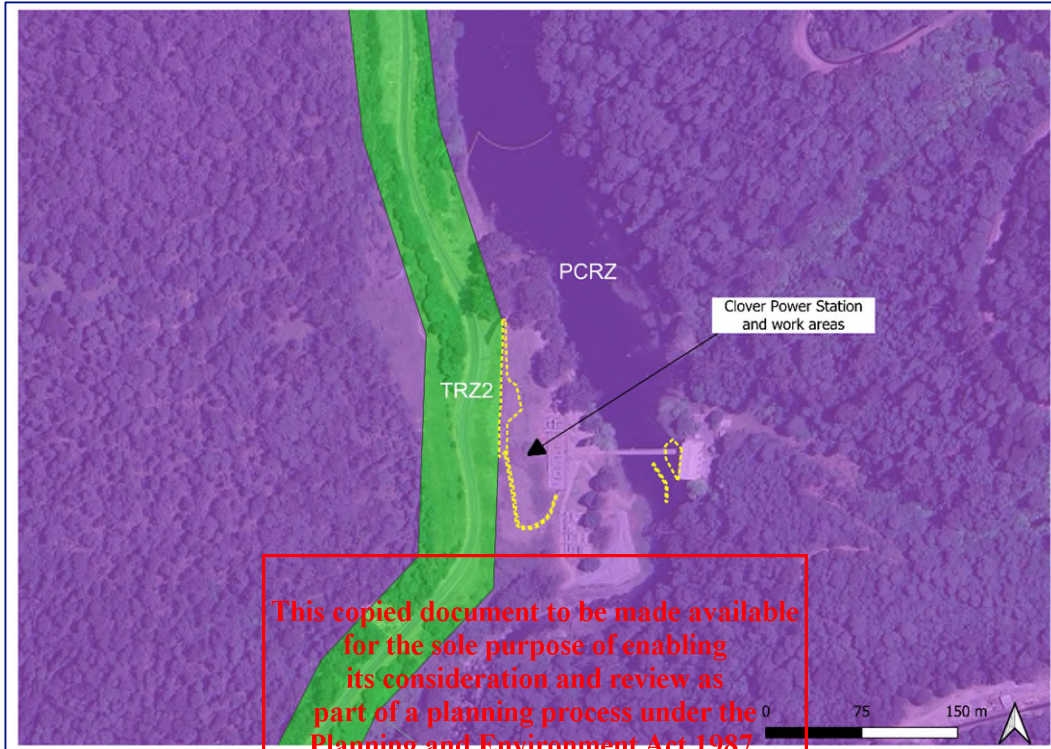


Figure 5 Land use zoning and the work area at Clover Power Station

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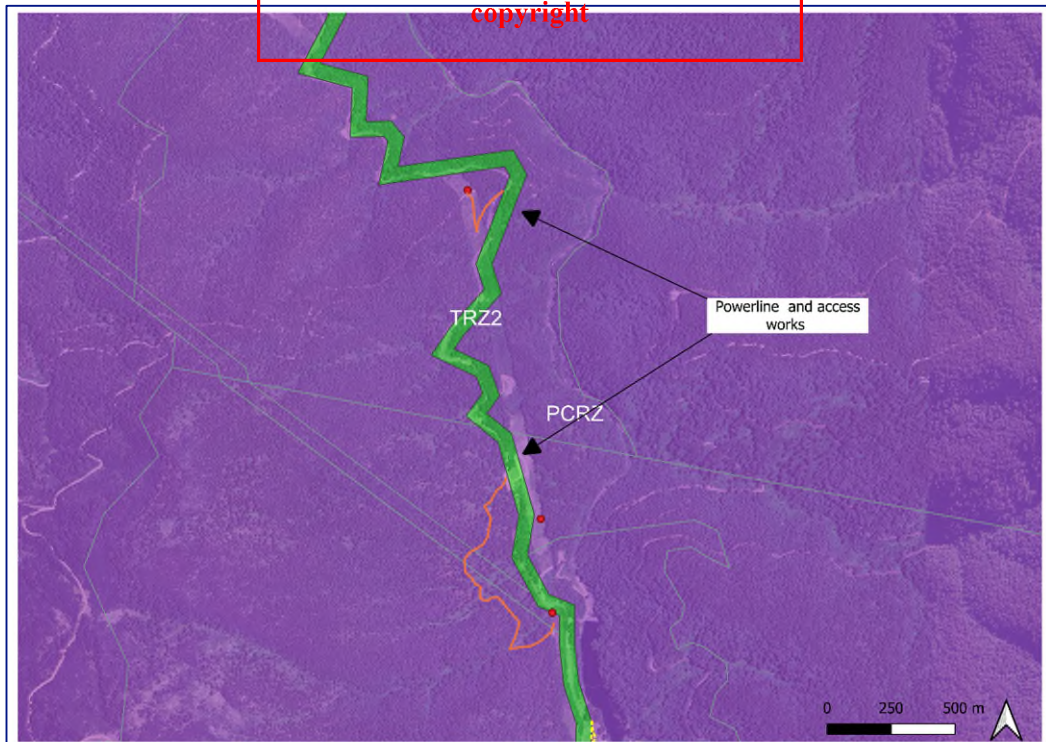


Figure 6 Land use zoning of the distribution line. And location of power pole

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## Overlays

The site is subject to a Bush Fire Management Overlay, however renewable energy facilities and utility installations are not listed as land uses where bushfire risk should be considered, therefore, there is no further consideration of this Overlay.

## Particular Provisions

**Clause 52.17 Native Vegetation** requires the avoidance, minimisation and offset of any removal destruction or lopping of native vegetation.

A permit is required for native vegetation removal consistent with Clause 52.17-1 as minor native vegetation removal (removal of scattered individuals) is required to provide for the proposed hardstand and storage area. An ecological due diligence assessment has been undertaken for the proposed works and is further discussed in section 6.4.

Native vegetation clearing associated with the 66kV distribution line will be undertaken under the exemption provided for utility installations and consistent with the *'Procedure to rely on the utility installations exemption in planning schemes'* (DELWP, 2019). This has been confirmed and agreed with AusNet and the Alpine Shire Council.

**Clause 53.13 Renewable Energy Facility** – applies to facilitate the establishment and expansion of renewable energy facilities and outlines information that must accompany an application including a site and context analysis and a design response. The requirements of this clause are not considered relevant to the proposed works at Clover Power Station. The works are to ensure the ongoing efficient operation of an existing renewable energy facility and are considered to have negligible impact on the surrounding amenity, which is discussed further in section 6.4

**Clause 53.22 Significant Economic Development** - aims to prioritise the assessment of development that will provide substantial public benefit, including renewable energy projects with an installed capacity of 1MW or greater. As the clover power station has a capacity of over 1MW it qualifies as 'significant economic development'.

**Clause 65 Decision guidelines** - sets out the matters to be considered before deciding on an application. The relevant matters are considered in section 6.4 below.

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## Notice and Referral Requirements

### Notice requirements

Buildings and works are not specifically exempted from notice under the PCRZ. AGL considers however that it is open to the Minister, as the responsible authority, to determine that notice is not required to other landowners and occupiers under section 52 (1) (a) of the P&E Act as the granting of a permit for these works are not considered to cause material detriment to any person, specifically:

- the works do not substantially change the ongoing operational use of the land;
- there are no sensitive receivers within 2 km of the site;
- the site and surrounding land is Crown Land managed by DEECA and Parks Victoria, who have both been consulted and their consent sought prior to the application being submitted.

### Clause 66.02 Use and Development Referrals

- The proposed works include minor native vegetation clearance, referral to the Secretary to the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (now DEECA) may be required (clause 66.02-2).
- The works are within an area identified as 'special water catchment area', referral to the relevant water supply authorities will be required (clause 66.02-5).
- As the works are within the vicinity of a major electricity transmission easement referral to the relevant transmission authority (AusNet) is required.

## 6.4. Planning and Environmental Assessment

Consistent with the decision guidelines under Clause 65.01 Approval of Application or Plan, the following matters have been considered to address: relevant planning policy, land use consistency with the relevant zoning, and the proposal's effect on the environment, human health and amenity of the area.

### Planning Policy

The works will increase the operational efficiency of an existing hydro-electric power station – providing for efficient dispatch of reliable clean energy, with no substantive change to the current land use of the site. The works are consistent with the planning policy frameworks for energy infrastructure (clause 19.01), specifically in that the works will enable existing energy infrastructure to be more effectively utilised.

All other relevant planning policies relate to the conservation and management of biodiversity, water quality and heritage values, which are discussed below.

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## Land Use Consistency

The project consists of overhaul works, including the extension and raising of the existing tail bay, a hardstand and storage area, replacement toilet facilities and ancillary construction facilities. Minor works are also required to the existing 66kV distribution line, including access track works, replacement of two poles and installation of a cross arm to increase the clearance of the conductors by 1m.

The works are considered to be consistent with the intent of the PCRZ zone for the following reasons:

- The works do not result in a substantial upgrade or alteration to the existing use of the site. As the works are generally replacing existing end of life components, there will be negligible alterations to the facility or impacts to views from the nearest public vantage point, which is the Bogong High Plains Road.
- The works are contained within areas of existing infrastructure or areas that have been used as part of the past operations of the hydro-electric station, and as such there is minimal impacts to native vegetation, water quality, fauna and/or their habitat.
- The site is remote, surrounded by National Park, with the closest sensitive receiver located over 2 km to the south. There will be no determinantal impacts to sensitive receivers.
- The relevant land managers (DEECA and Parks Victoria) have been consulted to seek permission to submit this application.
- The works associated with the existing 66kV distribution line will not have any substantial impact on the operation and safety of the power system. As the poles are being replaced by wooden poles in an existing cleared alignment there will be no visual impacts from the Bogong High Plains Road. Access track upgrades are predominately located within existing tracks that are required to access and maintain the powerline.

## Biodiversity

An ecological due diligence assessment has been prepared by Biosis Pty Ltd that provides an assessment of the proposed vegetation removal, potential impacts on threatened fauna and flora, including aquatic flora and fauna (**Appendix 5**). The report concludes that the proposed native vegetation to be removed is characterised as 'scattered individual plants', there is no threatened flora species and impacts on potential listed fauna species that may occur in the area are unlikely. A number of mitigation measures have been provided in the due diligence report, including the need to manage CaLP listed weeds identified on site. These recommendations will be incorporated into the environmental management plan or the operational environmental management plan, as are relevant.

## Heritage

A cultural heritage due diligence assessment was undertaken by Biosis Pty Ltd to assess potential heritage considerations associated with the proposed works (**Appendix 6**). The advice found that:

- A mandatory CHMP is not required for either the works at the Clover Power Station or the proposed works to the 66kV line.

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- There are areas of archaeological potential in the vicinity of the Clover Power station, such as the historic workers camps, due to their association with the development of the Kiewa Scheme. As no subsurface works are proposed no Heritage Victoria consents or consent exemptions are required.

AGL will implement an environmental management plan to ensure that there is no subsurface disturbance in the areas identified as having potential for archaeological significance. Including:

- Site Inductions to ensure all workers are aware of the area of archaeological potential; and
- An unexpected finds protocol will be developed and covered in the site induction.

## Water Quality

The subject site is within the Upper Kiewa catchment which is identified as being within a 'declared special area water supply catchment' (Declared SWSCA), which effectively identifies the area as important for water supply purposes. The publication *Nature, Aims and Implementation of a Land Use Determination in the Upper Kiewa Water Supply Catchment* (Rothols et al. 1965) further identifies appropriate land uses for the area and identifies that the catchment includes the ongoing operation of power generating stations.

Information within 'Planning permit applications in special water catchment areas' (DEECA, 2024) provides further guidance to protect and maintain water quality for ongoing drinking water supplies and general domestic uses. The policy references obligations under the *Environment Protection Act 2017*, and notes that there is a general environmental duty to manage risks of harm to human health and pollution from waste as far as is reasonably practical. The policy also notes that potential sediment discharges should be managed in accordance with *Civil construction, building and demolition guide*, Publication 1834.1, EPA, 2023. Noting the importance of maintaining water quality in the area, potential operational and construction impacts on water quality are further considered below.

## Operational Impacts

The Clover Power Station operational parameters are established by the Bulk Entitlement (Kiewa Hydro) conversion order under the *Water Act 1989* (the Entitlement). The Entitlement outlines parameters for water use including maximum storage capacity, passing flow rates and releases.

The proposed works will not result in a change to the operational parameters as specified in the Entitlement. The only operational change will be an increase in the maximum flow rate from 120ML/h to 140ML/h through the existing underground rock lined tunnel between Junction Dam and Clover Power Station, consistent with the other Kiewa Power Station discharge rates. This change has no impact on water quality, Clover Dam operating levels, passing flow rates, nor the maximum release rate from the Mount Beauty Regulating Pond. The tail bay raising works is located within close proximity to the existing footprint of the building and will allow water levels at the power station to be more effectively controlled (i.e. provides backpressure for the turbines to work effectively) but will have no impact on the water levels in the dam or alter passing flow rates.



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## Construction Impacts

In-water works include alterations to the tail bay, installation of the rock window and stream bed deepening to divert flows during construction. Potential impacts include sediment disturbance particularly during deepening of the stream bed and uncontrolled release of construction materials such as concrete or fuels during in water works. There is also the potential for runoff from adjacent work areas to migrate sediment and or other construction materials into the waterway.

## Mitigation Measures

Consistent with AGL's general environmental duty, an environmental management plan will be implemented to control and mitigate potential impacts to water quality during construction. The EMP will include the following requirements:

- Preparation of an erosion and sediment control plan to ensure runoff from the work sites will not result in discharge of sediments or contaminants into the waterway.
- Works in water ways, including the placement of windrow and excavation of the stream bed to be undertaken during period(s) of low flow to avoid erosion and additional sediment entering the waterway.
- Large rock will be used to reduce the risk of slipping or being moved by floodwaters.
- All material excavated within the river bed will be used to help form the rock wall, no excavated material will be removed from the waterway.
- There will be no damage or interference to the banks of the waterway.
- The flow will be diverted around the construction site, through the use of rock beaching – with flow confined to one portion of the waterway to protect the construction site and avoid pollution of waters.
- Excavation will only be undertaken in the waterway when the level of water in the dam is below that of the worksite. There will be a restriction on Clover dam levels to remove flooding risk.
- No works will be undertaken after periods of heavy rainfall or flooding.
- Visual inspections must be carried out frequently. Any water quality issues observed in or outside of the proposal area would be reported and appropriate action would be taken.
- Water quality monitoring is already undertaken as part of AGL's desilting management with two monitoring stations installed downstream of Clover Power station (located at Ryders Bridge, Tawonga and Damms Road Bridge, Mount Beauty). These loggers take turbidity readings every 15 minutes and can be viewed in our historian data system. This data will be reviewed during the works to ensure no downstream impacts, and spot checks will be performed immediately downstream of the work area with a handheld turbidity monitor.
- The Environment Management Plan for the site will also include a fauna salvage plan for fish, frogs and other aquatic fauna that may be inhabiting the work area and need to be relocated.

## Amenity and Construction Impacts

Construction impacts on amenity as a result of the proposed works are considered minor. As noted, the site is surrounded by National Park and there are no residential or sensitive receivers within 2 km. As such the visual impact of the works and/or noise impacts are unlikely to be perceived by any sensitive receivers. Construction hours are generally restricted to normal

working hours, with the exception being works undertaken on Saturdays (7am - 5pm), however, no night works are planned and noting the remoteness of the site, it is highly unlikely the extended hours on Saturday will impact residential receivers.

There will be some increased traffic to the site during the work, however, it is unlikely to be significant. There is estimated to be a maximum of an additional twenty (20) cars for staff and workers and a maximum of 1 to 2 truck deliveries per day during the power station works. Works associated with the distribution line, are anticipated to require several light vehicles, delivery truck, crane and small earthing moving equipment over a short duration (3 days). In both instances traffic impacts are minor, easily accommodated by the existing Bogong High Plains Road and unlikely to cause significantly delay to the travel times for other road users. Where works (powerline works) are required to be undertaken within the road reserve appropriate traffic management will be applied in consultation with the relevant road manager.

All other construction impacts are considered to be appropriately managed through the implementation of an environmental management plan which will outline appropriate mitigation measures to minimise and manage construction impacts as is needed.

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## 7. Conclusion

This application seeks approval for buildings and works associated with an existing renewable energy facility and a minor utility installation to facilitate the ongoing efficient operation of the Clover Power Station. Ongoing efficient operation of the power station is vital to support Australia's clean energy supply. The hydro power station itself provides a crucial support role in the event of peak demand periods and other outages in the provision of reliable energy.

As discussed, the proposed works are considered to be minor, with no substantive change to the existing land use established on the site within the existing land use zone (PCRZ). Potential impacts on the natural environmental, human health and amenity, specifically potential impacts on native vegetation and water quality, have been appropriately considered and it is concluded that these are minor and can be effectively managed with the implementation of relevant environmental management plans.

Noting the minor nature of the works, negligible impact to existing land use and any sensitive receivers, it is requested that public notice of this application is not required.

It is respectfully requested that the Minister for Planning grant a Planning Permit so that works can proceed to support the ongoing efficient operation of the Clover Power Station.

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## 8. References

DEECA, 2024 *Planning permit applications in special water supply catchment areas*, Creative Commons, Victoria.

EPA, 2023, *Civil Construction and building and demolition guide*, Environment Protection Authority, Melbourne Victoria.

Rothols W, Rowe, R & Terry K, 1965 *Report on the Nature, Aims and Implementation of a Land-Use determination in the Upper Kiewa Water Supply Catchment Area*, Soil Conservation Authority, Victoria.

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## Appendix 1 - Land Titles

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## Appendix 2 – Description of Works and Structural Plans

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## Appendix 3 – Land Manager’s Consent & Works on Waterway Permit

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## Appendix 4 – Kiewa agreement & AusNet’s Advice.

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## Appendix 5 – Ecological due diligence

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## Appendix 6 – Heritage due diligence

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