

Ecological Assessment

Winton Renewable Energy Storage & Stability Terminal (RESST)



Prepared for:
Winton Renewable Energy Stability
& Storage Terminal Pty Ltd

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JULY 2026

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Document Information

File Ref: 260708_Winton_RESST_Eco_Rev5

Version: 1

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Winton Renewable Energy Storage and Stability Terminal (RESST) - Ecological Assessment			
Rev	Description	Author	Date
1	For review	Dylan McWhinney	06/02/2026
2	Updated	Dylan McWhinney	01/05/2026
3	Updated	Dylan McWhinney	27/05/2026
4	For submission	Dylan McWhinney	04/06/2026
5	Amended submission	Dylan McWhinney	08/07/2026



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- assures the minimum standards of competency for consultants performing regulatory functions,
- develops guidelines and codes of practice, and
- improves confidence in the quality, reliability and accountability of environmental reports and documentation provided to government agencies by environmental practitioners.

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Executive Summary

DM Ecological was engaged by Winton Renewable Energy Storage & Stability Terminal (WRESST) to undertake an Ecological Assessment of their proposed Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) in Winton, Victoria. The BESS would comprise 400 megawatts (MW), 1,600 megawatt hours (MWh) of lithium-ion battery cells to store energy from the grid and adjacent solar farms and release it into the energy grid via construction of a new transmission connection to the existing Glenrowan Terminal Station.

To provide a context for the study area, information about flora and fauna from within five kilometres of the study area was obtained from relevant biodiversity databases. A search of the Victorian Biodiversity Atlas (VBA) database returned records for 331 flora species (five threatened) and 221 fauna species (17 threatened) within the buffered search area.

Seven patches of native vegetation were assessed, three of which occurred within the property, and the remainder within the adjacent Winton-Glenrowan Rd road-reserve. 42 individual native trees that could potentially be impacted by the Project were assessed and mapped. 32 of these trees were considered large trees, exceeding the EVC benchmark for diameter at standard height (dsh) for a large tree. 28 trees were identified as habitat trees, containing visible hollows, fissures and cracks or nests, which would be associated with arboreal or avian faunal species. Most native trees on the property were in the form of scattered trees. Many were large, and some were present as dead trees (stags). Stags are important for habitat value, as they often contain hollows suitable for avian species. Some non-native tree species were present in the form of Sugar Gums (*Eucalyptus cladocalyx*) and Peppercorns (*Schinus molle*) scattered across the paddock. The driveway was lined with planted non-native Desert Ash (*Fraxinus angustifolia*) and Silky Oak (*Grevillea robusta*) trees.

Of the 42 individual native trees assessed on the BESS property, only four are proposed to be impacted, which would require removal. Revisions to the Project layout have ensured that no assumed losses are accrued. Three of the trees that require removal are habitat trees, with two of them containing hollows and one containing a stick nest (likely attributable to an Australian Magpie). Two of the trees requiring removal are considered large according to the EVC benchmark. The layout of the site has been designed to avoid the remnant woodland patch at the southern end of the property (Patch 2a) and the scattered remnant trees that surround it. By siting the BESS in this way, native vegetation impacts are minimised in lieu of the removal of non-native trees (n=18). The area was subject to an Arboricultural Impact Assessment (AIA) to ensure retained trees could be adequately protected. Nominated access points through the Winton-Glenrowan Road Reserve have been sited to avoid habitat trees nearby, and to avoid impacting any large trees.

A 220 kV cable will connect the BESS to the adjacent Glenrowan Terminal Station. Up to 11 planted eucalypt trees may be impacted by trenching works within the terminal station. These trees were also included in the AIA, and construction will prioritise their retention via installing Tree Protection Zones (TPZ) where possible. None of the potentially impacted trees in the terminal station were observed to contain habitat features. Consultation with Ausnet (2026) and the Regent Honeyeater Project (2025) indicates the planted trees were not publicly funded, and as such would be exempt from requiring a permit for their removal or assumed loss.

The proposed extent of native vegetation impacts as described has been quantified in a Native Vegetation Removal Report (NVRr). The NVRr generated for the Project summarises the extent of removal as 0.286 ha and including two large trees. It is within mapped Location 1 type vegetation, indicating an area not typically supporting native vegetation. The NVRr prescribes the intermediate assessment pathway.

The NVRr also stipulates the offset requirement for the required removal extent. It includes:

- 0.065 general habitat units (GHU's).
- A 0.3466 minimum strategic biodiversity value score.
- Containing 2 large trees; and
- Within the GB CMA or Benalla Rural City LGA.

Mapped ecological values were considered along with existing and required additional easements to appropriately site the BESS. The minimal extent of native vegetation removal required as indicated here has ensured:

- Prioritised retention of high-quality remnant patches.
- Prioritised retention of large trees. Of the 32 large trees assessed within the study area, only two are proposed for removal or impact.
- Prioritised retention of habitat trees. 28 habitat trees were recorded during assessments and six require removal. Of the six, three are non-native. Of the three natives, only two are large or hollow bearing.
- No removal of endangered EVC's or threatened ecological communities listed under the FFG Act or EPBC Act; and
- No impact on habitat restoration works associated with the Regent Honeyeater Project.

Five threatened species were assessed as likely to occur within the study area. They are:

- Gang-gang Cockatoo (Endangered, EPBC Act & FFG Act).
- Painted Honeyeater (Vulnerable, EPBC Act & FFG Act).
- White-throated Needletail (Vulnerable, EPBC Act & FFG Act).
- Diamond Firetail (Vulnerable, EPBC Act & FFG Act).
- Grey-crowned Babbler (Vulnerable – FFG Act).

Five hollow bearing trees require removal to site the BESS units. Two of these trees (#52 & #53) are large native trees (one a dead snag) whilst the remaining hollow bearing trees are introduced Sugar Gums, two of which are dead (Figure 14). None of the hollow bearing trees contain hollows large enough (>7 cm diameter, NSW OEH, 2017) to be considered suitable Gang-gang Cockatoo breeding.

White-throated Needletails are non-breeding migrants in Australia (Birdlife Australia, 2026). Vegetation removal associated with this Project is unlikely to meaningfully impact the species.

Painted Honeyeater, Diamond Firetail and Grey-crowned Babbler are all known to create nests in woodland habitat which is available in the remnant vegetation within Winton-Glenrowan Road Reserve. Impacts from vegetation clearing within the road reserve have the potential to impact breeding activities for these species if not mitigated. Section 5 of this report provides several recommendations to be implemented by the Project to avoid significant impacts to these species. With these recommendations implemented, significant impact assessments (SIA's) in accordance with the *Matters of National Environmental Significance – Significant impact guidelines 1.1 (Commonwealth of Australia 2013)* have determined it is unlikely that any significant impacts to MNES would occur because of the Project (Appendix 8).

The FFG Act Victorian Temperate Woodland Bird Community is considered represented within the study area. The vegetation proposed for removal though minor in extent (0.286 ha), could provide habitat for some of these species (i.e. Grey-crowned Babbler), particularly within the Winton-Glenrowan Road Reserve. It is recommended that the Project engage with the Victorian Government DEECA Hume region and determine whether a permit is required under the FFG Act the for associated vegetation removal.

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1. Introduction

1.1 Project background

DM Ecological was engaged by Winton Renewable Energy Storage & Stability Terminal (WRESST) to undertake an Ecological Assessment of their proposed Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) in Winton, Victoria. The BESS would comprise 400 megawatts (MW), 1,600 megawatt hours (MWh) of lithium-ion battery cells to store energy from the grid and adjacent solar farms and release it into the energy grid via construction of a new transmission connection to the existing Glenrowan Terminal Station. The BESS would aim to support Victoria's growing energy requirements by providing renewable energy into the grid to meet demand.

1.1.1 Project specifics

The proposed Winton RESST will comprise the construction, operation, and decommissioning of a utility-scale BESS with an operational capacity of up to 400MW/1600 MWh. The Development Area within the Project Site will be approximately 6.5 ha, which includes the main BESS area and an underground transmission connection to the Glenrowan Terminal Station. The Proposal will include:

- Batteries, inverters and transformers
- Switching station and associated electrical infrastructure.
- Underground transmission connection to the existing Glenrowan Terminal Station
- Auxiliary power supplies
- Protection and control equipment
- Operations and maintenance building and site office
- Temporary construction laydown areas
- Access points and internal tracks
- Water storage systems and fire-fighting infrastructure
- Security fencing and monitoring
- Earthworks/benching
- Stormwater detention and drainage swales
- Landscaping/screening
- Associated uses, buildings and works.

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1.2 Scope of assessment

To progress the proposed project, WRESST requires understanding of the ecological character of the site to effectively site the proposed works, satisfy the requirements of applicable legislation, and ultimately gain planning approval for the project. This assessment will be lodged with the planning application and assist in outlining the ecological impacts to the decision makers. This ecological assessment is to consider impacts associated with the construction and operation of the proposed project and include all flora, fauna, communities, and native vegetation in accordance with:

- Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999.
- Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act 1988 and Flora and Fauna Guarantee Amendment Act 2019.
- Wildlife Act 1975.
- Planning and Environment Act 1987.

- Catchment and Land Protection Act 1994.
- Water Act 1989; and
- Any other legislation and/or guidelines relevant to ecological values and impacts.

The assessment has included a quantitative assessment of proposed impacts to native vegetation (i.e., a habitat hectare assessment and native vegetation removal report).

The study areas include the relevant lot and surrounding road reserves to ensure all potential impact areas are accounted for. These may include ancillary activities including access / egress, underground construction etc.

1.3 Location of the study area

The proposed site for the BESS is 576 Winton-Glenrowan Road, Winton 3673 (Parcels 1\TP836611 & 2\TP836611) with a transmission connection proposed within the property, from the BESS to the adjoining property containing the existing Glenrowan Terminal Station, per the attached study area plan (Map 1). The study area includes part of the Winton-Glenrowan Road Reserve for the nominated primary and secondary access points.

The study area encompasses the following zones and overlays:

- Farming Zone (FZ).
- Special Use Zone (SUZ4).
- Significant Municipal Road (SRZ3); and
- Vegetation Protection Overlay (VPO3).

The property in question as well as the properties to the immediate south, east, and west of the proposed BESS parcel have all been used as agricultural grazing properties historically. More recently, adjoining properties to the south and west have been developed as renewable energy (solar) projects and contain vast arrays of photovoltaic panels. The adjoining property to the east contains the Glenrowan Terminal Station. Some scattered remnant trees and patches of vegetation have been retained throughout the panel arrays on these properties. Parcel 1\TP836611 contains some remnant box woodland, and some scattered native trees are present over the rest of the property.

The property was substantially cleared of native vegetation historically to allow for agricultural production (grazing). A dwelling and associated outbuildings were in the process of demolition at the time of assessment (November 2025). The existing driveway is lined with planted trees (Desert Ash - *Fraxinus angustifolia*) and the remainder of the property is dominated by non-native pasture species. Figures 1- 3 depict the typical features of the proposed BESS property.

The study area is within the:

- Central Victorian Uplands (CVU) Bioregion.
- Broken River basin.
- Goulburn Broken Catchment Management Authority (GBCMA) area; and
- Benalla Rural City Council (BRCC) Local Government Area (LGA).

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Figure 1: View to the northern boundary of the study area comprising grazed paddocks and driveway lined by planted trees (November 2025)

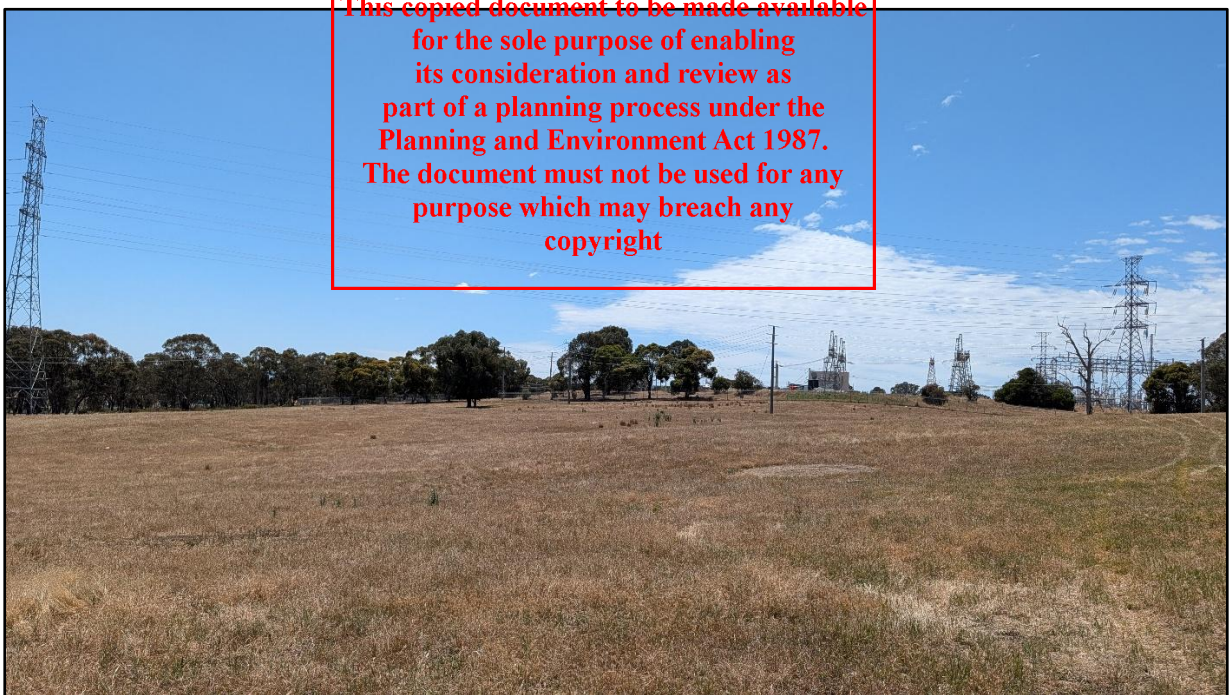


Figure 2: View to the eastern boundary of the study area, showing existing transmission line easement and Glenrowan Terminal Station in the background (November 2025).

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Figure 3: Farm dam that is well used by stock provides little in the way of aquatic habitat value (November 2025)

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Ecological Assessment

Winton Renewable Energy Storage & Stability Terminal (RESST)

Map 1: The study area

Legend

- Study Area
- Access Roads
- BESS units
- Control Building
- Native vegetation Screening
- O&M Building
- Retention Pond
- Storage Shed
- Substation
- Temporary Laydown Area
- Water tanks
- Project Fencing
- 220 kv Transmission line
- Property Boundary



Sources: Esri, TomTom, Garmin, FAO, NOAA, USGS, © OpenStreetMap contributors, and the GIS User Community, Source: Esri, Vantor, Earthstar Geographics, and the GIS User Community



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2. Methodologies

2.1 Desktop assessment

To provide a context for the study area, information about flora and fauna from within five kilometres of the study area was obtained from relevant biodiversity databases, including those maintained by both the Victorian Government Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action (DEECA) and the Australian Government Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water (DCCEEW). Records from the following databases were collated and reviewed:

- DEECA's Victorian Biodiversity Atlas (VBA), including the 'VBA_FLORA25, FLORA100 & FLORA Restricted' and 'VBA_FAUNA25, FAUNA100 & FAUNA Restricted' datasets; and
- DCCEEW's Protected Matters Search Tool for matters protected by the Commonwealth Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999 (EPBC Act).

Other sources of biodiversity information were examined including:

- DEECA's NatureKit mapping tool.
- DEECA's Habitat Importance Maps.
- DEECA's Native Vegetation Regulations Map (NVR Map) tool.
- BirdLife Australia 'Bird data' database.
- Cornell Lab of Ornithology eBird database; and
- Planning Scheme overlays relevant biodiversity based on VicPlan.

2.2 Definitions of significance

The significance of a species or ecological community is determined by its listing status under Commonwealth or State legislation / policy (Table 1).

Table 1: Criteria for determining significance of species or communities.

Significance	
Commonwealth	A Matter of National Environmental Significance (MNES) Listed as critically endangered, endangered, or vulnerable under the EPBC Act.
State	Listed as critically endangered, endangered, or vulnerable in Victoria on a DEECA Advisory List (DSE 2009; DSE 2013; DEPI 2014). Listed as threatened under the FFG Act.

2.2.1 Determining likelihood of occurrence of significant species

Likelihood of occurrence indicates the potential for a species or ecological community to occur regularly within the study area. It is based on expert opinion, information in relevant biodiversity databases and reports, and an assessment of the habitats on site. Likelihood of occurrence is ranked as negligible, low, medium, high, or recorded. The rationale for the rank assigned is provided. Those species for which there is little or no suitable habitat within the study area, or would only very occasionally occur there, are assigned a likelihood of low or negligible and are not considered further.

Species which have at least medium likelihood of occurrence are given further consideration in this report. The need for targeted survey for these species is also considered.

2.2.2 Determining occurrence of threatened ecological communities

The EPBC Act Protected Matters Search Tool (PMST) was used to determine the Commonwealth listed communities that could potentially occur in the study area. The various documents listed on their respective Species Profile and Threats Database (SPRAT) profile were used to assess their presence or absence from the site. These are listed below:

The approved conservation advice for *White Box – Yellow Box – Blakely’s Red Gum grassy woodlands and derived native grasslands* (Australian Government 2023) was used to assess the likely presence or absence of this threatened ecological community within the study area. The identification protocols and key diagnostic characteristics in the conservation advice provide the parameters for determining the presence of the community. Further information can be found within the conservation advice at <http://www.environment.gov.au/biodiversity/threatened/communities/pubs/43-conservation-advice.pdf>

The approved conservation advice for *Buloke Woodlands of the Riverina and Murray-Darling Depression Bioregions* (Australian Government 2023) was used to assess the likely presence or absence of this threatened ecological community within the study area. The identification protocols and key diagnostic characteristics in the conservation advice provide the parameters for determining the presence of the community. Further information can be found within the conservation advice at <http://www.environment.gov.au/biodiversity/threatened/communities/pubs/3-conservation-advice.pdf>

The approved conservation advice for *Grey Box (Eucalyptus microcarpa) Grassy Woodlands and Derived Native Grasslands of South-east Australia* (Australian Government, 2010) was used to assess the likely presence or absence of this threatened ecological community within the study area. The general description and associated key diagnostic characteristics in the listing advice provide the parameters for determining the presence of the community. Further information can be found within the conservation advice at: <http://www.environment.gov.au/biodiversity/threatened/communities/pubs/86-conservation-advice.pdf>

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For communities listed under the Victorian Government Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act 1988, the Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act Threatened List – Characteristics of Threatened Communities document (2024) was used to inform the presence or absence of these communities within the study area. Assessed communities included:

- Victorian Temperate Woodland Bird Community.

2.3 Site assessment

2.3.1 Flora and fauna assessment

A site-based assessment for flora and fauna occurred on the 24th of November 2025. Spring provides an ideal time to survey many native plants as they bud and flower, making their identification easier and more certain. A list of flora species was collected and is included in Section 3.4, Table 10. The list is not intended to be comprehensive, but representative of general species composition. Of priority was identifying native vegetation of significance (see Table 1). Vegetation Quality Assessments (VQA) were conducted for patches of vegetation in accordance with the *Vegetation Quality Assessment Manual – Guidelines for applying the habitat hectares scoring method Version 1.3* (DSE, 2004). Identifying and mapping the extent of significant vegetation assists in ensuring that development is designed with the avoid, minimise, mitigate principle in mind. It also informs any requirement for targeted surveys and

assessment beyond the *Planning and Environment Act 1987*. This could involve assessment under the *Environmental Effects Act 1978*, the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* or both.

Desktop assessments identified the study area residing within the Central Victorian Uplands (CVU) bioregion and modelled as containing Ecological Vegetation Classes (EVC) #61 – Box Ironbark Forest and EVC #235 – Plains Woodland/ Herb-rich Gilgai Wetland Mosaic (Map 2). These EVCs have a bioregional conservation status of Vulnerable and Endangered, respectively. The EVC Benchmarks (Appendix 4) provide a list of species likely to occur within the study area should they be in an ecologically sound condition. These benchmarks were used to inform the site assessment.

Site assessments also included assessing the study area to determine its values for fauna. These were determined primarily based on the types and qualities of habitat(s) present. All species of fauna observed during the assessment were noted and active searching for fauna was undertaken. This included direct observation, searching under rocks, examination of tracks and scats and identifying calls. Particular attention was given to searching for significant species (see Table 1) and their habitats. Fauna species were recorded with a view to characterising the values of the site and the investigation was not intended to provide a comprehensive survey of all fauna species that have potential to utilise the site over time.

A follow up Arboricultural Impact Assessment (AIA) was performed on the 30th of March 2026 (Arboressence) to assess a specific subset of trees that could be impacted by the proposed project layout. The AIA assessed the current health and viability of the trees and mapped each of their Notional Root Zones (NRZ) and Structural Root Zones (SRZ), to allow project design to retain trees wherever possible, and protect them with adequate Tree Protection Zones (TPZ).

Site assessments were carried out in compliance with DM Ecological Management Authorisation under the *Wildlife Act 1975* (Permit No: 10011435).

2.3.2 Targeted threatened species surveys

Targeted threatened species surveys were not undertaken as part of the initial site assessments. Any targeted survey requirements for threatened species and communities would be detailed in the recommendations of this report.

2.4 Limitations

Ecological surveys provide a sampling of flora and fauna at the given time and season. There are several reasons why a species may not be detected at the site during survey, such as low abundance, patchy distribution, species dormancy, seasonal conditions, and migration and breeding behaviours. If a species is not detected, it does not necessarily mean that it is not present. In most cases these factors do not present a significant limitation to assessing the overall biodiversity values of a site.

Surveys undertaken in spring are ideal in terms of identifying many native plants as they begin to bud and flower, making their identification easier and more certain. There is some likelihood that annual species, some of which could be threatened were not detected during the survey based on their active growing/ flowering periods occurring at different times. Historical records and assessments of habitat within the study area are used to determine these species likelihood of presence in the study area.

2.5 Legislation and policy

The implications for the project are assessed in relation to key biodiversity legislation and policy including:

- Matters listed under the EPBC Act, associated policy statements, significant impacts guidelines, listing advice and key threatening processes.
- Threatened taxa, communities and threatening processes listed under Section 10 of the FFG Act and associated action statements and listing advice.
- Guidelines for the removal, destruction or lopping of native vegetation (DELWP 2017).
- Noxious weeds and pest animals listed under the Catchment and Land Protection Act 1994 (CaLP Act).

These implications are discussed in detail in Section 4 of this report.

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Figure 4: A significant Grey Box (*Eucalyptus microcarpa*) tree at the sites proposed (and existing) access (November 2025)

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Ecological Assessment

Winton Renewable Energy Storage & Stability Terminal (RESST)

Map 2: Modelled pre-1750 EVCs

Legend

- Study Area
- Property Boundary
- NV1750 EVC**
 - Heathy Dry Forest
 - Box Ironbark Forest
 - Plains Grassy Woodland
 - Valley Grassy Forest
 - Grassy Dry Forest
 - Creekline Grassy Woodland
 - Grassy Woodland
 - Plains Woodland/Herb-rich Gilgai Wetland Mosaic
 - Plains Woodland
 - Granitic Hills Woodland
 - Other



3. Results

3.1 Desktop assessment

A search of the Victorian Biodiversity Atlas (VBA) database returned records for 331 flora species (five threatened) and 221 fauna species (17 threatened) within the buffered search area (Map 3). Grey-crowned Babbler (*Pomatostomus temporalis*) accounted for most threatened fauna records within the buffered search area (n=202) totalling 75% of all threatened fauna records within the search area. There are only 10 total records of threatened flora species within the buffered search area, with most species associated with the Box Ironbark Forest EVC.

Species recorded from two nearby observation hotspots (Cornell Lab of Ornithology eBird database) were reviewed, and three threatened species records were identified that are not currently recorded in the VBA. They include records of:

- Great Egret (*Ardea alba*) which could possibly be the Eastern sub-species (*Ardea alba modesta*), listed as Vulnerable under the FFG Act.
- Square-tailed Kite (*Lophoictinia isura*), listed as Vulnerable under the FFG Act; and
- White-throated Needletail (*Hirundapus caudacutus*), listed Vulnerable under the FFG Act and the EPBC Act.

The e-bird hot spots analysed were:

- Eleven Mile Creek Road, Winton (2 km southeast of study area); and
- Mokoan Rest Area Northbound (1.5 km west of study area).

Threatened species within a 5 km buffer of the study area generated from the databases, are provided in Table 2 (flora) and Table 3 (fauna) below.

Table 2: Threatened flora species recorded within a 5km buffer of the study area.

Scientific Name	Common Name	Conservation Status		Last Recorded	No. of Records
		FFG Act	EPBC Act		
<i>Allocasuarina luehmannii</i>	Buloke	Critically Endangered		2022	2
<i>Digitaria divaricatissima</i> var. <i>divaricatissima</i>	Umbrella Grass	Endangered		2008	1
<i>Diuris punctata</i> var. <i>punctata</i>	Purple Diuris	Endangered		1904	1
<i>Eucalyptus sideroxylon</i> subsp. <i>sideroxylon</i>	Mugga	Endangered		2014	2
<i>Gratiola pumilo</i>	Dwarf Brooklime	Endangered		1959	4

Table 3: Threatened fauna species recorded within a 5km buffer of the study area.

Scientific Name	Common Name	Conservation Status		Last Recorded	No. of Records
		FFG Act	EPBC Act		
<i>Anthochaera phrygia</i>	Regent Honeyeater	Critically Endangered	Critically Endangered	1990	1
<i>Antigone rubicunda</i>	Brolga	Endangered		2010	1

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Scientific Name	Common Name	Conservation Status FFG Act	Conservation Status EPBC Act	Last Recorded	No. of Records
<i>Ardea alba modesta</i> *	Eastern Great Egret	Vulnerable		2024	1
<i>Burhinus grallarius</i>	Bush Stone-curlew	Critically Endangered		2000	3
<i>Climacteris picumnus</i>	Brown Treecreeper	Vulnerable	Vulnerable	2019	9
<i>Egretta garzetta</i>	Little Egret	Endangered		1976	1
<i>Gallinago hardwickii</i>	Latham's Snipe	Vulnerable	Vulnerable	2017	1
<i>Geopelia cuneata</i>	Diamond Dove	Vulnerable		2018	1
<i>Grantiella picta</i>	Painted Honeyeater	Vulnerable	Vulnerable	1995	1
<i>Haliaeetus leucogaster</i>	White-bellied Sea-Eagle	Endangered		2018	2
<i>Hirundapus caudacutus</i> *	White-throated Needletail	Vulnerable	Vulnerable	2021	1
<i>Lathamus discolor</i>	Swift Parrot	Critically Endangered	Critically Endangered	1990	1
<i>Litoria raniformis</i>	Growing Grass Frog	Vulnerable	Vulnerable	1788	1
<i>Lophoictinia isura</i> *	Square-tailed Kite	Vulnerable		2022	1
<i>Maccullochella peelii</i>	Murray Cod	Endangered	Vulnerable	1993	37
<i>Petaurus norfolcensis</i>	Squirrel Glider	Vulnerable		2009	1
<i>Pomatostomus temporalis</i>	Grey-crowned Babbler	Vulnerable		2019	202
<i>Spatula rhynchotis</i>	Australasian Shoveler	Vulnerable		1989	1
<i>Stagonopleura guttata</i>	Diamond Firetail	Vulnerable	Vulnerable	1997	3
<i>Varanus varius</i>	Lace Monitor	Endangered		2018	5

Table Notes: * = record from e-bird not on VBA.

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The protected matters search tool (PMST) report (Appendix 5) identified EPBC Act listed species which have habitat known or likely to occur within the search area, but for which there are no actual records. These are listed in Table 4.

Table 4: EPBC Listed species with known or likely habitat within 5 km buffer of study area but no records.

Scientific Name	Common Name	EPBC Act	PMST Comments
<i>Amphibromus fluitans</i>	River Swamp Wallaby-grass	Vulnerable	Species or species habitat known to occur within area
<i>Aphelocephala leucopsis</i>	Southern Whiteface	Vulnerable	Species or species habitat known to occur within area
<i>Aprasia parapulchella</i>	Pink-tailed Legless Lizard	Vulnerable	Species or species habitat likely to occur within area
<i>Botaurus poiciloptilus</i>	Australasian Bittern	Endangered	Species or species habitat known to occur within area
<i>Calidris ferruginea</i>	Curlew Sandpiper	Critically Endangered	Species or species habitat known to occur within area
<i>Callocephalon fimbriatum</i>	Gang-gang Cockatoo	Endangered	Species or species habitat known to occur within area
<i>Crinia sloanei</i>	Sloane's Froglet	Endangered	Species or species habitat likely to occur within area
<i>Delma impar</i>	Striped Legless Lizard	Vulnerable	Species or species habitat likely to occur within area

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Scientific Name	Common Name	EPBC Act	PMST Comments
<i>Falco hypoleucos</i>	Grey Falcon	Vulnerable	Species or species habitat likely to occur within area
<i>Galaxias rostratus</i>	Flathead Galaxias	Critically Endangered	Species or species habitat likely to occur within area
<i>Melanodryas cucullata cucullata</i>	South-eastern Hooded Robin	Endangered	Species or species habitat known to occur within area
<i>Neophema chrysostoma</i>	Blue-winged Parrot	Vulnerable	Species or species habitat known to occur within area
<i>Polytelis swainsonii</i>	Superb Parrot	Vulnerable	Species or species habitat likely to occur within area
<i>Rostratula australis</i>	Australian Painted Snipe	Endangered	Species or species habitat likely to occur within area
<i>Swainsona recta</i>	Small Purple-pea	Endangered	Species or species habitat known to occur within area

The protected matters search tool (PMST) report (Appendix 5) also identified EPBC Act listed threatened ecological communities which may potentially occur within the search area. These are listed in Table 5 (below).

Table 5: EPBC Listed threatened ecological communities' that may occur within 5 km buffer of study area.

Threatened Ecological Community	EPBC Act	PMST Comments
Buloke Woodlands of the Riverina and Murray-Darling Depression Bioregions	Endangered	Community may occur within area
Grey Box (<i>Eucalyptus microcarpa</i>) Grassy Woodlands and Derived Native Grasslands of South-eastern Australia	Endangered	Community likely to occur within area
White Box-Yellow Box-Blakely's Red Gum Grassy Woodland and Derived Native Grassland	Critically Endangered	Community likely to occur within area

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Figure 5: Remnant Grey Box woodland patch within the BESS property (November 2025)

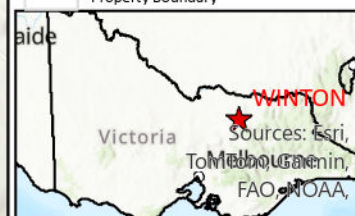
Ecological Assessment

Winton Renewable Energy Storage & Stability Terminal (RESST)

Map 3: Threatened species records

Legend

-  Study Area
- Threatened Flora records**
-  Mugga
 -  River Swamp Wallaby-grass
- Threatened Fauna records**
-  Brolga
 -  Brown Treecreeper
 -  Bush Stone-curlew
 -  Diamond Dove
 -  Diamond Firetail
 -  Grey-crowned Babbler
 -  Lace Monitor
 -  Latham's Snipe
 -  Murray Cod
 -  Painted Honeyeater
 -  Squirrel Glider
 -  White-bellied Sea-Eagle
-  5km search buffer
-  Property Boundary



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3.2 Vegetation and fauna habitat

To inform the Project's potential impacts on native vegetation, native vegetation was assessed and mapped in accordance *the Guidelines for the removal, destruction or lopping of native vegetation* (DEECA, 2025)). Native vegetation is defined in Clause 72 of the Victoria Planning Provisions as 'plants that are indigenous to Victoria, including trees, shrubs, herbs and grasses'. Native vegetation is assessed using two parameters: extent (hectares) and condition (Table 6). As per the Guideline's, native vegetation mapped includes both patches and scattered trees (small or large according to EVC benchmark diameter at breast height (DBH)).

Table 6: Native vegetation determinations

Category	Definition	Extent	Condition
Patch	An area with three or more native canopy trees where the drip line of each tree touches the drip line of at least on other tree, forming a continuous canopy. OR An area of vegetation where at least 25% of the total perennial understory plant cover is native. OR Any mapped wetland included in the Current Wetland Maps (DEECA, NatureKit, VicPlan, Manshare etc.).	Measured in hectares (hectare area of the patch).	Vegetation Quality Assessment Manual (DSE 2004). Modelled condition of current wetlands
Scattered Tree	A native canopy tree that does not form part of a patch.	Measured in hectares. Large trees are attributed to a 15m radius or 0.071-hectare extent. Small trees are attributed a 10m radius or 0.031-hectare extent.	All scattered trees assigned condition score of 0.2 (where not part of a patch).

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Vegetation across the study area was largely present in two distinct forms:

- Disturbed/ modified native vegetation (i.e., Remnant trees with grazed understorey, patches of native bullrush); and
- Non-native vegetation (e.g., driveway trees, pasture and weeds).

Seven patches of native vegetation were assessed, three of which occurred within the property, and the remainder within the adjacent Winton-Glenrowan Rd road-reserve. The patches within the road reserve, as well as the woodland patch (Figure 5) within the property were defined by their overlapping canopy trees. Two other patches of native vegetation within the property lacked trees and were defined by having at least 25% total perennial understory plant cover as native.

42 individual native trees that could potentially be impacted by the Project were assessed and mapped (Map 4). 32 of these trees were considered large trees, exceeding the EVC benchmark for diameter at standard height (dsh) for a large tree. 28 trees were identified as habitat trees, containing visible hollows, fissures and cracks or nests, which would be associated with arboreal or avian faunal species.

Patches 1a and 1b (see Map 4) are located either side of the existing property access within Winton-Glenrowan Road. They contain Grey Box trees (one large tree in Patch 1b), and some native grasses and herbs, but are considerably disturbed. Weed cover within the patches was assessed as 69% and 54%

respectively (see VQA detail in Appendix 6). Recent trenching works associated with telecommunications had recently occurred within the road reserve beneath the overhead powerlines, increasing disturbance (Figure 6). One large Grey Box in patch 1b has significant biodiversity value, containing arboreal habitat and is immediately adjacent to the existing driveway, which is proposed for access to the site for construction (Figure 4). The existing driveway encroaches more than 10% of the Notional Root Zone (NRZ) of the tree, but the tree is in good overall health.

Patches 1c and 1d are within the property and the proposed BESS footprint. They contained only native bullrushes (*Juncus* spp.) from a native vegetation perspective, but the surrounding vegetation was mostly comprised of annual pasture grasses, so perennial native cover (*Juncus* spp.) exceeded 25%, constituting a native vegetation patch. Their overall habitat scores were 0.10 which is considerably low, highlighting their low biodiversity value. By way of comparison, a single small, scattered tree (i.e., a sapling) is attributed a habitat score of 0.20.

Patches 1e, 1f & 1g represent the remnant woodland habitats within the southern (1e, 1f) and northern (1g) sections of the Winton-Glenrowan Rd road-reserve. They represent high quality remnant habitat containing large trees, good canopy cover and overall tree health, a reasonably diverse native understory and general low cover of weeds. The quality of vegetation in the roadside is evidenced by their Vegetation Quality Assessment Scores which ranged from 0.46 – 0.52 (Section 3.2.1, Table 8 and Appendix 6). 12 hollow bearing trees were identified within the road reserve. Part of Patch 1f had been cleared of trees where high-voltage transmission lines crossed the road, however dense native understorey was still present.

The remnant woodland patch (2a) on the property was also assessed, though it is not envisaged to be impacted by the Project. It consists of remnant box trees with overlapping canopies, and a heavily modified understory due to grazing. It lacked any native shrub layer or ground cover species, with Grey Box (*Eucalyptus microcarpa*) and Red Box (*Eucalyptus polyanthemos*) the only native species recorded in the patch. Ground cover was predominantly annual pasture species and weeds. Most of the trees were large and hollow-bearing, and biodiversity value would be considered higher than the habitat score (0.28) infers.

Outside of the remnant woodland patch (2a), most native trees on the property were in the form of scattered trees. Many were large, and some were present as dead trees (stags). Stags are important for habitat value, as they often contain hollows suitable for avian species. Some non-native tree species were present in the form of Sugar Gums (*Eucalyptus cladocalyx*) and Peppercorns (*Schinus molle*) scattered across the paddock. The driveway was lined with planted non-native Desert Ash (*Fraxinus angustifolia*) and Silky Oak (*Grevillea robusta*) trees.

Two farm dams are present on the western side of the property. They were near dry at the time of assessment and still actively used by stock. They provide little in the way of aquatic habitat value (Figure 3) and are surrounded by pasture grasses.

Photographs depicting the patches of native vegetation assessed and other habitat features described are provided in Figures 6-15.

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Figure 6: Recent telecommunications work in road reserve, patch 1a on the left (November 2025)



Figure 7: Patch 1b containing significant Grey Box tree (November 2025)

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Figure 8: Native bullrushes comprise patches 1c and 1d (November 2025)



Figure 9: Patch 1e quality woodland habitat on south side of Winton-Glenrowan Rd (March 2026)

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Figure 10: Dense cover of *Dianella revoluta* where trees had been removed for high-voltage transmission lines in Patch 1f (March 2026)



Figure 11: Patch 1g quality woodland habitat on north side of Winton-Glenrowan Rd (March 2026)

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Ecological Assessment

Winton Renewable Energy Stability and Storage Terminal (WRESST)

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Figure 12: Desert Ash tree lined driveway (November 2025)

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Figure 13: Scattered Ironbark (*Eucalyptus sideroxylon*) trees near eastern edge of property (November 2025)

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Figure 14: Introduced Sugar Gums and Peppercorns (March 2026)



Figure 15: Planted trees within Glenrowan Terminal Station (March 2026)

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Ecological Assessment

Winton Renewable Energy Storage & Stability Terminal (RESST)

Map 4: Mapped Ecological features

Legend

- Study Area
- Habitat Tree

Native Trees

Tree Size

- Large
- Small

- NRZ

Other Tree

- Exempt
- Introduced
- Native

Native Vegetation Patch

- Native Vegetation Patch



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3.2.1 Native vegetation removal

Information in this Section steps through the avoid, minimise, offset process and supports the Project's avoid and minimise statement.

The proposed BESS requires approximately 6.5 ha to facilitate its construction (including cabling routes). The ecological assessment has identified the environmental values and constraints considered in siting and constructing the BESS, as well as connecting the BESS to the existing Glenrowan Terminal Station. Of the 42 individual native trees assessed on the BESS property, only four are proposed to be impacted (Map 5). Four scattered trees would require removal. Revisions to the Project layout have ensured that no assumed losses are accrued. Assumed losses occur where works or disturbance encroaches >10% of a retained tree's Notional Root Zones (NRZ).

Three of the trees that require removal are habitat trees, with two of them containing hollows and one containing a stick nest (likely attributable to an Australian Magpie). Two of the trees requiring removal are considered large according to the EVC benchmark. The layout of the site has been designed to avoid the remnant woodland patch at the south of the property (Patch 2a) and the scattered remnant trees that surround it. By siting the BESS in this way, native vegetation impacts are minimised in lieu of the removal of non-native trees (n=18).

The large Grey Box at the current (and proposed) site access (Tree #32) has a significant portion (>20%) of its NRZ encroached by the current driveway. As the tree is in good health, and no ground disturbing works are proposed within the NRZ during construction of the BESS, this tree is proposed for retention rather than considered an assumed loss. The extent of the existing driveway will be used for access/ egress from the site, with the remainder of the NRZ a no-go zone and designated Tree Protection Zone (TPZ) area. Patch 1a is a low-quality patch with no large trees next to the adjacent driveway that will be removed to facilitate access requirements, without compromising the required TPZ of Tree #32 (Figure 14).

Details of the native vegetation impacts of BESS are summarised in Table 7 and shown in the corresponding Map 5 for reference.

Table 7: Potential native vegetation impacts of BESS. Impact corresponds to Map 6.

Tree/ Patch ID	Vegetation Type	Species or EVC	DSH (cm) or condition score	Status	Comments
1a	Patch	CVU_0803	0.22	Remove	Remove for primary site access
1c	Patch	CVU_0803	0.10	Remove	Remove to construct BESS infrastructure
1d	Patch	CVU_0803	0.10	Remove	Remove to construct BESS infrastructure
1h	Patch	CVU_0803	0.50	Remove	Remove for secondary site access
12	Scattered Tree	Grey Box	66 cm	Retain	Near cable route in Glenrowan Terminal Station but retained with TPZ.
24	Patch Tree	Stag	106 cm	Retain	Near secondary access but retained with TPZ.
32	Patch Tree	Grey Box	110 cm	Retain	Near primary access but retained with TPZ.
50	Scattered Tree	Grey Box	62 cm	Remove	Remove for BESS infrastructure.
51	Scattered Tree	Yellow Box	55 cm	Remove	Remove for BESS infrastructure. Contains magpie nest (unoccupied).
52	Scattered Tree	Red Box	129 cm	Remove	Remove for BESS infrastructure. Hollow bearing tree.

Tree/ Patch ID	Vegetation Type	Species or EVC	DSH (cm) or condition score	Status	Comments
53	Scattered Tree	Stag	108 cm	Remove	Remove for BESS infrastructure. Hollow bearing tree.

Four patches of native vegetation (1a, 1c, 1d & 1h) will require removal to provide access to the site (1a, 1h) and to construct the BESS compound and related infrastructure (1c, 1d). As previously described, patches 1c and 1d they are low-quality patches comprising scattered native bullrush (*Juncus* spp.) Due to their similar extent and condition, and proximity to one another, one VQA core was applied to both patches. (identified as Zone 3 in the VQA detail – Appendix 6). A summary of the VQA scoring for these patches is provided in Table 8.

Patch 1h is a small patch of native vegetation removal from the broader habitat zone (1e) required to facilitate the secondary site access. It is a high-quality patch of remnant woodland habitat (0.50 condition score), so care has been taken to minimise the footprint of the removal area, and to avoid significant trees and habitat. The area was subject to the March 2026 Arboricultural Impact Assessment to (Arborescence, Appendix 9) ensure retained trees could be adequately protected. The secondary access has been sited to avoid the two stages (habitat trees) nearby, and to avoid impacting any large trees (Figure 16).



Figure 16: Primary site access will remove low-quality patch 1a to protect significant tree #32 (March 2026)

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Figure 17: Secondary site access will remove small trees in favour of retaining habitat trees either side (March 2026).

Table 8: VQA habitat scoring for patches 1c, 1d & 1h.

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Parameter	1c score	1d score	1h score
Understorey	5	5	5
Weeds	2	2	11
Large Trees	0	0	9
Canopy	6	6	5
Litter	0	0	5
Logs	0	0	2
Recruitment	0	0	10
Landscape	3	3	3
Habitat Score	0.10	0.10	0.50

The proposed extent of native vegetation impacts as described has been quantified in a Native Vegetation Removal Report (NVR). The NVR generated for the Project (Appendix 5) summarises the extent of removal as 0.286 ha and including two large trees. It is within mapped Location 1 type vegetation, indicating an area not typically supporting native vegetation. The NVR prescribes the intermediate assessment pathway.

The NVR (appendix 5) also stipulates the offset requirement for the required removal extent. It includes:

- 0.065 general habitat units (GHU's).
- A 0.3466 minimum strategic biodiversity value score.
- Containing 2 large trees; and
- Within the GB CMA or Benalla Rural City LGA.

The assessment first considered any strategic biodiversity planning considerations that apply to the study area to ensure that they were not compromised by the Project. Clause 42.02 of the Planning Scheme states that a permit is required to remove, destroy or lop any vegetation specified in a schedule to this overlay. The Vegetation Protection Overlay Schedule 3 (VPO3) affects the study area and relates to Regent Honeyeater Habitat/Lurg Ironbark Vegetation Protection Area.

This area provides one of the limited habitat areas remaining of the Regent honeyeater which is listed as an endangered species under the Fauna and Flora Guarantee Act. The area also provides habitat for Squirrel gliders, Brush-tailed phascogales (Tuan), Grey-crowned babbler, Bush stone curlews and Quolls, which are listed as rare or endangered under the *Fauna and Flora Guarantee Act*.

Mapped ecological values were considered along with existing and required additional easements to appropriately site the BESS. The minimal extent of native vegetation removal required as indicated here has ensured:

- Prioritised retention of high-quality remnant patches.
- Prioritised retention of large trees. Of the 32 large trees assessed within the study area, only two are proposed for removal or impact.
- Prioritised retention of habitat trees. 28 habitat trees were recorded during assessments and six require removal. Of the six, three are non-native. Of the three natives, only two are large or hollow bearing.
- No removal of endangered EVC's or threatened ecological communities listed under the FFG Act or EPBC Act; and
- No impact on habitat restoration works associated with the Regent Honeyeater Project.

Trees requiring removal are shown in Figures 18-21.

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Figure 18: Tree 50, Grey Box 62 cm DSH (March 2026) Figure 19: Tree 51, Yellow Box 55 cm DSH (March 2026)



Figure 20: Tree 52, Red Box 129 cm DSH (March 2026)

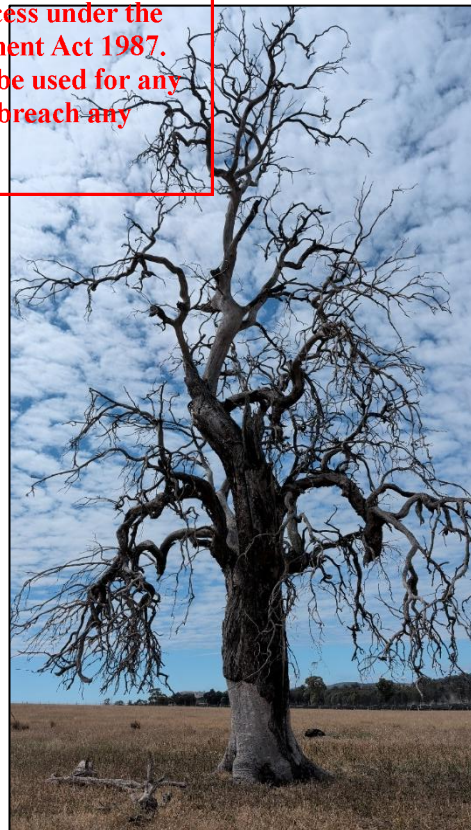
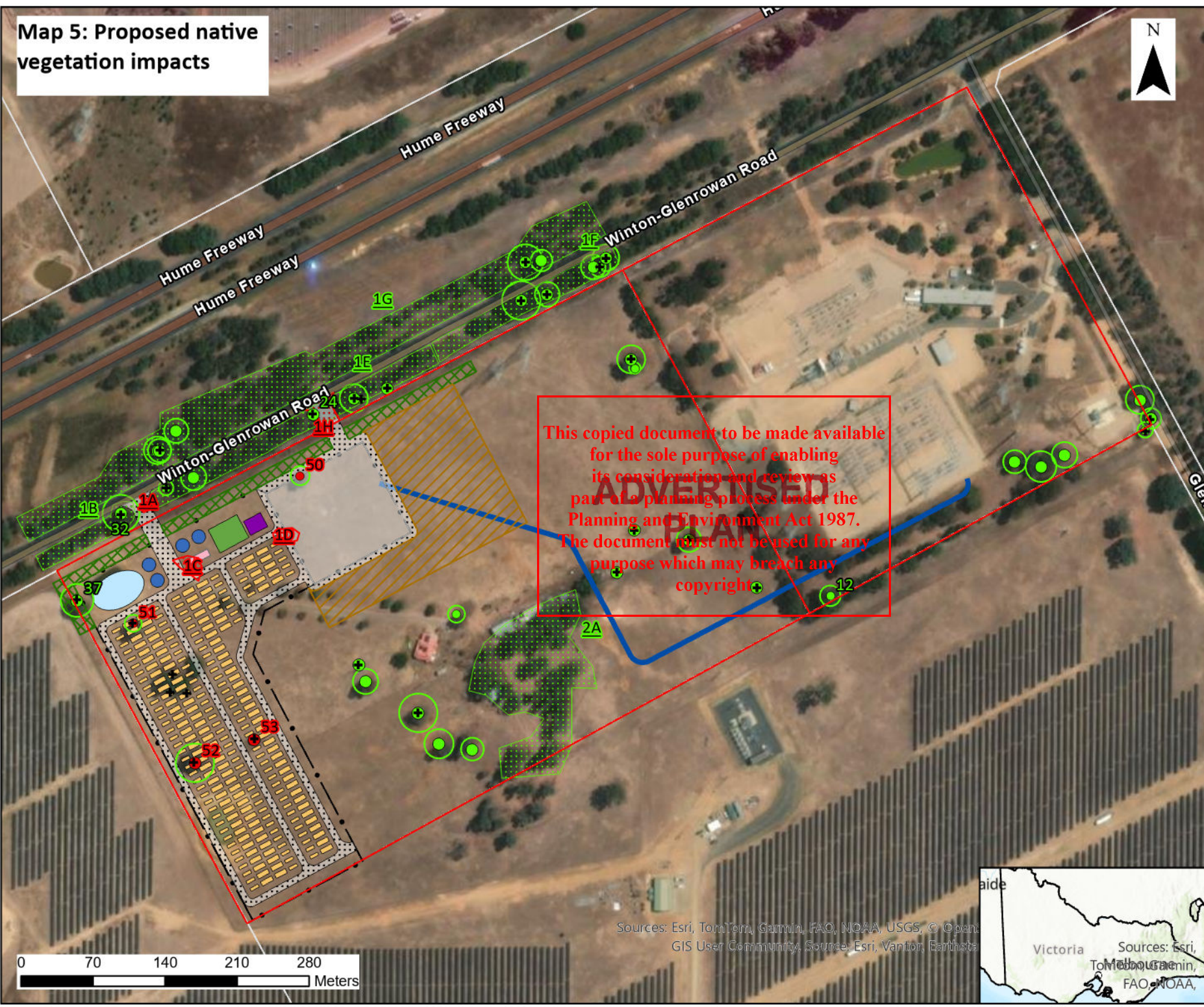


Figure 21: Tree 53, Stag 108 cm DSH (March 2026)

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Map 5: Proposed native vegetation impacts



Ecological Assessment

Winton Renewable Energy Storage & Stability Terminal (RESST)

Legend

Study Area

+ Habitat Tree

Native Trees

Impact, Tree Size

● Assumed Loss, Large

● Remove, Large

● Remove, Small

● Retain, Large

● Retain, Small

NRZ

Native Vegetation Patch

Status

Remove

Retain

Project Layout

Access Roads

BESS units

Control Building

Native vegetation Screening

O&M Building

Retention Pond

Storage Shed

Substation

Temporary Laydown Area

Water tanks

Project Fencing

220 kv Transmission line

VicMap

Property Boundary

Property Boundary

3.3 Landscape context

The property in question as well as the properties to the immediate south, east, and west of the proposed BESS parcel have all been used as agricultural grazing properties historically. More recently, adjoining properties to the south and west have been developed as renewable energy (solar) projects and contain vast arrays of photovoltaic panels. The adjoining property to the east contains the Glenrowan Terminal Station. Some scattered remnant trees and patches of vegetation have been retained throughout the panel arrays on these properties. Parcel 1\TP836611 contains some remnant box woodland, and some scattered native trees are present over the rest of the property.

From the Hume Freeway in the north, to Greta Rd in the south, Eleven Mile Creek Road to the east, and Wattle Creek Rd to the west, land has been mostly cleared of native vegetation, save for some scattered remnant trees dotted across the landscape. The lack of tree cover would be far more pronounced if not for the significant number of hectares of revegetation works undertaken in this area by the Regent Honeyeater Project. The RHE Project has been working for over 25 years to link the Lurg Hills and Chesney Vale Hills via strategically revegetating corridors and linking patches of remnant vegetation, including throughout the Project area. These revegetation areas are of significant biodiversity and conservation value in the landscape.

Areas of Core Habitat (>50 ha of remnant vegetation) include the Winton Wetlands 1 km north of the Project (and across the Hume Freeway) and the Warby-Ovens National Park 8 km northeast of the Project (Map 6).

Eleven Mile Creek is the only significant watercourse close to the study area. Minor drainage lines that lead to farm dams are present throughout the landscape including one within the study area which was dry at the time of assessment.

3.4 Flora observations

During the ecological assessment, flora observations were recorded. The species directly observed within the study area are provided in Table 9.

Table 9: Species of flora recorded within the study area.

Scientific Name	Common Name	Origin	Conservation Status		
			FFG Act	EPBC Act	CaLP Act
<i>Amyema spp.</i>	Mistletoe	Native	-	-	-
<i>Aristida behriana</i>	Brush Wire-grass	Native	-	-	-
<i>Avena spp.</i>	Oat	Introduced	-	-	-
<i>Briza maxima</i>	Large Quaking-grass	Introduced	-	-	-
<i>Bromus hordeaceus</i>	Soft Brome	Introduced	-	-	-
<i>Cirsium vulgare</i>	Spear Thistle	Introduced	-	-	R
<i>Dactylis glomerata</i>	Cocksfoot	Introduced	-	-	-
<i>Ehrharta spp.</i>	Veldt Grass	Introduced	-	-	-
<i>Eucalyptus blakelyi</i>	Blakely's Red Gum	Native	-	-	-
<i>Eucalyptus microcarpa</i>	Grey Box	Native	-	-	-
<i>Eucalyptus sideroxylon</i>	Red Ironbark	Native	-	-	-
<i>Festuca spp.</i>	Fescue	Introduced	-	-	-
<i>Fraxinus angustifolia subsp.</i>	Desert Ash	Introduced	-	-	-
<i>Grevillea robusta</i>	Silky Oak	Non-native	-	-	-

Scientific Name	Common Name	Origin	Conservation Status		
			FFG Act	EPBC Act	CaLP Act
<i>Hypochaeris radicata</i>	Flatweed	Introduced	-	-	-
<i>Juncus spp.</i>	Rush	Native	-	-	-
<i>Lepidium africanum</i>	Common Peppergrass	Introduced	-	-	-
<i>Lolium loliaceum</i>	Stiff Rye-grass	Introduced	-	-	-
<i>Phalaris aquatica</i>	Toowoomba Canary-grass	Introduced	-	-	-
<i>Plantago lanceolata</i>	Ribwort	Introduced	-	-	-
<i>Rumex crispus</i>	Curled Dock	Introduced	-	-	-
<i>Rytidosperma setaceum var.</i>	Bristly Wallaby-grass	Native	-	-	-
<i>Rytidosperma spp.</i>	Wallaby Grass	Native	-	-	-
<i>Sonchus oleraceus</i>	Common Sow-thistle	Introduced	-	-	-

Table Notes: **R** = Restricted Weed (CaLP Act 1994).

3.5 Fauna observations

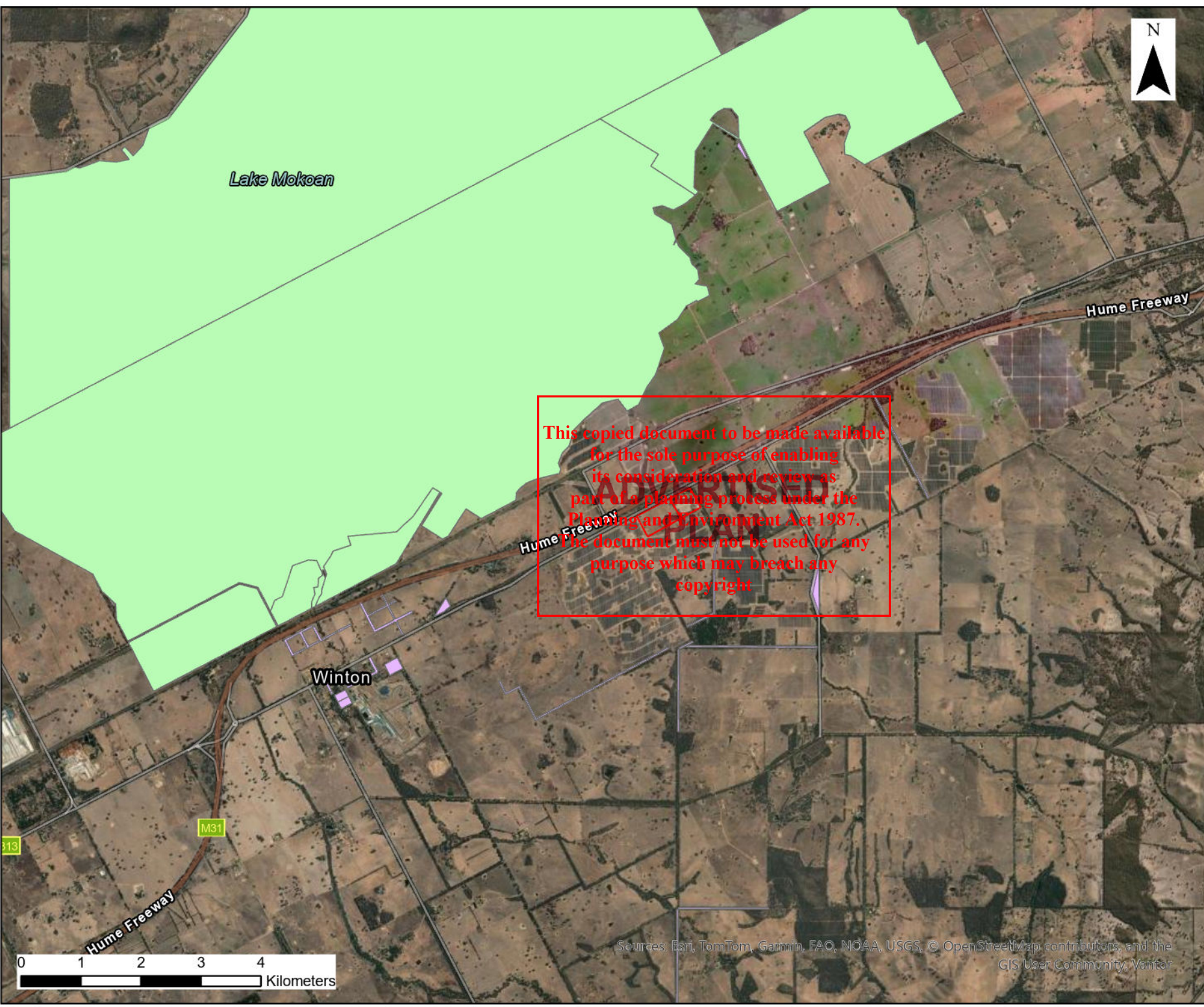
During the ecological assessment, fauna observations were recorded. The species directly observed within the study area on are provided in Table 10.

Table 10: Species of fauna recorded within the study area.

Scientific Name	Common Name	Conservation Status	
		FFG Act	EPBC Act
<i>Anhinga novaehollandiae</i>	Australasian Darter	Secure	Secure
<i>Anthochaera carunculata</i>	Red Wattlebird	Secure	Secure
<i>Cacatua galerita</i>	Eastern Crested Cockatoo	Secure	Secure
<i>Chenonetta jubata</i>	Australian Wood Duck	Secure	Secure
<i>Corvus coronoides</i>	Australian Raven	Secure	Secure
<i>Entomyzon cyanotis</i>	Blue-faced Honeyeater	Secure	Secure
<i>Eolophus roseicapilla</i>	Galah	Secure	Secure
<i>Grallina cyanoleuca</i>	Magpie Lark	Secure	Secure
<i>Gymnorhina tibicen</i>	Australian Magpie	Secure	Secure
<i>Hirundo neoxena</i>	Welcome Swallow	Secure	Secure
<i>Manorina melanocephala</i>	Noisy Miner	Secure	Secure
<i>Pardalotus striatus</i>	Striated Pardalote	Secure	Secure
<i>Pelecanus conspicillatus</i>	Australian Pelican	Secure	Secure
<i>Philemon corniculatus</i>	Noisy Friarbird	Secure	Secure
<i>Platycercus eximius</i>	Eastern Rosella	Secure	Secure
<i>Rhipidura leucophrys</i>	Willie Wagtail	Secure	Secure

3.6 Significant species

Lists of EPBC Act and FFG Act listed species and communities recorded or predicted to occur within 5 kilometres of the study area are provided in Tables 2, 3 and 4. An assessment of the likelihood of these species occurring in the study area and an indication of where within the site (i.e., which habitats or features of relevance to the species) is included in Appendix 2. Where species have a likelihood of occurrence within the study area of medium, high, or recorded they are given further consideration. Species likely to occur within the study area are summarised in Table 11.



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Ecological Assessment

Winton Renewable Energy Storage & Stability Terminal (RESST)

Map 6: Landscape Context

Legend

- Study Area
- Crown_Land**
 - Other
 - Winton Wetlands



Sources: Esri, TomTom, Garmin, FAO, NOAA, USGS, © OpenStreetMap contributors, and the GIS User Community, Vanitior



3.6.1 EPBC Act and FFG Act listed taxa.

Table 11: Likelihood of threatened species occurrence.

Scientific Name	Common Name	EPBC Act Status	FFG Act Status	Habitat	Likelihood	Rationales
<i>Callocephalon fimbriatum</i>	Gang-gang Cockatoo	Endangered	Endangered	Found in tall mountain forests and woodlands, with dense shrubby understories. In winter, Gang-gangs will move to lower altitudes into drier, more open forests and woodlands. At this time, they may be seen by roadsides and in parks and gardens of urban areas. They require tall trees for nest hollows.	Medium	Large Eucalyptus throughout the study area provide somewhat suitable habitat. Recent records throughout landscape including within 1 km of study area.
<i>Grantiella picta</i>	Painted Honeyeater	Vulnerable	Vulnerable	Found in dry open forests and woodlands and is strongly associated with mistletoe. It may also be found along rivers, on plains with scattered trees and on farmland with remnant vegetation. It has been seen in urban parks and gardens where large eucalypts are available.	Medium	Frequently recorded in Lurg Hills and within 1 km of the study area as recently as 2017.
<i>Hirundapus caudacutus</i>	White-throated Needletail	Vulnerable	Vulnerable	Almost exclusively aerial but will roost in trees on occasion	Medium	Records from within 5km as recent as 2021. Could utilise airspace of study area.
<i>Stagonopleura guttata</i>	Diamond Firetail	Vulnerable	Vulnerable	Diamond Firetails are found in open grassy woodland, heath and farmland or grassland with scattered trees.	Medium	Relatively common in Benalla LGA a. Study area provides suitable habitat and recorded in study area previously (2007).
<i>Pomatostomus temporalis</i>	Grey-crowned Babbler	Not Listed	Vulnerable	Found in open forests and woodlands, favouring inland plains with an open shrub layer, little ground cover and plenty of fallen timber and leaf litter. May be seen along roadsides and around farms	High	Many records (>200) within 5 km of study area, including adjacent properties. Recorded on nearby properties within previous 12 months in similar habitats.

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3.6.2 Woodland birds

The following information and analysis of habitats and potential impacts in the study area relates to the following threatened species from Table 11:

- Gang-gang Cockatoo (Endangered, EPBC Act & FFG Act).
- Painted Honeyeater (Vulnerable, EPBC Act & FFG Act).
- White-throated Needletail (Vulnerable, EPBC Act & FFG Act).
- Diamond Firetail (Vulnerable, EPBC Act & FFG Act).
- Grey-crowned Babbler (Vulnerable – FFG Act).

Much of the land surrounding the study area can be classified as remnant woodland habitat, particularly road reserves and areas where large trees are present in medium to high density. The remnant patches in the Winton Glenrowan Road Reserve are in good condition and show native species diversity and density in the shrub and ground cover strata, which provides good habitat for these species. Within the property boundary, it is mostly open woodland, lacking a shrub layer and limited in native ground cover and grasses. Even without the shrub layer, these woodland habitats provide important breeding, roosting, and dispersal resources for all these species. Many of the large trees within the study area are hollow bearing, including large hollows required for hollow-dependant species.

3.6.3 Potential impacts to threatened species.

All the species described in this Section could potentially be affected by the removal of any large Eucalypt trees. The hollow-dependant Gang-gang Cockatoo could be impacted by the removal of hollow bearing trees. The Project has gone through consideration to avoid large tree removal and minimise assumed losses of large trees. Five hollow bearing trees require removal to sit the BESS units (Map 5). Two of these trees (#52 & #53) are large native trees (one a dead snag) whilst the remaining hollow bearing trees are introduced (non-native) Sugar Gums, two of which are dead (Figure 14). None of the hollow bearing trees contain hollows large enough (>7 cm diameter, NSW OEH, 2017) to be considered suitable Gang-gang Cockatoo breeding.

The loss of hollow-bearing trees from Victorian native forests has been listed as a potentially threatening process on Schedule 3 of the Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act 1988, largely because of the dependence of many vertebrates (including several rare species) on this habitat for shelter and nesting (SWIFFT, 2024).

White-throated Needletails are non-breeding migrants in Australia (Birdlife Australia, 2026). They are mostly aerial though will roost in trees temporarily whilst in Australia. Vegetation removal associated with this Project is unlikely to meaningfully impact the species. Any roosting birds would be adults and could move to adjacent retained vegetation.

Painted Honeyeater, Diamond Firetail and Grey-crowned Babbler are all known to create nests in woodland habitat which is available in the remnant vegetation within Winton-Glenrowan Road Reserve. All make nests from leaves, grasses, sticks etc in trees or shrubs. Impacts from vegetation clearing within the road reserve have the potential to impact breeding activities for these species if not mitigated. Section 5 of this report provides several recommendations to be implemented by the Project to avoid significant impacts to these species. With these recommendations implemented, it is unlikely that any significant impacts to MNES would occur because of the Project.

As the Project intends to make a voluntary referral to the Australian Government DCCEEW, significant impact assessments (SIA's) in accordance with the *Matters of National Environmental Significance – Significant impact guidelines 1.1* (Commonwealth of Australia 2013) have been prepared (Appendix 8).

Ecological Assessment

Winton Renewable Energy Stability and Storage Terminal (WRESST)

3.7 FFG Act threatened fauna community.

One FFG Act-listed threatened fauna community is considered to occur within the study site, Victorian Temperate Woodland Bird Community. The FFG Act-listed Victorian Temperate Woodland Bird Community has been defined as a suite of bird species, mainly associated with drier woodlands on the slopes and plains north of the Great Dividing Range. This community is synonymous with drier woodlands dominated by Box, Stringybark, Ironbark, Yellow Gum or River Red Gum or by Buloke or Cypress Pine.

The community identifies 24 key woodland-dependant bird species, with the presence of one or more species representative of the community (Scientific Advisory Committee 2000). The community lists another 21 woodland-associated bird species that are known to occur in the same habitat but are not included in the FFG Act listing (Scientific Advisory Committee 2000).

Desktop assessments identified VBA records for nine of these species within 5 km of the study area. Three of these species were assessed as likely to occur within the study area (Table 11). The vegetation required for removal constitutes suitable habitat for these species, so could be considered representative the VTWBC. Additional permits under the FFG Act for the removal of a TEC may be required.

4. Legislative implications

This Section provides a high-level overview of the implications of development within the study area under relevant Commonwealth and State legislation. This includes assessment of the Benalla Planning Scheme as part of the Planning and Environment Act 1987.

4.1 Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999

The EPBC Act establishes a Commonwealth process for the assessment of proposed actions likely to have a significant impact on any Matters of National Environmental Significance (MNES). The significant impact guidelines outline the impact criteria (Table 12) and provide a decision-making framework ('self-impact assessment') for determining whether an action will require referral to the Australian Government Environment Minister and/or further approval under the EPBC Act (DCCEEW 2022).

Table 12: Potential impacts to Matters of National Environmental Significance (MNES)

MNES	Potential Impacts
World Heritage Properties	The proposed action will not impact any properties listed for World Heritage.
National Heritage Places	The proposed action will not impact any places listed for National Heritage.
Ramsar wetlands of international significance	The proposed action will not impact any listed Ramsar wetlands due to no significant waterways being present within or close to the study area.
Threatened species and ecological communities	Three threatened ecological communities have the potential to occur within the study area: - Grey Box (<i>Eucalyptus microcarpa</i>) Grassy Woodlands and Derived Native Grasslands of South-eastern Australia. - Buloke Woodlands of the Riverina and Murray-Darling Depression Bioregions and - White Box-Yellow Box-Blakely's Red Gum Grassy Woodland and Derived Native Grasslands Relevant patches do not meet the required patch size or species diversity to constitute presence of the TEC. EPBC Act listed species could be present within the study area, including:

MNES	Potential Impacts
	- Gang-gang Cockatoo. - Painted Honeyeater - White-throated Needle-tail; and - Diamond Firetail. No significant effects are likely as a result of the project (see SIA's in Appendix 8).
Migratory and marine species	There is no marine or wetland habitat within the study area. Further, the study area would not be classed as an 'important habitat' as defined under the EPBC Act Policy Statement 1.1 Significant Impact Guidelines (Commonwealth of Australia 2013), in that it does not contain: - Habitat utilised by a migratory species occasionally or periodically within a region that supports an ecologically significant proportion of the population of the species, - Habitat utilised by a migratory species which is at the limit of the species range; or, - Habitat within an area where the species is declining.
Commonwealth marine area	The proposed action will not impact any Commonwealth marine areas.
Nuclear actions (including uranium mining)	The proposed action is not a nuclear action.
Great Barrier Reef Marine Park	The proposed action will not impact the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park.
Water resources impacted by coal seam gas or mining development	The proposed action is not a coal seam gas or mining development.

4.1.1 EPBC Act implications

Three threatened ecological communities and threatened fauna species have potential to occur within the study area. Based on habitats in the study area and nearby records, the precautionary principle should apply, and the bird species assumed present unless targeted surveys determine otherwise. Five hollow bearing trees require removal to site the BESS units (Map 5). Two of these trees (#52 & #53) are large native trees (one a dead snag) whilst the hollow bearing trees are introduced (non-native) Sugar Gums, two of which are dead (Figure 14). None of the hollow bearing trees contain hollows large enough (>7 cm diameter, NSW OEH, 2017) to be considered suitable Gang-gang Cockatoo breeding.

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Painted Honeyeater, Diamond Firetail and Grey-crowned Babbler are all known to create nests in woodland habitat which is available in the remnant vegetation within Winton-Glenrowan Road Reserve. All make nests from leaves, grasses, sticks etc in trees or shrubs. Impacts from vegetation clearing within the road reserve have the potential to impact breeding activities for these species if not mitigated. Section 5 of this report provides several recommendations to be implemented by the Project to avoid significant impacts to these species. With these recommendations implemented, it is unlikely that any significant impacts to MNES would occur because of the Project.

Significant Impact Assessments (Appendix 8) have determined that no significant impacts to MNES are likely to occur due to the Project. Nonetheless, the Project intends to make a voluntary referral under the EPBC Act 1999 to the Australian Government DCCEEW.

4.2 Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act 1988

The Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act 1988 (the FFG Act) provides for the listing of taxa (genera, species, subspecies and varieties), threatened communities of flora and fauna and potentially threatening processes. Proponents are required to apply for an FFG Act permit to 'take' listed and/or protected flora species and listed vegetation communities.

An FFG Act permit is generally not required for the removal of listed and/or protected flora species and communities on private land. There are currently no requirements for proponents to apply for a permit under the FFG Act where a proposed activity requires the removal of habitat for a listed terrestrial fauna species. The Act does however regulate the removal, salvage, temporary holding, relocation, taking, trading and keeping of FFG Act-listed fish species. The Flora and Fauna Guarantee Amendment Act 2019 (the Amendment Act) came into effect on June 1, 2020. The Amendment Act requires consideration of biodiversity across government to ensure decisions and policies are made with proper consideration of the potential impacts on biodiversity and now applies the FFG Act to Crown land and private/freehold land that is managed by a public authority.

The following threatening processes listed under the FFG Act should be considered in relation to any proposed development (DELWP 2022):

- Habitat fragmentation as a threatening process for fauna in Victoria; and
- Invasion of native vegetation by environmental weeds.

4.2.1 FFG Act implications

The FFG Act Victorian Temperate Woodland Bird Community is considered represented within the study area. The vegetation proposed for removal though minor in extent (0.286 ha), could provide habitat for some of these species (i.e. Grey-crowned Babbler), particularly within the Winton-Glenrowan Road Reserve. It is recommended that the Project engage with the Victorian Government DEECA Hume region and determine whether a permit is required under the FFG Act for the associated vegetation removal.

4.3 Planning and Environment Act 1987

The Planning and Environment Act 1987 (P&E Act) outlines the legislative framework for planning in Victoria and for the development and administration of planning schemes. Within Victoria, the requirement for a planning permit to remove native vegetation is triggered by several Clauses within the Victoria Planning Provisions Planning Scheme. Within each municipality, the Local Planning Provisions for each Government Authority are outlined within the associated local Planning Scheme. The local Planning Scheme that applies to the study area is the Benalla Planning Scheme.

The Benalla Planning Scheme defines native vegetation at Clause 73.01 as plants that are indigenous to Victoria, including trees, shrubs, herbs, and grasses. Within every local Planning Scheme, the removal of native vegetation is assessed in accordance with either Clause 52.16 or 52.17. In this case, Clause 52.17 would apply to any proposed developments, and vegetation removal should be assessed and offset in accordance with the incorporated document the *Guidelines for the removal, destruction or lopping of native vegetation* (DEECA, 2025).

4.3.1 Local Planning Provisions

Benalla Planning Scheme Zones and Overlays affecting the study area include:

- Farming Zone (FZ).
- Special Use Zone (SUZ4).
- Significant Municipal Road (TRZ3); and
- Vegetation Protection Overlay (VPO3).

Farming Zone (FZ)

Clause 35.07 of the Planning Scheme states that a permit is required for a Renewable Energy Facility (other than wind energy facility). It must meet the application requirements outlined in Clause 53.13 which include:

- A site and context analysis, including:
 - A site plan, photographs or other techniques to accurately describe the site and the surrounding area.
 - A location plan showing the full site area, local electricity grid, access roads to the site and direction and distance to nearby accommodation, hospital or education centre.
- A design response, including:
 - Detailed plans of the proposed development including, the layout and height of the facility and associated building and works, materials, reflectivity, colour, lighting, landscaping, the electricity distribution starting point (where the electricity will enter the distribution system), access roads and parking areas.
 - Accurate visual simulations illustrating the development in the context of the surrounding area and from key public viewpoints.
 - The extent of vegetation removal and a rehabilitation plan for the site.
 - Written report and assessment, including:
 - An explanation of how the proposed design derives from and responds to the site analysis.
 - A description of the proposal, including the types of process to be utilised, materials to be stored and the treatment of waste.
 - Whether a Development Licence, Operating Licence, Permit or Registration is required from the Environment Protection Authority.
 - the potential amenity impacts such as noise, glint, light spill, emissions to air, land or water, vibration, smell and electromagnetic interference.
 - the effect of traffic to be generated on roads.
 - the impact upon Aboriginal or non-Aboriginal cultural heritage.
 - the impact of the proposal on any species listed under the *Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act 1988* or *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999*.
 - A statement of why the site is suitable for a renewable energy facility including, a calculation of the greenhouse benefits.
 - An environmental management plan including, a construction management plan, any rehabilitation and monitoring.

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Special Use Zone (SUZ4)

The Glenrowan Terminal Station is the subject of Schedule 4 to the Special Use Zone (Clause 37.01-s4) of the Planning Scheme. Schedule 4 states that a permit is not required for earth and energy resources industry on the condition that it must be in conjunction with a utility installation. Given that works in the SUZ4 affected area will be installation of cables connecting the BESS to the terminal station, it is suggested that a permit would not be required under the SUZ4 zone. This should be confirmed with Council planners during the application process.

Significant Municipal Road (TRZ3)

Clause 36.04 states the permit is not required for a Utility installation (other than Minor utility installation and Telecommunications facility) if the use is carried out by or on behalf of a relevant transport manager. Though the BESS facility is classified a utility installation, it is not on behalf of a relevant transport manager. A permit is otherwise required to Construct a building or construct or carry out works. This should be confirmed with Council planners during the application process.

Vegetation Protection Overlay (VPO3)

Clause 42.02 of the Planning Scheme states that a permit is required to remove, destroy or lop any vegetation specified in a schedule to this overlay. VPO3 affects the study area and relates to the Regent Honeyeater Habitat/Lurg Ironbark Vegetation Protection Area.

This area provides one of the limited habitat areas remaining of the Regent honeyeater which is listed as an endangered species under the Fauna and Flora Guarantee Act. The area also provides habitat for Squirrel gliders, Brush-tailed phascogales (Tuan), Grey-crowned babblers, Bush stone curlews and Quolls, which are listed as rare or endangered under the Fauna and Flora Guarantee Act. The area maintains vegetative links between the Warby Range and the Grub Dividing Range used as habitat and migratory routes by the indigenous fauna species.

An application must show the species of native vegetation proposed for removal and measures proposed to minimise the removal of Mugga Ironbark, White Box, Yellow Box and Blakeley's Red Gum all of which support the survival of the Regent honeyeater and the other threatened species.

Four scattered trees require removal as part of the Project (Section 3.2.1) including one small Yellow Box (Tree #51). The tree is non-hollow bearing and contains one stick nest attributable to an Australian Magpie. It is isolated amongst an otherwise largely cleared paddock (Map 5) and is unlikely to contribute to habitat utilised by the Regent Honeyeater. The species is not known to nest within isolated paddock trees of this size class (small), with the fragmented habitat increasing the likelihood of competition from large aggressive honeyeaters such as the noisy miner (*Manorina melanocephala*), noisy friarbird (*Philemon corniculatus*) and the red wattlebird (*Anthochaera carunculata*) (Australian Government, 2015). Additionally, there are no Regent Honeyeater records within 5 km of the study area in the past 30 years (closest record 1990, 5 km buffer). The removal of this isolated 55 cm DSH Yellow Box is therefore considered to be consistent with the intent of VPO3, which prioritises retention of woodland-scale habitat rather than isolated paddock specimens. The small patches of vegetation requiring removal at the primary and secondary access points within the Winton-Glenrowan Road Reserve comprise small River Red Gums and Silver Wattles. They provide habitat value for some woodland birds including threatened species (Section 3.6.3), but the impacts are not significant (Appendix 8).

4.4 Catchment and Land Protection Act 1994

The *Catchment and Land Protection Act 1994* (CaLP Act) contains provisions relating to catchment planning, land management, noxious weeds and pest animals. Under the CaLP Act, noxious weeds are further defined as either State Prohibited (S), Regionally Prohibited (P), Regionally Controlled (C), or Restricted (R), while pest animals are classified as either Prohibited Pest Animals (P), Controlled Pest Animals (C), Regulated Pest Animals (R) or Established Pest Animals (E). This classification is dependent on the type and level of threat to primary production, Crown land, the environment and community health. Landowners are responsible for the control of any infestation of noxious weeds and pest animals to minimise their spread and impacts. Landowners must, to the best of their ability:

- Eradicate regionally prohibited weeds.
- Prevent the growth and spread of regionally controlled weeds; and,
- Prevent the spread of — and as far as possible eradicate — established pest animals on their land.

One weed (Spear Thistle) listed as noxious under the CaLP Act was recorded within the study area (See Section 3.4 Table 9).

4.4.1 CaLP Act implications

Listed noxious weeds must be appropriately controlled throughout the study area. Approved planning permits for development within the study area should stipulate requirements for weed management in an Environmental Plan. These should follow the guidelines set out in the CaLP Act and clearly outline any obligations of the proponent in relation to minimising the spread of weeds because of development. This may include a pre-clearance weed survey undertaken prior to any construction activities to record and map the locations of all noxious and potentially noxious weeds. Noxious Weeds are subject to permit conditions.

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4.5 Wildlife Act 1975 and Wildlife Regulations 2013

The *Wildlife Act 1975* (and associated Wildlife Regulations 2013) is the primary legislation in Victoria providing for protection and management of wildlife.

4.5.1 Wildlife Act implications

Where native vegetation is identified for removal, planning permits should contain conditions regarding the protection of wildlife. They should consider the species present and seasonal conditions and timing of proposed works. A pre-construction inspection of trees containing habitat (e.g. hollows and nests) is required prior to any tree removal. Authorisation for habitat removal may be obtained under the Wildlife Act 1975 through a licence. Any persons engaged to remove, salvage, hold or relocate native fauna during construction must hold a current Management Authorisation under the *Wildlife Act 1975*, issued by DEECA.

4.6 Environmental Effects Act 1978

The *Environment Effects Act 1978* (EE Act) provides for assessment of proposed projects (works) that can have a significant effect on the environment. The Act does this by enabling the Minister administering the Environment Effects Act to decide that an Environment Effects Statement (EES) should be prepared. The Minister might typically require a proponent to prepare an EES when:

- there is a likelihood of regionally or State significant adverse effects on the environment.
- there is a need for integrated assessment of potential environmental effects (including economic and social effects) of a project and relevant alternatives, and
- normal statutory processes would not provide a sufficiently comprehensive, integrated and transparent assessment.

The requirement for project referrals under the EE Act is assessed against the referral criteria set out in the Ministerial Guidelines for Assessment of Environmental Effects. They include both individual potential effects and combinations of potential effects.

4.6.1 EE Act implications

Self-assessment against the referral criteria is likely not required for this Project which should be assessed under normal statutory processes (via the *Planning and Environment Act 1987*). This ecological assessment has demonstrated that there will be no significant impacts on any flora and fauna species, or communities listed under the FFG Act. The Project has been sited in a location where it is consistent with surrounding land use (renewable energy projects, Glenrowan Terminal Station, and agricultural grazing land).

Impacts associated with the construction and operation will be in accordance with relevant industry standards for emissions of noise and light. Disruption to the community will be kept to a minimum, with no dwellings directly affected by the Project. The Project will continue to liaise with Benalla Rural City Council, The DEECA Hume Region Natural Environment Program, and other relevant state and federal agencies to ensure the appropriate level of assessment, consultation and ultimately approval is achieved.

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5. Discussion and recommendations

Ecological values within the study area are centred around native vegetation. The proposed BESS property contains some large remnant trees, both scattered and within patches (overlapping canopy trees). Many of these trees contain hollows or nests and were classified as habitat trees during the assessment. The patch of remnant trees at the south of the property provides the area of highest biodiversity value within the site and is not proposed to be impacted. This area could provide an opportunity for the Project to protect and restore the modified woodland over time, either as a first-party offset site, or a way to satisfy Clause 12.01 of the planning scheme.

Four scattered trees would require approval under Clause 52.17 for their removal. Revisions to the Project layout have ensured that no assumed losses are accrued. Three of the trees that require removal are habitat trees, with two of them containing hollows and one containing a stick nest (likely attributable to an Australian Magpie). Two of the trees requiring removal are considered large according to the EVC benchmark. The layout of the site has been designed to avoid the remnant woodland patch at the south of the property (Patch 2a) and the scattered remnant trees that surround it. By siting the BESS in this way, native vegetation impacts are minimised in lieu of the removal of non-native trees (n=18).

Five hollow-bearing trees require removal to site the BESS. Two of those are included in the trees requiring planning approval under Clause 52.17 (Trees 52 & 53 in Table 7 & Map 5). The remaining three hollow-bearing trees are non-native Sugar Gums, and whilst they do not require planning approval under Clause 52.17 for their removal, they have been considered for their habitat value for threatened species (Appendix 8 – MNES Significant Impact Assessment). The hollow-bearing trees required to be removed do not provide suitable habitat for the threatened species considered likely to occur in the project area.

Four patches of native vegetation (1a, 1c, 1d & 1h) will require removal to provide access to the site (1a, 1h) and to construct the RESST compound and related infrastructure (1c, 1d). As previously described, patches 1c and 1d they are low-quality patches comprising scattered native bullrush (*Juncus* spp.)

Patch 1a is a low-quality patch with no large trees next to the adjacent driveway that will be removed to facilitate access requirements, without compromising the required FPZ of Tree #32. Patch 1h is a small patch of native vegetation removal from the broader habitat zone (1e) required to facilitate the secondary site access. It is a high-quality patch of remnant woodland habitat (0.50 condition score), so care has been taken to minimise the footprint of the removal area, and to avoid significant trees and habitat.

A Vegetation Protection Overlay (VPO3) affects the study area relating to the Regent Honeyeater Habitat/Lurg Ironbark Vegetation Protection Area. An application must show the species of native vegetation proposed for removal and measures proposed to minimise the removal of Mugga Ironbark, White Box, Yellow Box and Blakeley's Red Gum all of which support the survival of the Regent honeyeater and the other threatened species. One small Yellow Box (55cm DSH) requires removal to site the BESS. It is isolated amongst an otherwise largely cleared paddock and is unlikely to contribute to habitat utilised by the Regent Honeyeater. The species is not known to nest within isolated paddock trees of this size class (small), with the fragmented habitat increasing the likelihood of competition from large aggressive honeyeaters such as the noisy miner (*Manorina melanocephala*), noisy friarbird (*Philemon corniculatus*) and the red wattlebird (*Anthochaera carunculata*) (Australian Government, 2015). Additionally, there are no Regent Honeyeater records within 5 km of the study area in the past 30 years (closest record 1990, 5 km buffer). The likelihood of occurrence assessment (Appendix 2) noted that the intent of the Regent Honeyeater Project and VPO3 is to increase landscape connectivity between suitable Regent Honeyeater habitats, and that the species would become more likely to occur in the region over time if the desired project outcomes are realised. The removal of this isolated 55 cm DSH Yellow Box is therefore considered to be consistent with the intent of VPO3, which prioritises retention of woodland-scale habitat rather than isolated paddock specimens.

Five threatened species were determined to have a medium to high likelihood of occurrence within the project area, all of which are woodland bird species. Significant impact assessments in accordance with the *Matters of National Environmental Significance – Significant impact guidelines 1.1* (Appendix 8) have determined that no significant impacts to MNES are likely to occur. The determination is based on several factors including the lack of suitable breeding habitat, the extent of habitat loss/ disturbance having been minimised, and the assumption that the project implements the following recommendations.

Recommended measures to mitigate impacts upon ecological values present within the study area include:

- Ensuring that designs have avoided and minimised impacts to native vegetation to the maximum extent possible by siting the BESS and cable route appropriately.
- Ensuring any proposed works remain within the intended construction footprint, i.e., not disturbing or removing areas of native vegetation outside the proposed works area. This also applies to machinery storage, materials stockpiles, laydown areas, rest areas, parking and access roads.
- Minimise impacts to native vegetation and habitats through construction and micro-siting techniques, including appropriate signage and fencing for retained areas of native vegetation (i.e., no-go zones).
- If necessary, trees (including dead trees) should be lopped/ pruned rather than removed. If retained trees are lopped or pruned, it should be in line with the *Australian Standard 4373-2007 Pruning of amenity trees*.
- Where possible, tree clearing or pruning should be undertaken between 1st February – 30th April to avoid breeding seasons of woodland bird species.
- Hollows should be prioritised for retention during pruning works.
- Pre-clearing fauna salvage may be required. This should be done by an appropriately trained and licensed ecologist.
- Pre-clearing surveys should be undertaken by an ecologist to identify any active nesting/denning sites prior to the removal of any native vegetation. If nests are identified in trees to be removed, they need to be cleared of eggs and chicks (birds) and juveniles (mammals). If present, clearing should be postponed until young have fledged. If no young are identified, clearing should commence under the ecologist's supervision to ensure animals can safely move from the clearing front.
- Where possible, all material from trees removed or lopped/ pruned (i.e., logs) should be placed outside of impacted areas and utilised on-site or in adjacent shelterbelts as habitat for fauna.
- All contractors should be inducted prior to beginning construction to ensure that they are aware of all project's environmental requirements and conditions of approvals.
- Ecological features should be included as a mapping overlay on any construction plans and should be displayed throughout common areas.
- Construction stockpiles, machinery, haul roads, and other infrastructure should be placed away from all retained ecological features.
- Tree Protection Zones (TPZs) must be fenced, and no-go zone signage displayed to prevent indirect losses during construction activities. A TPZ applies to a tree and is a specific area above and below the ground, with a radius 12 x the DBH. At a minimum standard, a TPZ should consider the following:
 - A TPZ should be a radius no less than two metres or greater than 15 metres.
 - Construction related activities and encroachment (i.e. earthworks such as trenching or compaction that disturb the root zone) should be excluded from the TPZ.

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- Where encroachment exceeds 10% of the total area of the TPZ, the tree should be considered as lost and offset accordingly.
- Directional drilling may be used for works within the TPZ without being considered encroachment. The directional bore should be at least 600 millimetres deep.
- The above TPZ guidelines may be varied if a qualified arborist confirms the works will not significantly damage the tree (including stags / dead trees). In this case the tree would be retained, and no offset would be required.
- Removal of any habitat trees or shrubs (particularly hollow-bearing trees), where possible should be undertaken outside of the applicable breeding seasons outlined in this report. If any habitat trees or shrubs are proposed to be removed within the prescribed breeding seasons, this must be undertaken under the supervision of an appropriately qualified zoologist to salvage and translocate any displaced fauna (i.e., pre-construction inspection and salvage).
- Ensure that best practice sedimentation and pollution control measures are undertaken, in accordance with Environment Protection Agency guidelines (EPA 1991; EPA 1996; Victorian Stormwater Committee 1999) to prevent offsite impacts to waterways and wetlands; and,
- As indigenous flora provides valuable habitat for indigenous fauna, it is recommended that any landscape/ remedial plantings that are undertaken as part of the proposed works are conducted using indigenous species sourced from a local provenance, rather than exotic deciduous trees and shrubs.
- If large trees are removed from the Project site, the Project should liaise with GB CMA or the nearby Winton Wetlands about the potential to install large logs/ root balls within local waterways to enhance threatened fish species habitat.

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Appendix 1 – Concept Plans

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Preliminary Concept Layout Plan

2545 - WRESST

LEGEND

Proposed Features

- BESS Components
- Substation
- 220kV Underground Transmission Cable
- Fencing
- Emergency Access Gate
- Storage Shed
- O&M Building
- Control Building
- Internal Access Roads
- Temporary Laydown Area
- Native Vegetation Buffer
- Water Tanks
- Retention Basin

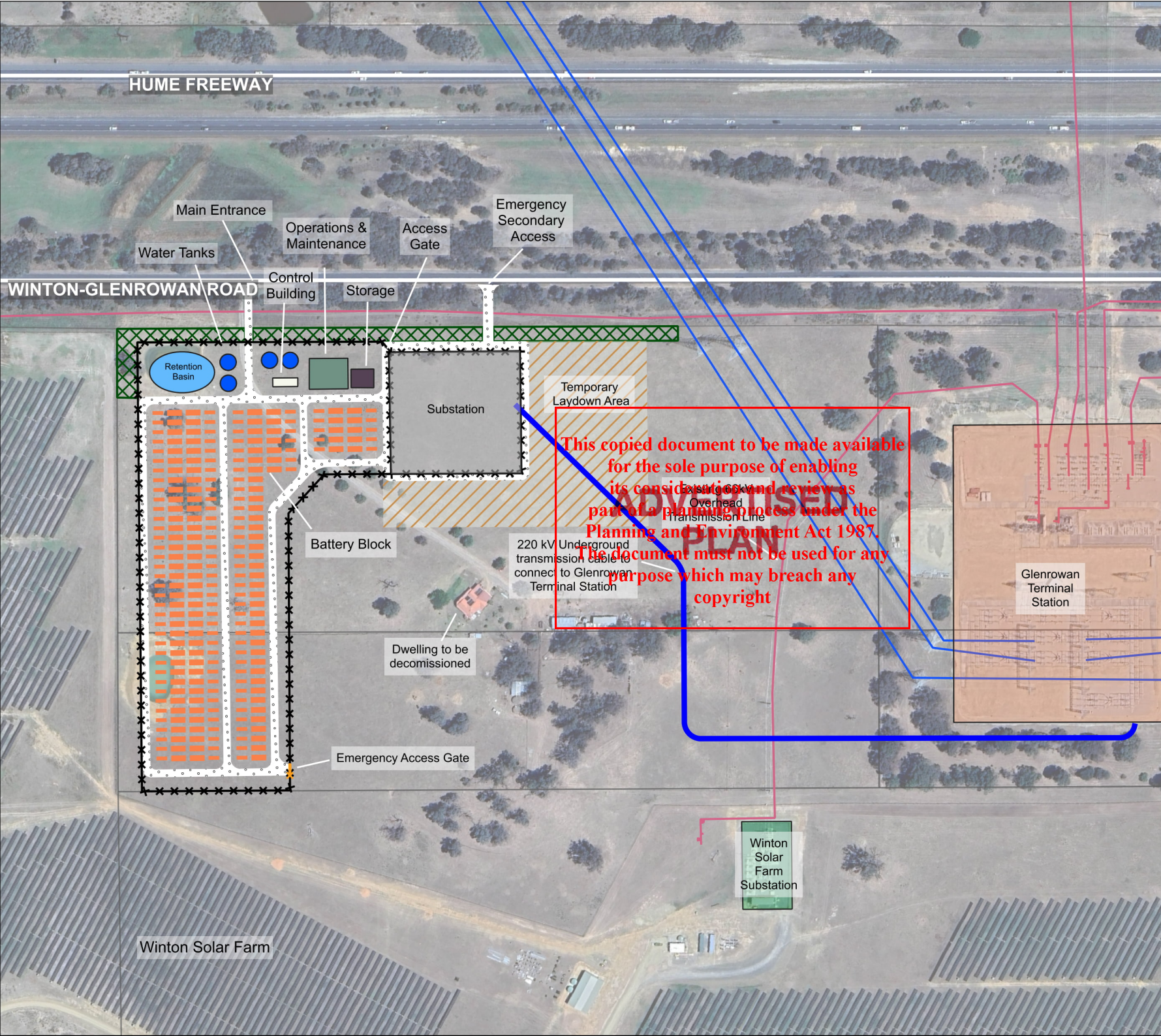
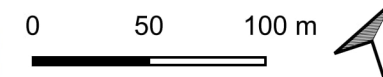
Existing Features

- Winton SF Substation
- Glenrowan Terminal Station
- 220 kV Transmission Line
- 66 kV Transmission Line
- Cadastre

Version: 1.0

Date: 08/05/2026

Disclaimer: This plan is preliminary and subject to detailed studies and approval.



Appendix 2 – Likelihood of threatened species occurrence analysis

Scientific Name	Common Name	EPBC Act Status	FFG Act Status	Habitat	Likelihood	Rationales
<i>Anthochaera phrygia</i>	Regent Honeyeater	Critically Endangered	Critically Endangered	A range of dry woodlands and forests dominated by nectar producing tree species.	Low	Habitat is limited by lack of understory and species diversity. No nearby records since 2013. Likelihood to improve over time as habitat linkages become more suitable.
<i>Calidris ferruginea</i>	Curlew Sandpiper	Critically Endangered	Critically Endangered	Occur on intertidal mudflats in sheltered coastal areas, such as estuaries, bays, inlets and lagoons, and also around non-tidal swamps, lakes and lagoons near the coast, and ponds in saltworks and sewage farms. They are also recorded inland, though less often, including around ephemeral and permanent lakes, dams, waterholes and drains, usually with bare mud or sand.	Negligible	No suitable habitat in study area. Nearest records at Winton Wetlands.
<i>Lathamus discolor</i>	Swift Parrot	Critically Endangered	Critically Endangered	A range of forests and woodlands, especially those supporting nectar-producing tree species. Also, well-treed urban areas.	Low	Could utilise study area when in mainland Australia however would expect it in areas of higher Eucalypt density (like nearby core habitat where there are multiple records).
<i>Pedionomus torquatus</i>	Plains Wanderer	Critically Endangered	Critically Endangered	Open, sparse swards and grasslands	Negligible	No suitable habitat in study area.
<i>Galaxias rostratus</i>	Flathead Galaxias	Critically Endangered	Vulnerable	Southern Murray Darling Basin. inhabits a variety of habitats including billabongs, lakes, swamps	Negligible	No suitable habitat in study area

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Scientific Name	Common Name	EPBC Act Status	FFG Act Status	Habitat	Likelihood	Rationales
				and rivers, with a preference for still or slow flowing waters.		
<i>Botaurus poiciloptilus</i>	Australasian Bittern	Endangered	Critically Endangered	Lives and forages in wetlands amongst rushes and reeds.	Low	No suitable habitat in study area. Nearest record at Winton Wetlands.
<i>Rostratula australis</i>	Australian Painted Snipe	Endangered	Critically Endangered	Different types of shallow, brackish or freshwater terrestrial wetlands, especially temporary ones which have muddy margins and small, low-lying islands. Suitable wetlands usually support a mosaic of low, patchy vegetation, as well as lignum and cane grass.	Low	No suitable habitat in study area. No nearby records.
<i>Callocephalon fimbriatum</i>	Gang-gang Cockatoo	Endangered	Endangered	Found in tall mountain forests and woodlands, with dense shrubby understories. In winter, Gang-gangs will move to lower altitudes into drier, more open forests and woodlands. At this time, they may be seen by roadsides and in parks and gardens around areas. They require tall trees for roosting.	Medium	Large Eucalyptus throughout the study area provide somewhat suitable habitat. Recent records throughout landscape including within 1 km of study area.
<i>Crinia sloanei</i>	Sloane's Froglet	Endangered	Endangered	Temporary and permanent waterbodies including oxbows off creeks and rivers, farm dams, large and small natural wetlands, constructed frog ponds and temporary puddles. It prefers wetlands that contain riparian and aquatic vegetation. Most often it has been found in waterbodies that contain grasses and reeds that are of medium height and have small stem diameters, such as couch, water couch or the common spike rush (<i>Eleocharis actua</i>)	Low	Dam overflows subject to seasonal inundation could provide suitable habitat at times. Records within the 5 km search area all > 30 years old.

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Scientific Name	Common Name	EPBC Act Status	FFG Act Status	Habitat	Likelihood	Rationales
<i>Melanodryas cucullata</i>	Hooded Robin	Endangered	Vulnerable	Structurally diverse open woodlands containing <i>Eucalyptus</i> , <i>Acacia</i> or <i>Callitris</i> with an understorey of smaller trees, shrubs and grasses. They are not normally found in urban or densely forested areas. Hooded Robins are more positively associated with edge habitats, with deep and sheltered edges considered particularly important.	Low	Some habitat suitability but no nearby records. Conspicuous species which would expect to be on e-bird if present in area.
<i>Swainsona recta</i>	Small Purple-pea	Endangered	Not Listed	Grassy understorey of woodlands and open-forests dominated by Blakely's Red Gum <i>Eucalyptus blakelyi</i> , Yellow Box <i>E. melliodora</i> , Candlebark Gum <i>E. rubida</i> and Long-leaf Box <i>E. goniacalyx</i> . Grows in association with understorey dominants that include Kangaroo Grass <i>Themeda australis</i> , <i>Poa</i> spp. and spear-grasses <i>Austrostipa</i> spp.	Low	Some habitats in study area loosely match the description of suitable habitat, though heavily disturbed. No recent records in geographic area.
<i>Aprasia parapulchella</i>	Pink-tailed Legless Lizard	Vulnerable	Endangered	Sloping open woodland areas with predominantly native grassy ground layers, particularly those dominated by Kangaroo Grass (<i>Themeda australis</i>). Sites are typically well-drained, with rocky outcrops or scattered, partially buried rocks. Commonly found beneath small, partially embedded rocks	Low	The study area does not provide suitable habitats. No records east of Goulburn River.
<i>Delma impar</i>	Striped Legless Lizard	Vulnerable	Endangered	Grassy ground cover, often with a mixture of native and exotic perennials and annuals. The species shelters under surface rock, in cracks in the soil, or in tussocks.	Low	Habitat is somewhat suitable in parts but highly fragmented from other suitable habitats. No recent records in the geographic area.
<i>Maccullochella peelii</i>	Murray Cod	Vulnerable	Endangered	Waterways of the Murray-Darling Basin in a wide range of warm water habitats that range from clear, rocky streams to slow flowing turbid rivers and billabongs.	Negligible	No suitable habitat within study area.

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Scientific Name	Common Name	EPBC Act Status	FFG Act Status	Habitat	Likelihood	Rationales
<i>Polytelis swainsonii</i>	Superb Parrot	Vulnerable	Endangered	Timbered waterways and nearby well-watered woodlands, especially in River Red Gums along the Murray and Murrumbidgee Rivers.	Low	Study area does not provide preferred habitat and they do not frequent the region.
<i>Falco hypoleucos</i>	Grey Falcon	Vulnerable	Vulnerable	The species occurs throughout the arid and semiarid zones of Australia, where the mean annual rainfall is less than 500 mm, but rarely in waterless areas. These areas are relatively treeless except along watercourses, and comprise sandy to stony plains, spinifex tussock grassland, low shrubland and acacia scrub.	Low	Not within key range. Lack of nearby records.
<i>Grantiella picta</i>	Painted Honeyeater	Vulnerable	Vulnerable	Found in dry open forests and woodlands and is strongly associated with mistletoe. It may also be found along rivers, on plains with scattered trees and on farmland with remnant vegetation. It has been seen in urban parks and gardens where large eucalyptus are available.	Medium	Frequently recorded in Lurg Hills and within 1 km of the study area as recently as 2017.
<i>Hirundapus caudacutus</i>	White-throated Needletail	Vulnerable	Vulnerable	Primarily exclusively aerial but will roost in trees on occasion	Medium	Records from within 5 km as recent as 2021. Could utilise airspace of study area.
<i>Litoria raniformis</i>	Growling Grass Frog	Vulnerable	Vulnerable	Water bodies, including slow flowing streams and rivers, or off-stream wetlands, which contain water at least periodically	Low	No recorded in Benalla region since mid-1970's. Current re-wilding program occurring at Winton Wetlands.
<i>Stagonopleura guttata</i>	Diamond Firetail	Vulnerable	Vulnerable	Diamond Firetails are found in open grassy woodland, heath and farmland or grassland with scattered trees.	Medium	Relatively common in Benalla LGA a. Study area provides suitable habitat and recorded in study area previously (2007).

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Scientific Name	Common Name	EPBC Act Status	FFG Act Status	Habitat	Likelihood	Rationales
<i>Amphibromus fluitans</i>	River Swamp Wallaby-grass	Vulnerable	Not Listed	Gilgai depressions in seasonally wet Kangaroo Grass (<i>Themeda triandra</i>) dominated grassland, a seasonal soak dominated by Common Bog-rush (<i>Schoenus Apogon</i>) and in a stand of Sedge Carex <i>sp. aff. bichenoviana</i> .	Negligible	No suitable habitat in study area.
<i>Aphelocephala leucopsis</i>	Southern Whiteface	Vulnerable	Not Listed	Typically inhabits arid open woodlands with a shrubby or grassy understory, as well as grass plains throughout much of the continents south	Low	Found more so in arid regions. Historical records from search area. Nearest recent record at Winton Wetlands.
<i>Climacteris picumnus victoriae</i>	Brown Treecreeper (south-eastern)	Vulnerable	Not Listed	Found in eucalypt woodlands (including Box-Gum Woodland) and dry open forest of the inland slopes and plains inland of the Great Dividing Range; mainly inhabits woodlands dominated by stringybarks or other rough-barked eucalypts, usually with an open grassy understory, sometimes with more shrub species; also found in inland River Red Gum (<i>Eucalyptus camaldulensis</i>) Forest bordering wetlands.	Low	The study area provides suitable habitat but no records in geographic area. Brown Treecreeper records near to study area are not of the listed subspecies.
<i>Gallinago hardwickii</i>	Latham's Snipe	Vulnerable	Not Listed	They differ to other shorebird species in preferring open freshwater or brackish wetlands with cover nearby, particularly areas of wet tussock grassland and other dense ground vegetation.	Negligible	No suitable habitat in study area
<i>Neophema chrysostoma</i>	Blue-winged Parrot	Vulnerable	Not Listed	Inhabits a range of habitats from coastal, sub-coastal and inland areas, right through to semi-arid zones. Throughout their range they favour grasslands and grassy woodlands. They are often found near wetlands both near the coast and in semi-arid zones.	Low	Habitat in study area could be considered suitable, but records indicate they do not frequent the region.

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Scientific Name	Common Name	EPBC Act Status	FFG Act Status	Habitat	Likelihood	Rationales
<i>Allocasuarina luehmannii</i>	Buloke	Not Listed	Critically Endangered	Typically occupies patches of red-brown loamy sands with alkaline sub-soils on the alluvial plain of the Murray River	Low	No suitable habitat in study area. Species would have been conspicuous if present.
<i>Burhinus grallarius</i>	Bush Stone Curlew	Not Listed	Critically Endangered	Inhabits open forests and woodlands with a sparse grassy ground layer and fallen timber.	Low	Lack of mid and understory makes them particularly vulnerable to predation. No recent records in Benalla area.
<i>Antigone rubicunda</i>	Brolga	Not Listed	Endangered	Large open wetlands, grassy plains, coastal mudflats and irrigated croplands and, less frequently, mangrove-studded creeks and estuaries. It is less common in arid and semi-arid regions but will occur close to water.	Low	No suitable habitat within study area.
<i>Digitaria divaricatissima</i>	Umbrella Grass	Not Listed	Endangered	Woodland, on better soils.	Low	Study area does not resemble preferred habitat.
<i>Diuris punctata</i> var. <i>punctata</i>	Purple Diuris	Not Listed	Endangered	Occurring in the open forests, woodlands and grasslands of the fertile lowlands, now much reduced through clearing for agriculture and heavily fragmented. A few, isolated sites, but sometimes locally abundant.	Low	One historical record near Winton. Otherwise lack of records and study area is heavily modified/ disturbed.
<i>Egretta garzetta</i>	Little Egret	Not Listed	Endangered	Frequents tidal mudflats, saltwater and freshwater wetlands, and mangroves.	Low	No suitable habitat in study area
<i>Eucalyptus sideroxylon</i>	Mugga	Not Listed	Endangered	In Victoria confined to the Chiltern area, northern Warby Range and south of Winton, while the other ironbark, <i>Eucalyptus tricarpa</i> , with its 3-budded inflorescences and larger fruit is widespread	Low	Records in nearby Lurg Hills. Ironbarks in the study area were <i>E. tricarpa</i> .
<i>Gratiola pumilo</i>	Dwarf Brooklime	Not Listed	Endangered	Grows in seasonally inundated, damp ground.	Low	Habitat suitability is limited in study area.
<i>Haliaeetus leucogaster</i>	White-bellied Sea-Eagle	Not Listed	Endangered	Habitats are characterised by the presence of large areas of open water including larger rivers, swamps, lakes, and the sea. Breeding habitat	Low	No nests identified in the remnant trees. Unlikely to use study area

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Scientific Name	Common Name	EPBC Act Status	FFG Act Status	Habitat	Likelihood	Rationales
				consists of mature tall open forest, open forest, tall woodland, and swamp sclerophyll forest close to foraging habitat. Nest trees are typically large emergent eucalypts and often have emergent dead branches or large dead trees nearby which are used as 'guard roosts'. Nests are large structures built from sticks and lined with leaves or grass.		for any other purpose.
<i>Varanus varius</i>	Lace Monitor	Not Listed	Endangered	Prefer semi-humid to humid forested habitat, including river basins and adjacent areas.	Low	Lack of shrub layer and ground cove likely limits food availability. Scarce records in area.
<i>Pomatostomus temporalis</i>	Grey-crowned Babbler	Not Listed	Vulnerable	Found in open forests and woodlands, favouring inland plains with an open shrub layer, little ground cover and plenty of fallen timber and leaf litter. May be seen along roadsides and around	High	Recorded within the study area utilising planted Ash trees along driveway. Babbler nests are also recorded in these trees. Likely to use revegetation areas within and adjacent to study area.
<i>Geopelia cuneata</i>	Diamond Dove	Not Listed	Vulnerable	And or semi-arid grassland with reliable water supply in the winter. Often seen along roads and tracks.	Low	Not preferred habitat.
<i>Ardea alba modesta</i>	Eastern Great Egret	Not Listed	Vulnerable	The Eastern Great Egret has been reported in a wide range of wetland habitats. The species usually frequents shallow waters.	Low	Study area does not resemble suitable habitat, particularly in comparison to nearby Lake Benalla and Winton Wetlands where the species is recorded frequently.
<i>Neophema pulchella</i>	Turquoise Parrot	Not Listed	Vulnerable	Open, grassy woodland with dead trees near permanent water	Low	The study area is too fragmented, disturbed. Frequently recorded in larger remnant patches in Lurg Hills, Mt. Meg NCR and Warby

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Scientific Name	Common Name	EPBC Act Status	FFG Act Status	Habitat	Likelihood	Rationales
						Ovens NP.
<i>Spatula rhynchotis</i>	Australian Shoveler	Not Listed	Vulnerable	All kinds of wetlands, preferring large undisturbed heavily vegetated freshwater swamps. It is also found on open waters and occasionally along the coast.	Low	No suitable habitat within study area outside of small farm dam.
<i>Hieraaetus morphnoides</i>	Little Eagle	Not Listed	Vulnerable	Seen over woodland and forested lands and open country, extending into the arid zone. It tends to avoid rainforest and heavy forest.	Low	Study area contains little woodland compared to nearby areas which would appear more attractive.
<i>Petaurus norfolcensis</i>	Squirrel Glider	Not Listed	Vulnerable	River Red Gum forests, and mixed species dry forests (including 'box-ironbark' forests) and woodlands. Both of these general habitat types typically contain many mature trees and characteristically include a substantial understory of Silver Wattle or Black Wattle.	Low	Sporadically recorded through Lurg Hills. Not close to study area.

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Appendix 3 - EVC Benchmarks

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EVC/Bioregion Benchmark for Vegetation Quality Assessment

Central Victorian Uplands bioregion

EVC 61: Box Ironbark Forest

Description:

Occurs on gently undulating rises, low hills and peneplains on infertile, often stony soils derived from a range of geologies. The open overstorey to 20 m tall consists of a variety of eucalypts, often including one of the Ironbark species. The mid storey often forms a dense to open small tree or shrub layer over an open ground layer ranging from a sparse to well-developed suite of herbs and grasses.

Large trees:

Species	DBH(cm)	#/ha
<i>Eucalyptus</i> spp.	70 cm	15 / ha
<i>Eucalyptus</i> (mallee) spp.	30 cm	

Tree Canopy Cover:

%cover	Character Species	Common Name
30%	<i>Eucalyptus polyanthemos</i>	Red Box
	<i>Eucalyptus macrorhyncha</i>	Red Stringybark
	<i>Eucalyptus tricarpa</i>	Red Ironbark
	<i>Eucalyptus goniacalyx</i> s.s.	Bundy

Understorey:

Life form	#Spp	%Cover	LF code
Immature Canopy Tree		5%	IT
Tree or Large Shrub	1	5%	T
Medium Shrub	6	25%	MS
Small Shrub	2	5%	SS
Prostrate Shrub	1	1%	PS
Large Herb	2	1%	LH
Medium Herb	5	10%	MH
Small or Prostrate Herb	1	1%	SH
Large Tufted Graminoid	1	5%	LTG
Medium to Small Tufted Graminoid	7	15%	MTG
Bryophytes/Lichens	na	10%	BL
Soil Crust	na	10%	S/C
Total understorey projective foliage cover		80%	

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EVC 61: Box Ironbark Forest - Central Victorian Uplands bioregion

LF Code	Species typical of at least part of EVC range	Common Name
T	<i>Exocarpos cupressiformis</i>	Cherry Ballart
MT	<i>Eucalyptus behriana</i>	Bull Mallee
MS	<i>Acacia pycnantha</i>	Golden Wattle
MS	<i>Cassinia arcuata</i>	Drooping Cassinia
MS	<i>Brachyloma daphnoides</i>	Daphne Heath
MS	<i>Cassinia longifolia</i>	Shiny Cassinia
PS	<i>Astroloma humifusum</i>	Cranberry Heath
LH	<i>Senecio tenuiflorus</i>	Slender Fireweed
LH	<i>Wahlenbergia gracilis s.l.</i>	Sprawling Bluebell
MH	<i>Gonocarpus tetragynus</i>	Common Raspwort
MH	<i>Einadia hastata</i>	Saloop
MH	<i>Galium gaudichaudii</i>	Rough Bedstraw
SH	<i>Dichondra repens</i>	Kidney-weed
MTG	<i>Joycea pallida</i>	Silvertop Wallaby-grass
MTG	<i>Lomandra filiformis</i>	Wattle Mat-rush
MTG	<i>Dianella revoluta s.l.</i>	Black-anther Flax-lily
MTG	<i>Austrodanthonia setacea</i>	Bristly Wallaby-grass

Recruitment:
Continuous

Organic Litter:
20 % cover

Logs:
20 m/0.1 ha.

Weediness:

LF Code	Typical Weed Species	Common Name	Invasive	Impact
LH	<i>Sonchus oleraceus</i>	Common Sow-thistle	high	low
MH	<i>Hypochoeris radicata</i>	Cat's Ear	high	low
MTG	<i>Vulpia bromoides</i>	Squirrel-tail Fescue	high	low
MNG	<i>Aira elegantissima</i>	Delicate Hair-grass	high	low

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EVC/Bioregion Benchmark for Vegetation Quality Assessment

Central Victorian Uplands bioregion

EVC 235: Plains Woodland/Herb-rich Gilgai Wetland Mosaic

Description:

Open woodland to 15 m tall on broad alluvial plains and along ephemeral drainage lines. Soils are generally poorly drained heavy clays which form distinctive "gilgai" crests and troughs in a fine-scale mosaic. The understorey consists of few, if any shrubs while the ground layer is made up of a combination of "dryland" herbs/grasses and amphibious herbs/grasses tolerant of seasonal inundation.

Large trees:

Species	DBH(cm)	#/ha
<i>Eucalyptus</i> spp.	70 cm	10 / ha
<i>Allocasuarina luehmmanii</i>	40 cm	

Tree Canopy Cover:

%cover	Character Species	Common Name
15%	<i>Eucalyptus camaldulensis</i>	River Red-gum
	<i>Eucalyptus microcarpa</i>	Grey Box
	<i>Allocasuarina luehmmanii</i>	Buloke

Understorey:

Life form	#Spp	%Cover	LF code
Immature Canopy Tree	2	5%	IT
Medium Shrub	2	10%	MS
Large Herb	2	5%	LH
Medium Herb	3	15%	MH
Small or Prostrate Herb	1	15%	SH
Large Tufted Graminoid	1	1%	LTG
Medium to Small Tufted Graminoid	8	20%	MTG
Medium to Tiny Non-tufted Graminoid	2	5%	MNG
Bryophytes/Lichens	na	10%	BL
Soil Crust	na	10%	S/C
Total understorey projective foliage cover		90%	

LF Code	Species typical of at least part of EVC range	Common Name
MS	<i>Acacia pycnantha</i>	Golden Wattle
MS	<i>Acacia paradoxa</i>	Hedge Wattle
PS	<i>Astroloma humifusum</i>	Cranberry Heath
LH	<i>Senecio tenuiflorus</i>	Slender Fireweed
LH	<i>Senecio quadridentatus</i>	Cotton Fireweed
MH	<i>Veronica plebeia</i>	Trailing Speedwell
MH	<i>Calotis anthemoides</i>	Cut-leaf Burr-daisy
MH	<i>Brachyscome basaltica</i> var. <i>gracilis</i>	Woodland Swamp-daisy
MH	<i>Vittadinia cuneata</i>	Fuzzy New Holland-daisy
SH	<i>Cymbonotus preissianus</i>	Austral Bear's-ear
SH	<i>Myriophyllum integrifolium</i>	Tiny Water-milfoil
SH	<i>Phyllangium divergens</i>	Wiry Mitrewort
LTG	<i>Juncus pallidus</i>	Pale Rush
LTG	<i>Deyeuxia quadriseta</i>	Reed Bent-grass
MTG	<i>Lomandra filiformis</i>	Wattle Mat-rush
MTG	<i>Isolepis platycarpa</i>	Broad-fruit Club-sedge
MTG	<i>Pentapogon quadrifidus</i>	Five-awned Spear-grass
MTG	<i>Burchardia umbellata</i>	Milkmaids
MNG	<i>Microlaena stipoides</i> var. <i>stipoides</i>	Weeping Grass
TTG	<i>Centrolepis fascicularis</i>	Tufted Centrolepis

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EVC 235: Plains Woodland/Herb-rich Gilgai Wetland Mosaic - Central Victorian Uplands bioregion

Recruitment:

Continuous

Organic Litter:

20 % cover

Logs:

15 m/0.1 ha.

Weediness:

LF Code	Typical Weed Species	Common Name	Invasive	Impact
LH	<i>Cirsium vulgare</i>	Spear Thistle	high	high
MH	<i>Hypochoeris radicata</i>	Cat's Ear	high	low
MH	<i>Leontodon taraxacoides</i> ssp. <i>taraxacoides</i>	Hairy Hawkbit	high	low
MH	<i>Arctotheca calendula</i>	Cape Weed	high	low
MH	<i>Anagallis arvensis</i>	Pimpernel	high	low
MTG	<i>Vulpia bromoides</i>	Squirrel-tail Fescue	high	low
MTG	<i>Briza minor</i>	Lesser Quaking-grass	high	low
TTG	<i>Cyperus tenellus</i>	Tiny Flat-sedge	high	low

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Appendix 4 - Protected Matters Search Tool (PMST) Report

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Australian Government

Department of Climate Change, Energy,
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EPBC Act Protected Matters Report

This report provides general guidance on matters of national environmental significance and other matters protected by the EPBC Act in the area you have selected. Please see the caveat for interpretation of information provided here.

Report created: 05-Feb-2026

[Summary](#)

[Details](#)

[Matters of NES](#)

[Other Matters Protected by the EPBC Act](#)

[Extra Information](#)

[Caveat](#)

[Acknowledgements](#)

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Summary

Matters of National Environment Significance

This part of the report summarises the matters of national environmental significance that may occur in, or may relate to, the area you nominated. Further information is available in the detail part of the report, which can be accessed by scrolling or following the links below. If you are proposing to undertake an activity that may have a significant impact on one or more matters of national environmental significance then you should consider the [Administrative Guidelines on Significance](#).

World Heritage Properties:	None
National Heritage Places:	None
Wetlands of International Importance (Ramsar	7
Great Barrier Reef Marine Park:	None
Commonwealth Marine Area:	None
Listed Threatened Ecological Communities:	3
Listed Threatened Species:	39
Listed Migratory Species:	8

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Other Matters Protected by the EPBC Act

This part of the report summarises other matters protected under the Act that may relate to the area you nominated. Approval may be required for a proposed activity that significantly affects the environment on Commonwealth land, when the action is outside the Commonwealth land, or the environment anywhere when the action is taken on Commonwealth land. Approval may also be required for the Commonwealth or Commonwealth agencies proposing to take an action that is likely to have a significant impact on the environment anywhere.

The EPBC Act protects the environment on Commonwealth land, the environment from the actions taken on Commonwealth land, and the environment from actions taken by Commonwealth agencies. As heritage values of a place are part of the 'environment', these aspects of the EPBC Act protect the Commonwealth Heritage values of a Commonwealth Heritage place. Information on the new heritage laws can be found at <https://www.dcceew.gov.au/parks-heritage/heritage>

A [permit](#) may be required for activities in or on a Commonwealth area that may affect a member of a listed threatened species or ecological community, a member of a listed migratory species, whales and other cetaceans, or a member of a listed marine species.

Commonwealth Lands:	None
Commonwealth Heritage Places:	None
Listed Marine Species:	17
Whales and Other Cetaceans:	None
Critical Habitats:	None
Commonwealth Reserves Terrestrial:	None
Australian Marine Parks:	None
Habitat Critical to the Survival of Marine Turtles:	None

Extra Information

This part of the report provides information that may also be relevant to the area you have

State and Territory Reserves:	3
Regional Forest Agreements:	1
Nationally Important Wetlands:	None
EPBC Act Referrals:	9
Key Ecological Features (Marine):	None
Biologically Important Areas:	None
Bioregional Assessments:	None
Geological and Bioregional Assessments:	None

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Details

Matters of National Environmental Significance

Wetlands of International Importance (Ramsar Wetlands)		[Resource Information]
Ramsar Site Name	Proximity	Buffer Status
Banrock station wetland complex	500 - 600km upstream from Ramsar site	In feature area
Barmah forest	50 - 100km upstream from Ramsar site	In feature area
Gunbower forest	100 - 150km upstream from Ramsar site	In feature area
Hattah-kulkyne lakes	300 - 400km upstream from Ramsar site	In feature area
Nsw central murray state forests	50 - 100km upstream from Ramsar site	In feature area
Riverland	500 - 600km upstream from Ramsar site	In feature area
The coorong, and lakes alexandrina and albert wetland	500 - 600km upstream from Ramsar site	In feature area

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Listed Threatened Ecological Communities

[Resource Information]

For threatened ecological communities where the distribution is well known, maps are derived from recovery plans, State vegetation maps, remote sensing imagery and other sources. Where threatened ecological community distributions are less well known, existing vegetation maps and point location data are used to produce indicative distribution maps.

Status of Vulnerable, Disallowed and Ineligible are not MNES under the EPBC Act.

Community Name	Threatened Category	Presence Text	Buffer Status
Buloke Woodlands of the Riverina and Murray-Darling Depression Bioregions	Endangered	Community may occur within area	In feature area
Grey Box (Eucalyptus microcarpa) Grassy Woodlands and Derived Native Grasslands of South-eastern Australia	Endangered	Community likely to occur within area	In feature area
White Box-Yellow Box-Blakely's Red Gum Grassy Woodland and Derived	Critically Endangered	Community likely to occur within area	In feature area

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Community Name	Threatened Category	Presence Text	Buffer Status
Native Grassland			

Listed Threatened Species

[Resource Information]

Status of Conservation Dependent and Extinct are not MNES under the EPBC Act.
 Number is the current name ID.

Scientific Name	Threatened Category	Presence Text	Buffer Status
BIRD			
Anthochaera phrygia Regent Honeyeater [82338]	Critically Endangered	Breeding known to occur within area	In feature area
Aphelocephala leucopsis Southern Whiteface [529]	Vulnerable	Species or species habitat known to occur within area	In feature area
Botaurus poiciloptilus Australasian Bittern [1001]	Endangered	Species or species habitat known to occur within area	In feature area
Calidris acuminata Sharp-tailed Sandpiper [874]	Vulnerable	Species or species habitat may occur within area	In feature area
Calidris ferruginea Curlew Sandpiper [856]	Critically Endangered	Species or species habitat known to occur within area	In feature area
Callocephalon fimbriatum Gang-gang Cockatoo [768]	Endangered	Species or species habitat known to occur within area	In feature area
Climacteris picumnus victoriae Brown Treecreeper (south-eastern) [67062]	Vulnerable	Species or species habitat known to occur within area	In feature area
Falco hypoleucos Grey Falcon [929]	Vulnerable	Species or species habitat likely to occur within area	In feature area
Gallinago hardwickii Latham's Snipe, Japanese Snipe [863]	Vulnerable	Species or species habitat known to occur within area	In feature area
Grantiella picta Painted Honeyeater [470]	Vulnerable	Species or species habitat known to occur within area	In feature area

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Scientific Name	Threatened Category	Presence Text	Buffer Status
Hirundapus caudacutus White-throated Needletail [682]	Vulnerable	Species or species habitat known to occur within area	In feature area
Lathamus discolor Swift Parrot [744]	Critically Endangered	Species or species habitat known to occur within area	In feature area
Melanodryas cucullata cucullata South-eastern Hooded Robin, Hooded Robin (south-eastern) [67093]	Endangered	Species or species habitat known to occur within area	In feature area
Neophema chrysostoma Blue-winged Parrot [726]	Vulnerable	Species or species habitat known to occur within area	In feature area
Pedionomus torquatus Plains-wanderer [906]	Critically Endangered	Species or species habitat may occur within area	In feature area
Polytelis swainsonii Superb Parrot [738]	Vulnerable	Species or species habitat likely to occur within area	In feature area
Rostratula australis Australian Painted Snipe [77037]	Endangered	Species or species habitat likely to occur within area	In feature area
Stagonopleura guttata Diamond Firetail [59398]	Vulnerable	Species or species habitat known to occur within area	In feature area
CRUSTACEAN			
Euastacus armatus Murray Crayfish [81537]	Vulnerable	Species or species habitat may occur within area	In feature area
FISH			
Galaxias rostratus Flathead Galaxias, Beaked Minnow, Flat-headed Galaxias, Flat-headed Jollytail, Flat-headed Minnow [84745]	Critically Endangered	Species or species habitat likely to occur within area	In feature area
Maccullochella peelii Murray Cod [66633]	Vulnerable	Species or species habitat may occur within area	In buffer area only

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Scientific Name	Threatened Category	Presence Text	Buffer Status
Macquaria australasica Macquarie Perch [66632]	Endangered	Species or species habitat may occur within area	In feature area
Nannoperca australis Murray-Darling Basin lineage Southern Pygmy Perch (Murray-Darling Basin lineage) [91711]	Vulnerable	Species or species habitat may occur within area	In buffer area only
FROG			
Crinia sloanei Sloane's Froglet [59151]	Endangered	Species or species habitat likely to occur within area	In feature area
Litoria raniformis Southern Bell Frog, Growling Grass Frog, Green and Golden Frog, Warty Swamp Frog, Golden Bell Frog [1828]	Vulnerable	Species or species habitat likely to occur within area	In feature area
INSECT			
Keyacris scurra Key's Matchstick Grasshopper [89739]	Endangered	Species or species habitat may occur within area	In buffer area only
Synemon plana Golden Sun Moth [25234]	Vulnerable	Species or species habitat may occur within area	In buffer area only
MAMMAL			
Dasyurus maculatus maculatus (SE mainland population) Spot-tailed Quoll, Spotted-tail Quoll, Tiger Quoll (southeastern mainland population) [75184]	Endangered	Species or species habitat may occur within area	In feature area
Nyctophilus corbeni Corben's Long-eared Bat, South-eastern Long-eared Bat [83395]	Vulnerable	Species or species habitat may occur within area	In buffer area only
Pteropus poliocephalus Grey-headed Flying-fox [186]	Vulnerable	Foraging, feeding or related behaviour may occur within area	In feature area
PLANT			
Amphibromus fluitans River Swamp Wallaby-grass, Floating Swamp Wallaby-grass [19215]	Vulnerable	Species or species habitat known to occur within area	In feature area

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Scientific Name	Threatened Category	Presence Text	Buffer Status
Caladenia concolor Crimson Spider-orchid, Maroon Spider-orchid [5505]	Vulnerable	Species or species habitat may occur within area	In feature area
Lepidium monoplacoides Winged Pepper-cress [9190]	Endangered	Species or species habitat may occur within area	In feature area
Myriophyllum porcatum Ridged Water-milfoil [19919]	Vulnerable	Species or species habitat may occur within area	In feature area
Prasophyllum validum Sturdy Leek-orchid, Mount Remarkable Leek-orchid [10268]	Vulnerable	Species or species habitat may occur within area	In feature area
Swainsona murrayana Slender Darling-pea, Slender Swainson, Murray Swainson-pea [6765]	Vulnerable	Species or species habitat may occur within area	In feature area
Swainsona recta Small Purple-pea, Mountain Swainson-pea, Small Purple Pea [7580]	Endangered	Species or species habitat known to occur within area	In buffer area only
REPTILE Aprasia parapulchella Pink-tailed Worm-lizard, Pink-tailed Legless Lizard [1665] Delma impar Striped Legless Lizard, Striped Snake-lizard [1649]			
Listed Migratory Species Scientific Name Threatened Category Presence Text Buffer Status Migratory Marine Birds Apus pacificus Fork-tailed Swift [678]			
Migratory Terrestrial Species Scientific Name Threatened Category Presence Text Buffer Status Hirundapus caudacutus White-throated Needletail [682]			

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Scientific Name	Threatened Category	Presence Text	Buffer Status
Motacilla flava Yellow Wagtail [644]		Species or species habitat may occur within area	In feature area
Migratory Wetlands Species			
Actitis hypoleucos Common Sandpiper [59309]		Species or species habitat may occur within area	In feature area
Calidris acuminata Sharp-tailed Sandpiper [874]	Vulnerable	Species or species habitat may occur within area	In feature area
Calidris ferruginea Curlew Sandpiper [856]	Critically Endangered	Species or species habitat known to occur within area	In feature area
Calidris melanotos Pectoral Sandpiper [858]		Species or species habitat may occur within area	In feature area
Gallinago hardwickii Latham's Snipe, Japanese Snipe [863]	Vulnerable	Species or species habitat known to occur within area	In feature area

Other Matters Protected by the EPBC Act

Listed Marine Species	[Resource Information]		
Scientific Name	Threatened Category	Presence Text	Buffer Status
Bird			
Actitis hypoleucos Common Sandpiper [59309]		Species or species habitat may occur within area	In feature area
Apus pacificus Fork-tailed Swift [678]		Species or species habitat likely to occur within area overfly marine area	In feature area
Bubulcus ibis as Ardea ibis Cattle Egret [66521]		Species or species habitat may occur within area overfly marine area	In feature area

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Scientific Name	Threatened Category	Presence Text	Buffer Status
Calidris acuminata Sharp-tailed Sandpiper [874]	Vulnerable	Species or species habitat may occur within area	In feature area
Calidris ferruginea Curlew Sandpiper [856]	Critically Endangered	Species or species habitat known to occur within area overfly marine area	In feature area
Calidris melanotos Pectoral Sandpiper [858]	ADVERTISED PLAN	Species or species habitat may occur within area overfly marine area	In feature area
Chalcites osculans as Chrysococcyx osculans Black-eared Cuckoo [83425]		Species or species habitat known to occur within area overfly marine area	In feature area
Gallinago hardwickii Latham's Snipe, Japanese Snipe [863]		Species or species habitat known to occur within area overfly marine area	In feature area
Haliaeetus leucogaster White-bellied Sea-Eagle [943]		Species or species habitat known to occur within area	In feature area
Hirundapus caudacutus White-throated Needletail [682]	Vulnerable	Species or species habitat known to occur within area overfly marine area	In feature area
Lathamus discolor Swift Parrot [744]	Critically Endangered	Species or species habitat known to occur within area overfly marine area	In feature area
Merops ornatus Rainbow Bee-eater [670]	This copied document to be made available for the sole purpose of enabling its consideration and review as part of a planning process under the Planning and Environment Act 1987. The document must not be used for any purpose which may breach any copyright	Species or species habitat may occur within area overfly marine area	In feature area
Motacilla flava Yellow Wagtail [644]		Species or species habitat may occur within area overfly marine area	In feature area

Scientific Name	Threatened Category	Presence Text	Buffer Status
Myiagra cyanoleuca Satin Flycatcher [612]		Species or species habitat known to occur within area overfly marine area	In feature area
Neophema chrysostoma Blue-winged Parrot [726]	Vulnerable	Species or species habitat known to occur within area overfly marine area	In feature area
Rhipidura rufifrons Rufous Fantail [592]	This copied document to be made available for the sole purpose of enabling its consideration and review as part of a planning process under the Planning and Environment Act 1987. The document must not be used for any purpose which may breach any copyright	Species or species habitat likely to occur within area overfly marine area	In feature area
Rostratula australis as Rostratula benghalensis (sensu lato) Australian Painted Snipe [77037]		Species or species habitat likely to occur within area overfly marine area	In feature area

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Extra Information

State and Territory Reserves			[Resource Information]
Protected Area Name	Reserve Type	State	Buffer Status
Eleven Mile Creek B.R.	Natural Features Reserve	VIC	In buffer area only
Winton B.R.	Natural Features Reserve	VIC	In buffer area only
Winton Wetlands N.F.R.	Natural Features Reserve	VIC	In buffer area only

Regional Forest Agreements	[Resource Information]
Note that all areas with completed RFAs have been included. Please see the associated resource information for specific caveats and use limitations associated with RFA boundary information.	

RFA Name	State	Buffer Status
North East	Victoria	In feature area

EPBC Act Referrals	[Resource Information]			
Title of referral	Reference	Referral Outcome	Assessment Status	Buffer Status
Reintroduction of Growling Grass Frogs to Winton Wetlands	2022/09394		Completed	In buffer area only

Controlled action

Title of referral	Reference	Referral Outcome	Assessment Status	Buffer Status
Controlled action				
The Modified Operation of the Goulburn Murray Irrigation District	2009/5123	Controlled Action	Post-Approval	In feature area
Not controlled action				
Biodiversity Impacts Audit	2011/6191	Not Controlled Action	Completed	In feature area
Glenrowan Solar Farm and Cable	2021/9103	Not Controlled Action	Completed	In feature area
Improving rabbit biocontrol: releasing another strain of RHDV, sthrn two thirds of Australia	2015/7522	Not Controlled Action	Completed	In feature area
INDIGO Central Submarine Telecommunications Cable	2017/8127	Not Controlled Action	Completed	In feature area
Lake Mokoan Decommissioning and Mid Murray Storage Project	2007/3342	Not Controlled Action	Completed	In feature area
Not controlled action (particular manner)				
APA GasNet Australia (Operations) Pty Ltd /Exploration (mineral, oil and gas - non-marine)/Between W	2014/7186	Not Controlled Action (Particular Manner)	Post-Approval	In buffer area only
INDIGO Marine Cable Route Survey (INDIGO)	2017/7996	Not Controlled Action (Particular Manner)	Post-Approval	In feature area

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Caveat

1 PURPOSE

This report is designed to assist in identifying the location of matters of national environmental significance (MNES) and other matters protected by the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999 (Cth) (EPBC Act) which may be relevant in determining obligations and requirements under the EPBC Act.

The report contains the mapped locations of:

- World and National Heritage properties;
- Wetlands of International and National Importance;
- Commonwealth and State/Territory reserves;
- distribution of listed threatened, migratory and marine species;
- listed threatened ecological communities; and
- other information that may be useful as an indicator of potential habitat value.

2 DISCLAIMER

This report is not intended to be exhaustive and should only be relied upon as a general guide as mapped data is not available for all species or ecological communities listed under the EPBC Act (see below). Persons seeking to use the information contained in this report to inform the referral of a proposed action under the EPBC Act should consider the limitations noted below and whether additional information is required to determine the existence and location of MNES and other protected matters.

Where data is available to inform the mapping of protected species, the presence type (e.g. known, likely or may occur) that can be determined from the data is indicated in general terms. It is the responsibility of any person using or relying on the information in this report to ensure that it is suitable for the circumstances of any proposed use. The Commonwealth cannot accept responsibility for the consequences of any use of the report or any part thereof. To the maximum extent allowed under governing law, the Commonwealth will not be liable for any loss or damage that may be occasioned directly or indirectly through the use of, or reliance on the contents of this report.

3 DATA SOURCES

Threatened ecological communities

For threatened ecological communities where the distribution is well known, maps are generated based on information contained in recovery plans, State vegetation maps and remote sensing imagery and other sources. Where threatened ecological community distributions are less well known, existing vegetation maps and point location data are used to produce indicative distribution maps.

Threatened, migratory and marine species

Threatened, migratory and marine species distributions have been discerned through a variety of methods. Where distributions are well known and if time permits, distributions are inferred from either thematic spatial data (i.e. vegetation, soils, geology, elevation, aspect, terrain, etc.) together with point locations and described habitat; or modelled (MAXENT or BIOCLIM habitat modelling) using point locations and environmental data layers.

Where little information is available for a species or large number of maps are required in a short time-frame, maps are derived either from 0.04 or 0.02 decimal degree cells; by an automated process using polygon capture techniques (static two kilometre grid cells, alpha-hull and convex hull); or captured manually or by using topographic features (national park boundaries, islands, etc.).

In the early stages of the distribution mapping process (1999-early 2000s) distributions were defined by degree blocks, 100K or 250K map sheets to rapidly create distribution maps. More detailed distribution mapping methods are used to update these distributions when time permits.

4 LIMITATIONS

The following species and ecological communities have not been mapped and do not appear in this report:

- threatened species listed as extinct or considered vagrants;
- some recently listed species and ecological communities;
- some listed migratory and listed marine species, which are not listed as threatened species; and
- migratory species that are very widespread, vagrant, or only occur in Australia in small numbers.

The following groups have been mapped, but may not cover the complete distribution of the species:

- listed migratory and/or listed marine seabirds, which are not listed as threatened, have only been mapped for recorded breeding sites; and
- seals which have only been mapped for breeding sites near the Australian continent

The breeding sites may be important for the protection of the Commonwealth Marine environment.

Refer to the metadata for the feature group (using the Resource Information link) for the currency of the information.

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Acknowledgements

This database has been compiled from a range of data sources. The department acknowledges the following custodians who have contributed valuable data and advice:

- [-Office of Environment and Heritage, New South Wales](#)
- [-Department of Environment and Primary Industries, Victoria](#)
- [-Department of Primary Industries, Parks, Water and Environment, Tasmania](#)
- [-Department of Environment, Water and Natural Resources, South Australia](#)
- [-Department of Land and Resource Management, Northern Territory](#)
- [-Department of Environmental and Heritage Protection, Queensland](#)
- [-Department of Parks and Wildlife, Western Australia](#)
- [-Environment and Planning Directorate, ACT](#)
- [-Birdlife Australia](#)
- [-Australian Bird and Bat Banding Scheme](#)
- [-Australian National Wildlife Collection](#)
- [-Natural history museums of Australia](#)
- [-Museum Victoria](#)
- [-Australian Museum](#)
- [-South Australian Museum](#)
- [-Queensland Museum](#)
- [-Online Zoological Collections of Australian Museums](#)
- [-Queensland Herbarium](#)
- [-National Herbarium of NSW](#)
- [-Royal Botanic Gardens and National Herbarium of Victoria](#)
- [-Tasmanian Herbarium](#)
- [-State Herbarium of South Australia](#)
- [-Northern Territory Herbarium](#)
- [-Western Australian Herbarium](#)
- [-Australian National Herbarium, Canberra](#)
- [-University of New England](#)
- [-Ocean Biogeographic Information System](#)
- [-Australian Government, Department of Defence](#)
- [Forestry Corporation, NSW](#)
- [-Geoscience Australia](#)
- [-CSIRO](#)
- [-Australian Tropical Herbarium, Cairns](#)
- [-eBird Australia](#)
- [-Australian Government – Australian Antarctic Data Centre](#)
- [-Museum and Art Gallery of the Northern Territory](#)
- [-Australian Government National Environmental Science Program](#)
- [-Australian Institute of Marine Science](#)
- [-Reef Life Survey Australia](#)
- [-American Museum of Natural History](#)
- [-Queen Victoria Museum and Art Gallery, Inveresk, Tasmania](#)
- [-Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery, Hobart, Tasmania](#)
- [-Other groups and individuals](#)

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The Department is extremely grateful to the many organisations and individuals who provided expert advice and information on numerous draft distributions.

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Please feel free to provide feedback via the [Contact us](#) page.

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Appendix 5 – Native Vegetation Removal Report

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Native Vegetation Removal Report

NVRR ID: 381_20260526_UQ9

This report provides information to support an application to remove, destroy or lop native vegetation in accordance with the [Guidelines for the removal, destruction or lopping of native vegetation](#) (the Guidelines). This report is **not an assessment by DEECA** of the proposed native vegetation removal. Native vegetation information and offset requirements have been determined using spatial data provided by the applicant or their consultant.

Report details

Date created: 26/05/2026

Local Government Area: BENALLA RURAL CITY

Shapefile name:

Winton_RESST_NVR_patches2.shp

Winton_RESST_NVR_trees1.shp

Site assessor name: Dylan McWhinney

Registered Aboriginal Party: Yorta Yorta

Coordinates: 146.12735, -36.49386

Address: 576 WINTON-GLENROWAN ROAD WINTON 3673

Regulator Notes

Removal polygons are located:

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Summary of native vegetation to be removed

Assessment pathway	Intermediate Assessment Pathway		
Location category	Location 1 The native vegetation extent map indicates that this area is not typically characterised as supporting native vegetation. It does not meet the criteria to be classified as Location Category 2 or 3. The removal of less than 0.5 hectares of native vegetation in this area will not require a Species Offset.		
Total extent including past and proposed removal (ha) <i>Includes endangered EVCs (ha): 0.286</i>	0.286	<i>Extent of past removal (ha)</i>	0
		<i>Extent of proposed removal - Patches (ha)</i>	0.083
		<i>Extent of proposed removal - Scattered Trees (ha)</i>	0.203
No. Large Trees proposed to be removed	2	<i>No. Large Patch Trees</i>	0
		<i>No. Large Scattered Trees</i>	2
No. Small Scattered Trees	2		

Offset requirements if approval is granted

Any approval granted will include a condition to secure an offset, before the removal of native vegetation, that meets the following requirements:

General Offset amount ¹	0.065 General Habitat Units
Minimum strategic biodiversity value score ²	0.3466
Large Trees	2
Vicinity	Goulburn Broken CMA or BENALLA RURAL CITY LGA

NB: values within tables in this document may not add to the totals shown above due to rounding

The availability of third-party offset credits can be checked using the Native Vegetation Credit Register (NVCR) Search Tool - <https://nvcr.delwp.vic.gov.au>

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1. The General Offset amount required is the sum of all General Habitat Units in Appendix 1.
 2. Minimum strategic biodiversity value score is 80 per cent of the weighted average score across habitat zones where a General Offset is required.
 3. The Species Offset amount(s) required is the sum of all Species Habitat Units in Appendix 1.

Application requirements

Applications to remove, destroy or lop native vegetation must include all the below information. If an appropriate response has not been provided the application is not complete.

Application Requirement 1 - Native vegetation removal information

If the native vegetation removal is mapped correctly, the information presented in this Native Vegetation Removal Report addresses Application Requirement 1.

Application Requirement 2 - Topographical and land information

This statement describes the topographical and land features in the vicinity of the proposed works, including the location and extent of any ridges, hilltops, wetlands and waterways, slopes of more than 20% gradient, low-lying areas, saline discharge areas or areas of erosion.

Application Requirement 3 - Photographs of the native vegetation to be removed

Application Requirement 3 is not addressed in this Native Vegetation Removal Report. All applications must include recent, timestamped photos of each Patch, Large Patch, Tree and Scattered Tree which has been mapped in this report.

Application Requirement 4 - Past removal

If past removal has been considered correctly, the information presented in this Native Vegetation Removal Report addresses Application Requirement 4.

Application Requirement 5 - Avoid and minimise statement

This statement describes what has been done to avoid and minimise impacts on native vegetation and associated biodiversity values.

Application Requirement 6 - Property Vegetation Plan

This requirement only applies if an approved Property Vegetation Plan (PVP) applies to the property
Does a PVP apply to the proposal?

Application Requirement 7 - Defendable space statement

Where the removal of native vegetation is to create defendable space, this statement:

- Describes the bushfire threat; and

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- 
- Describes how other bushfire risk mitigation measures were considered to reduce the amount of native vegetation proposed for removal (this can also be part of the avoid and minimise statement).

This statement is not required if, If the proposed defensible space is within the Bushfire Management Overlay (BMO), and in accordance with the 'Exemption to create defensible space for a dwelling under Clause 44.06 of local planning schemes' in Clause 52.12-5.

Application Requirement 8 - Native Vegetation Precinct Plan

This requirement is only applicable if you are removing native vegetation from within an area covered by Native Vegetation Precinct Plan (NVPP), and the proposed removal is not identified as 'to be removed' within the NVPP.

Does an NVPP apply to the proposal?

Application Requirement 9 - Offset statement

This statement demonstrates that an offset is available and describes how the required offset will be secured. The Applicant's Guide provides information relating to this requirement.

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Next steps

Applications to remove, destroy or lop native vegetation must address all the application requirements specified in the Guidelines. If you wish to remove the mapped native vegetation you are required to apply for approval from the responsible authority (e.g. local Council). This Native vegetation removal report must be submitted with your application and meets most of the application requirements. The following requirements need to be addressed, as applicable.

Application Requirement 3 - Photographs of the native vegetation to be removed

Recent, dated photographs of the native vegetation to be removed **must be provided** with the application. All photographs must be clear, show whether the vegetation is a Patch of native vegetation, Patch Tree or Scattered Tree, and identify any Large Trees. If the area of native vegetation to be removed is large, provide photos that are indicative of the native vegetation.

Ensure photographs are attached to the application. If appropriate photographs have not been provided the application is not complete.

Application Requirement 6 - Property Vegetation Plan

If a PVP is applicable, it must be provided with the application.

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Appendix 1: Description of native vegetation to be removed

General Habitat Units for each zone (Patch, Scattered Tree or Patch Tree) are calculated by the following equation in accordance with the Guidelines

General Habitat Units = extent without overlap x condition score x general landscape factor x 1.5, where the general landscape factor = 0.5 + (strategic biodiversity value score/2)

The General Offset amount required is the sum of all General Habitat Units per zone.

Native vegetation to be removed

Information provided by or on behalf of the applicant							Information calculated by NVR Map				
Zone	Type	DBH (cm)	EVC code	Bioregional conservation status	Partial Removal	Condition score	Large Tree(s)	Polygon extent (ha)	Extent without overlap (ha)	SBV score	General Habitat Units
1-a	Patch	-	CVU_0803	Endangered	no	0.220	-	0.011	0.011	0.430	0.003
1-c	Patch	-	CVU_0803	Endangered	no	0.100	-	0.024	0.024	0.430	0.003
1-d	Patch	-	CVU_0803	Endangered	no	0.100	-	0.019	0.019	0.430	0.002
1-h	Patch	-	CVU_0803	Endangered	no	0.460	-	0.029	0.029	0.430	0.014
3-a	Scattered Tree	62	CVU_0803	Endangered	no	0.200	-	0.031	0.031	0.430	0.007
3-b	Scattered Tree	108	CVU_0803	Endangered	no	0.200	1	0.070	0.070	0.390	0.015
3-c	Scattered Tree	129	CVU_0803	Endangered	no	0.200	1	0.070	0.070	0.390	0.015

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Information provided by or on behalf of the applicant							Information calculated by NVR Map				
Zone	Type	DBH (cm)	EVC code	Bioregional conservation status	Partial Removal	Condition score	Large Tree(s)	Polygon extent (ha)	Extent without overlap (ha)	SBV score	General Habitat Units
3-d	Scattered Tree	55	CVU_0803	Endangered	no	0.200	-	0.031	0.031	0.640	0.008

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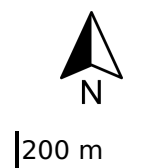
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Appendix 2: Images of mapped native vegetation

1. Property in context



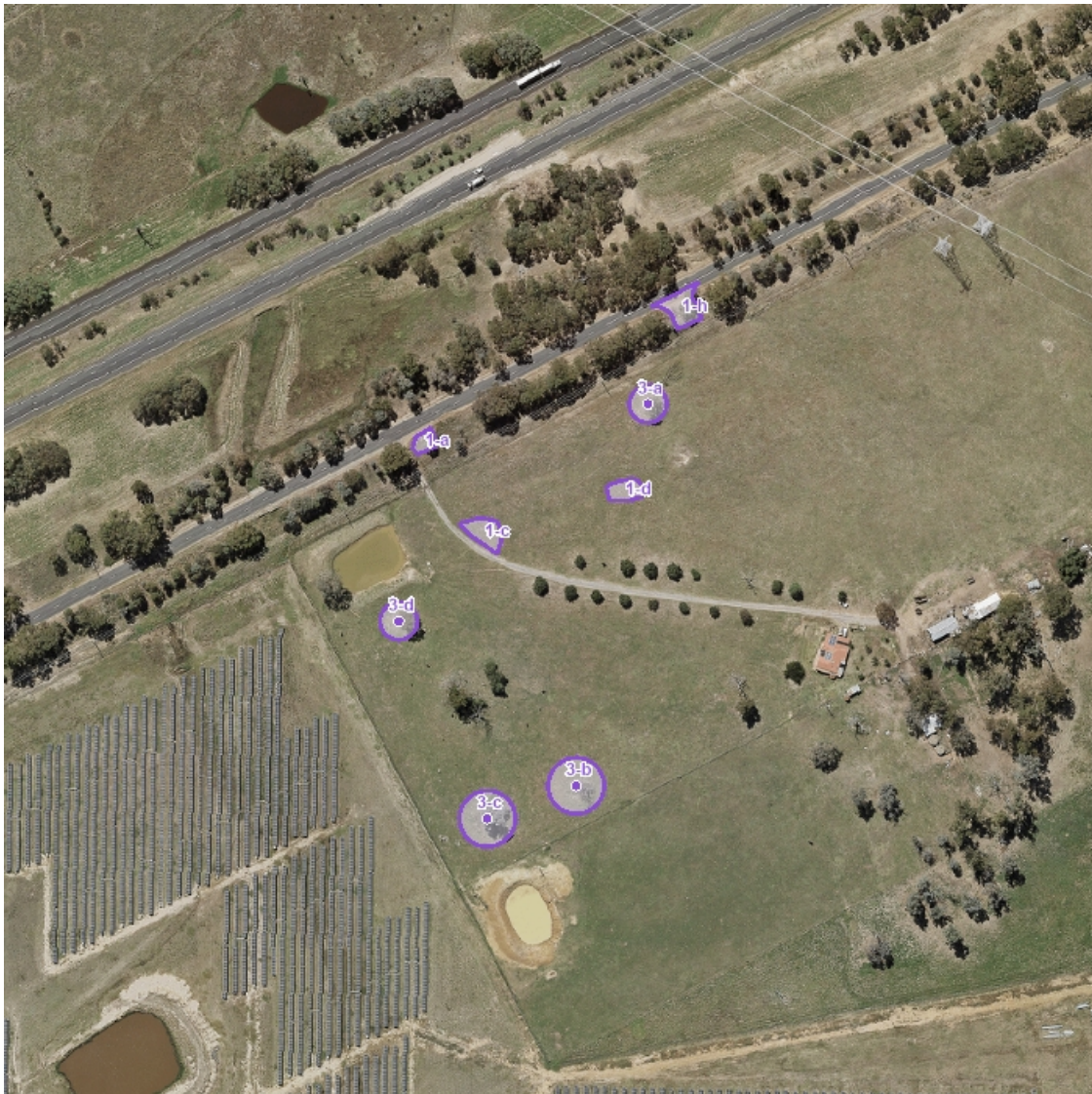
- Proposed Removal
- Past Removal
- Partial Removal
- Property Boundaries



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2. Aerial photograph showing mapped native vegetation



- Proposed Removal
- Past Removal
- Partial Removal



70 m

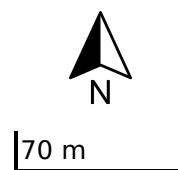
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3. Location Risk Map



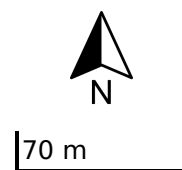
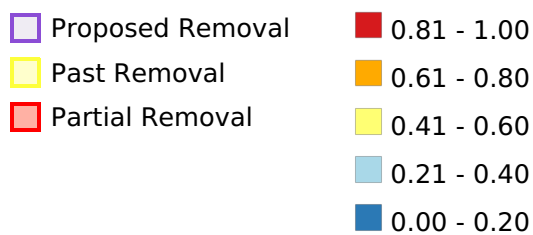
- | | |
|--|--|
|  Proposed Removal |  Location 1 |
|  Past Removal |  Location 2 |
|  Partial Removal |  Location 3 |



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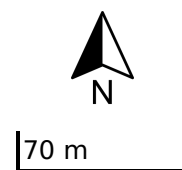
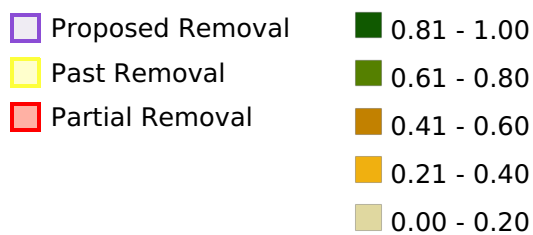
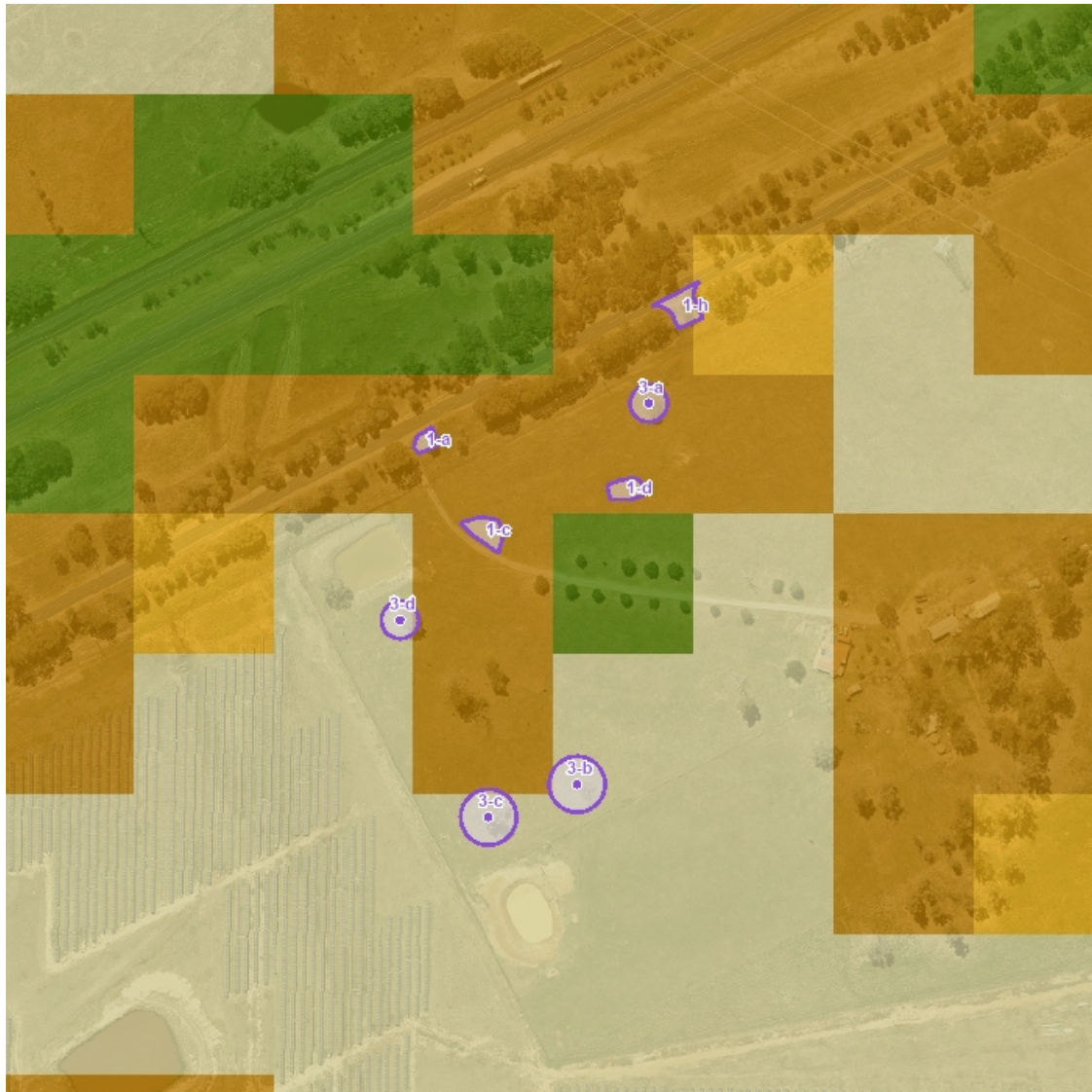
4. Strategic Biodiversity Value Score Map



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5. Condition Score Map



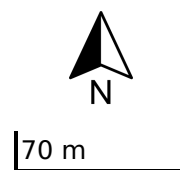
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6. Endangered EVCs



- Proposed Removal
- Past Removal
- Partial Removal
- Endangered 1750 Ecological Vegetation Classes



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Appendix 6 – VQA Detail

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Project name	Winton BESS	Zone ID	1
Assessor	Dylan McWhinney	Date	23/11/2025
EVC	CVU_0803: Plains Woodland	DBH	70cm
Bioregion	Central Victorian Uplands	Location	~36.4933° N, 146.1291° E

MULTIPLIER	1	HABITAT SCORE
SITE CONDITION SCORE	19	22.00
LANDSCAPE SCORE	3	



LARGE TREES	BM	Obs	RECRUITMENT	BM	Obs	PATCH SIZE	Obs
Health	N/A	>70%	Evidence of a cohort		Yes	Area of patch (ha)	0.026
Number/ha	15	0	Evidence of episodic event	Continuous	Yes	Significantly disturbed	Yes
Score	0		% of woody species with adeq. recruit		100	Score	1
CANOPY TREES	BM	Obs	Diversity of woody species	5	1	DISTANCE TO CORE (50ha area)	Obs
Health	N/A	30~70%				Distance to core (km)	2
Cover %	15	8				Significantly disturbed	Yes
Score	4					Score	1
ORGANIC LITTER	BM	Obs				NEIGHBOURHOOD	%
Cover of litter %	10	1	Herb Diversity	25	0	Significantly disturbed	Yes
Origin of litter	N/A	Native	Score	0		100m	20
Score	3		LOGS	BM	Obs	1km	20
			Logs within 1ha (m)	100	0	5km	40
			Large logs within 1ha (m)	50	0	Score	1
			Score	0			

WEEDS	%	HT
Dactylis glomerata	35	No
Phalaris aquatica	5	Yes
Lolium spp.	2	No
Avena fatua	2	No
Rumex crispus	1	No
Sonchus spp.	2	No
Briza maxima	5	No
Bromus hordeaceus	5	No
Plantago lanceolata	2	No
Ehrharta spp.	10	No
Total Cover	69.00%	
Cover of high threat species	5.00%	
Score	2	

UNDERSTOREY																		Score:						5
	Req.	IT	T	MT	MS	SS	PS	LH	MH	SH	LTG	LNG	MTG	MNG	TTG	HG	GF	TF	SC	EP	BL	S/C	No	Cov
Benchmark no. species		1			2	2	1	1	20	4	1	1	16	3									11	
Obs. no. species		1											1	1									3	
Benchmark % cover		5			5	5	1	1	20	10	1	1	45	5							10	10		119
Obs. % cover		8%											0.50	1								0.50		10
Present & Modified		P												P&M										

Species list																								
Eucalyptus microcarpa	Yes	8																						8
Juncus spp.	No													1										1
Rytidosperma sp. aff. setaceum	No												0.5											0.50

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ADVERTISED PLAN

Project name	Winton BESS	Zone ID	2
Assessor	Dylan McWhinney	Date	23/11/2025
EVC	CVU_0803: Plains Woodland	DBH	70cm
Bioregion	Central Victorian Uplands	Location	~36.4933° N, 146.1291° E

MULTIPLIER	1	HABITAT SCORE
SITE CONDITION SCORE	28	31.00
LANDSCAPE SCORE	3	



LARGE TREES	BM	Obs	RECRUITMENT	BM	Obs	PATCH SIZE	Obs
Health	N/A	>70%	Evidence of a cohort		Yes	Area of patch (ha)	0.05
Number/ha	15	25	Evidence of episodic event	Continuous	Yes	Significantly disturbed	Yes
Score	10		% of woody species with adeq. recruit		100	Score	1
CANOPY TREES	BM	Obs	Diversity of woody species	5	1	DISTANCE TO CORE (50ha area)	Obs
Health	N/A	>70%	Score	5		Distance to core (km)	2
Cover %	15	25	RECRUITMENT (NON-WOODY)	BM	Obs	Significantly disturbed	Yes
Score	3		Cover of recruitment area (%)		0	Score	1
ORGANIC LITTER	BM	Obs <td>Herb Diversity</td> <td>25</td> <td>1</td> <th>NEIGHBOURHOOD</th> <th>%</th>	Herb Diversity	25	1	NEIGHBOURHOOD	%
Cover of litter %	10	4	Score	0		Significantly disturbed	Yes
Origin of litter	N/A	Native	LOGS	BM	Obs	100m	20
Score	3		Logs within 1ha (m)	100	0	1km	20
			Large logs within 1ha (m)	50	0	5km	40
			Score	0		Score	1

WEEDS	%	HT
Dactylis glomerata	10	No
Phalaris aquatica	2	Yes
Lolium spp.	2	No
Avena fatua	2	No
Rumex crispus	1	No
Bromus hordeaceus	5	No
Plantago lanceolata	2	No
Ehrharta spp.	25	No
Cirsium vulgare	5	Yes
Total Cover	54.00%	
Cover of high threat species	7.00%	
Score	2	

	UNDERSTOREY																	Score:							5
	Req.	IT	T	MT	MS	SS	PS	LH	MH	SH	LTG	LNG	MTG	MNG	TTG	HG	GF	TF	SC	EP	BL	S/C	No	Cov	
Benchmark no. species		1			2	2	1	1	20	4	1	1	16	3									11		
Obs. no. species					1				1				2										3		
Benchmark % cover		5			5	5	1	1	20	10	1	1	45	5							10	10		119	
Obs. % cover					2				0.20				2										1		5.20
Present & Modified					P																		P&M		

Species list																								
Chrysocephalum apiculatum su...	No								0.2															0.20
Eucalyptus microcarpa	Yes				2																			2
Eucalyptus tricarpa	No																							
Rytidosperma sp. aff. setaceum	No												1											1
Rytidosperma spp.	No												1											1

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Project name	Winton BESS	Zone ID	3
Assessor	Dylan McWhinney	Date	24/11/2025
EVC	CVU_0803: Plains Woodland	DBH	70cm
Bioregion	Central Victorian Uplands	Location	~36.4947° N, 146.1262° E

MULTIPLIER	1	HABITAT SCORE
SITE CONDITION SCORE	7	10.00
LANDSCAPE SCORE	3	

LARGE TREES	BM	Obs	RECRUITMENT	BM	Obs	PATCH SIZE	Obs	WEEDS	%	HT
Health	N/A	>70%	Evidence of a cohort		No	Area of patch (ha)	0.02	<i>Cirsium vulgare</i>	1	Yes
Number/ha	15	0	Evidence of episodic event	Continuous	No	Significantly disturbed	Yes	<i>Hypochaeris spp.</i>	1	Yes
Score	0		% of woody species with adeq. recruit		0	Score	1	<i>Bromus hordeaceus</i>	48	No
CANOPY TREES	BM	Obs				DISTANCE TO CORE (50ha area)	Obs	<i>Festuca spp.</i>	15	No
Health	N/A	>70%	Diversity of woody species	5	0	Distance to core (km)	2	<i>Lolium spp.</i>	10	No
Cover %	15	0	Score	0		Significantly disturbed	Yes	<i>Hordeum vulgare s.s.</i>	10	No
Score	0		RECRUITMENT (NON-WOODY)	BM	Obs	Score	1	<i>Acetosa spp.</i>	5	No
ORGANIC LITTER	BM	Obs	Cover of recruitment area (%)		0	NEIGHBOURHOOD	%	Total Cover	90.00%	
Cover of litter %	10	0	Herb Diversity	25	0	Significantly disturbed	Yes	Cover of high threat species	2.00%	
Origin of litter	N/A	Non-Native	Score	0		100m	20	Score	2	
Score	0		LOGS	BM	Obs	1km	20			
			Logs within 1ha (m)	100	0	5km	40			
			Large logs within 1ha (m)	50	0	Score	1			
			Score	0						

	UNDERSTOREY																	Score:						5
	Req.	IT	T	MT	MS	SS	PS	LH	MH	SH	LTG	LNG	MTG	MNG	TTG	HG	GF	TF	SC	EP	BL	S/C	No	Cov
Benchmark no. species		1			2	2	1	1	20	4	1	1	16	3									11	
Obs. no. species														1									1	
Benchmark % cover		5			5	5	1	1	20	10	1	1	45	5							10	10		119
Obs. % cover														10										10
Present & Modified														P&M										

Species list																										
Juncus spp.	No													10												10

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Project name	Winton BESS	Zone ID	4
Assessor	Dylan McWhinney	Date	24/11/2025
EVC	CVU_0061: Box Ironbark Forest	DBH	30/70cm
Bioregion	Central Victorian Uplands	Location	-36.4953° N, 146.1296° E

MULTIPLIER	1	HABITAT SCORE
SITE CONDITION SCORE	25	28.00
LANDSCAPE SCORE	3	



LARGE TREES	BM	Obs	RECRUITMENT	BM	Obs	PATCH SIZE	Obs
Health	N/A	30-70%	Evidence of a cohort		No	Area of patch (ha)	1
Number/ha	15	20	Evidence of episodic event	Continuous	No	Significantly disturbed	Yes
Score	9		% of woody species with adeq. recruit		0	Score	1
CANOPY TREES	BM	Obs				DISTANCE TO CORE (50ha area)	Obs
Health	N/A	30-70%	Diversity of woody species	10	0	Distance to core (km)	2
Cover %	30	18	Score	0		Significantly disturbed	Yes
Score	4		RECRUITMENT (NON-WOODY)	BM	Obs	Score	1
ORGANIC LITTER	BM	Obs	Cover of recruitment area (%)		0	NEIGHBOURHOOD	%
Cover of litter %	20	5	Herb Diversity	8	0	Significantly disturbed	Yes
Origin of litter	N/A	Native	Score	0		100m	20
Score	3		LOGS	BM	Obs	1km	20
			Logs within 1ha (m)	200	165	5km	40
			Large logs within 1ha (m)	50	34	Score	1
			Score	5			

WEEDS	%	HT
Hordeum leporinum	50	No
Bromus hordeaceus	25	No
Lolium spp.	10	No
Urtica spp.	1	No
Avena fatua	5	No
Malva spp.	2	No
Total Cover	93.00%	
Cover of high threat species	0.00%	
Score	4	

	UNDERSTOREY																	Score:						0
	Req.	IT	T	MT	MS	SS	PS	LH	MH	SH	LTG	LNG	MTG	MNG	TTG	HG	GF	TF	SC	EP	BL	S/C	No	Cov
Benchmark no. species		1	1		6	2	1	2	5	1	1		7										10	
Obs. no. species																								
Benchmark % cover		5	5		25	5	1	1	10	1	5		15								10	10		93
Obs. % cover																								
Present & Modified																								

Species list																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																							
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Project name	Winton BESS	Zone ID	5
Assessor	Dylan McWhinney	Date	26/03/2026
EVC	CVU_0803: Plains Woodland	DBH	70cm
Bioregion	Central Victorian Uplands	Location	~36.4931° N, 146.1292° E

MULTIPLIER	1	HABITAT SCORE
SITE CONDITION SCORE	47	50.00
LANDSCAPE SCORE	3	



LARGE TREES	BM	Obs	RECRUITMENT	BM	Obs	PATCH SIZE	Obs
Health	N/A	30~70%	Evidence of a cohort		Yes	Area of patch (ha)	0.25
Number/ha	15	16	Evidence of episodic event	Continuous	Yes	Significantly disturbed	Yes
Score	9		% of woody species with adeq. recruit		100	Score	1
CANOPY TREES	BM	Obs				DISTANCE TO CORE (50ha area)	Obs
Health	N/A	>70%	Diversity of woody species	5	4	Distance to core (km)	2
Cover %	15	20	Score	10		Significantly disturbed	Yes
Score	5		RECRUITMENT (NON-WOODY)	BM	Obs	Score	1
ORGANIC LITTER	BM	Obs	Cover of recruitment area (%)		0	NEIGHBOURHOOD	%
Cover of litter %	10	10	Herb Diversity	25	1	Significantly disturbed	Yes
Origin of litter	N/A	Native	Score	0		100m	20
Score	5		LOGS	BM	Obs	1km	20
			Logs within 1ha (m)	100	30	5km	40
			Large logs within 1ha (m)	50	0	Score	1
			Score	2			

WEEDS	%	HT
Dactylis glomerata	1	No
Lolium spp.	2	No
Bromus hordeaceus	1	No
Thinopyrum obtusiflorum	2	No
Total Cover	6.00%	
Cover of high threat species	0.00%	
Score	11	

	UNDERSTOREY																	Score:						5
	Req.	IT	T	MT	MS	SS	PS	LH	MH	SH	LTG	LNG	MTG	MNG	TTG	HG	GF	TF	SC	EP	BL	S/C	No	Cov
Benchmark no. species		1			2	2	1	1	20	4	1	1	16	3									11	
Obs. no. species		1			1	2	1		1				6							1			7	
Benchmark % cover		5			5	5	1	1	20	10	1	1	45	5							10	10		119
Obs. % cover		5%			2.50	50	5		0.20				35							1		1		99.70
Present & Modified		P			P	P	P						P&M									P&M		

Species list

Acacia acinacea s.l.	Yes					25																		25
Acacia pycnantha	Yes				2.5																			2.50
Amyema miquellii	No																			1				1
Atriplex semibaccata	No						5																	5
Austrostipa scabra subsp. falcata	No												3											3
Austrostipa spp.	No												2											2
Chrysocephalum apiculatum su...	No								0.2															0.20
Dianella revoluta var. revoluta s.l.	No												20											20
Eucalyptus microcarpa	Yes	5																						5
Eucalyptus tricarpa	No																							
Grevillea alpina	Yes					25																		25
Lomandra filiformis subsp. coriac...	No												5											5
Rytidosperma sp. aff. setaceum	No												2											2
Rytidosperma spp.	No												3											3

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Project name	Winton BESS	Zone ID	6
Assessor	Dylan McWhinney	Date	26/03/2026
EVC	CVU_0803: Plains Woodland	DBH	70cm
Bioregion	Central Victorian Uplands	Location	~36.4935° N, 146.1282° E

MULTIPLIER	1	HABITAT SCORE
SITE CONDITION SCORE	43	46.00
LANDSCAPE SCORE	3	



LARGE TREES	BM	Obs	RECRUITMENT	BM	Obs	PATCH SIZE	Obs
Health	N/A	30~70%	Evidence of a cohort		Yes	Area of patch (ha)	0.3
Number/ha	15	18	Evidence of episodic event	Continuous	Yes	Significantly disturbed	Yes
Score	9		% of woody species with adeq. recruit		63	Score	1
CANOPY TREES	BM	Obs				DISTANCE TO CORE (50ha area)	Obs
Health	N/A	>70%	Diversity of woody species	5	8	Distance to core (km)	2
Cover %	15	20	Score	6		Significantly disturbed	Yes
Score	5		RECRUITMENT (NON-WOODY)	BM	Obs		Score
ORGANIC LITTER	BM	Obs				NEIGHBOURHOOD	%
Cover of litter %	10	6	Cover of recruitment area (%)		0	Significantly disturbed	Yes
Origin of litter	N/A	Native	Herb Diversity	25	1	100m	20
Score	5		Score	0		1km	20
LOGS	BM	Obs				5km	40
Logs within 1ha (m)	100	45				Score	1
Large logs within 1ha (m)	50	0					
Score	2						

WEEDS	%	HT
Dactylis glomerata	5	No
Lolium spp.	2	No
Bromus hordeaceus	1	No
Thinopyrum obtusiflorum	5	No
Plantago spp.	1	No
Total Cover	14.00%	
Cover of high threat species	0.00%	
Score	11	

UNDERSTOREY																		Score:							5
	Req.	IT	T	MT	MS	SS	PS	LH	MH	SH	LTG	LNG	MTG	MNG	TTG	HG	GF	TF	SC	EP	BL	S/C	No	Cov	
Benchmark no. species		1			2	2	1	1	20	4	1	1	16	3									11		
Obs. no. species		4			2	2	1		1				6							1			7		
Benchmark % cover		5			5	5	1	1	20	10	1	1	45	5							10	10		119	
Obs. % cover		8%			3.50	3	3		0.20				22							2.50		2		44.20	
Present & Modified		P			P	P	P						P&M									P&M			

Species list

Acacia acinacea s.l.	Yes					2																		2
Acacia implexa	Yes					1																		1
Acacia pycnantha	Yes					2.5																		2.50
Amyema miquellii	No																			2.5				2.50
Atriplex semibaccata	No							3																3
Austrostipa scabra subsp. falcata	No												2											2
Austrostipa spp.	No												1											1
Chrysocephalum apiculatum su...	No								0.2															0.20
Dianella revoluta var. revoluta s.l.	No												10											10
Eucalyptus blakelyi	No	0.5																						0.50
Eucalyptus melliodora	No	0.5																						0.50
Eucalyptus microcarpa	Yes	5																						5
Eucalyptus tricarpa	No																							
Eucalyptus tricarpa	No																							
Eucalyptus tricarpa	No	2																						2
Grevillea alpina	Yes						1																	1
Lomandra filiformis subsp. coriac...	No												1											1
Rytidosperma sp. aff. setaceum	No												5											5
Rytidosperma spp.	No												3											3

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Project name	Winton BESS	Zone ID	7
Assessor	Dylan McWhinney	Date	26/03/2026
EVC	CVU_0803: Plains Woodland	DBH	70cm
Bioregion	Central Victorian Uplands	Location	~36.4941° N, 146.1261° E

MULTIPLIER	1	HABITAT SCORE
SITE CONDITION SCORE	46	52.00
LANDSCAPE SCORE	6	



LARGE TREES	BM	Obs	RECRUITMENT	BM	Obs	PATCH SIZE	Obs
Health	N/A	30~70%	Evidence of a cohort		Yes	Area of patch (ha)	1.4
Number/ha	15	6	Evidence of episodic event	Continuous	Yes	Significantly disturbed	Yes
Score	3		% of woody species with adeq. recruit		64	Score	1
CANOPY TREES	BM	Obs				DISTANCE TO CORE (50ha area)	Obs
Health	N/A	>70%	Diversity of woody species	5	14	Distance to core (km)	0
Cover %	15	20	Score	6		Significantly disturbed	Yes
Score	5		RECRUITMENT (NON-WOODY)	BM	Obs	Score	4
ORGANIC LITTER	BM	Obs	Cover of recruitment area (%)		0	NEIGHBOURHOOD	%
Cover of litter %	10	7.5	Herb Diversity	25	1	Significantly disturbed	Yes
Origin of litter	N/A	Native	Score	0		100m	20
Score	5		LOGS	BM	Obs	1km	20
			Logs within 1ha (m)	100	70	5km	60
			Large logs within 1ha (m)	50	28	Score	1
			Score	5			

WEEDS	%	HT
Dactylis glomerata	1	No
Paspalum distichum	1	No
Phalaris aquatica	2	Yes
Hypericum perforatum subsp. vero...	0.5	Yes
Briza minor	0.5	No
Plantago spp.	0.5	No
Prunus cerasifera	2	Yes
Olea europaea	0.5	Yes
Fraxinus angustifolia	0.5	Yes
Total Cover	8.50%	
Cover of high threat species	5.50%	
Score	7	

UNDERSTOREY																		Score:							15
	Req.	IT	T	MT	MS	SS	PS	LH	MH	SH	LTG	LNG	MTG	MNG	TTG	HG	GF	TF	SC	EP	BL	S/C	No	Cov	
Benchmark no. species		1			2	2	1	1	20	4	1	1	16	3									11		
Obs. no. species		8	1		4	1	2	1					5	1						1			9		
Benchmark % cover		5			5	5	1	1	20	10	1	1	45	5							10	10		119	
Obs. % cover		6.50%	1		5	1	0.50	0.25					8.50	0.50						1.50		3		27.75	
Present & Modified		P			P	P	P	P					P&M	P&M								P&M			

Species list

Acacia acinacea s.l.	Yes				2																			2
Acacia dealbata	Yes				1																			1
Acacia implexa	Yes		1																					1
Allocasuarina verticillata	Yes	0.5																						0.50
Amyema miquellii	No																			1.5				1.50
Atriplex semibaccata	No						0.25																	0.25
Austrostipa scabra	No												1											1
Austrostipa spp.	No												1											1
Bursaria spinosa subsp. spinosa ...	Yes				1.5																			1.50
Callistemon sieberi	No				0.5																			0.50
Cassinia sifton	Yes	1																						1
Chrysocephalum apiculatum su...	No							0.25																0.25
Dianella revoluta s.l.	No												2											2
Einadia nutans subsp. linifolia	No						0.25																	0.25
Eucalyptus albens	No	0.5																						0.50
Eucalyptus blakelyi	No	1																						1
Eucalyptus melliodora	Yes	1																						1
Eucalyptus microcarpa	Yes	1																						1
Eucalyptus polyanthemus	No	0.5																						0.50
Eucalyptus tricarpa	Yes	1																						1
Grevillea australis	No					1																		1
Juncus spp.	No													0.5										0.50
Rytidosperma caespitosum	No												2.5											2.50
Rytidosperma setaceum	No												2											2

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Appendix 7 – Native Vegetation Credit Register Report

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Report of available native vegetation credits

This report lists native vegetation credits available to purchase through the Native Vegetation Credit Register.

This report is **not evidence** that an offset has been secured. An offset is only secured when the units have been purchased and allocated to a permit or other approval and an allocated credit extract is provided by the Native Vegetation Credit Register.

Date and time: 26/05/2026 02:44

Report ID: 35938

What was searched for?

General offset

General habitat units	Strategic biodiversity value	Large trees	Vicinity (Catchment Management Authority or Municipal district)
0.065	0.3466	2	Goulburn Broken or LGA Benalla Rural City

Details of available native vegetation credits on 26 May 2026 02:44

These sites meet your requirements for general offsets.

Credit Site ID	GHU	LT	CMA	LGA	Land owner	Trader	Fixed price	Broker(s)
BBA-1145	0.216	13	Goulburn Broken	Mitchell Shire	No	Yes	No	Ethos
BBA-2355	1.127	6	Goulburn Broken	Greater Shepparton City	Yes	Yes	No	VegLink
VC_CFL-3726_01	3.816	64	Goulburn Broken	Greater Shepparton City	Yes	Yes	No	Contact NVOR
VC_CFL-3829_01	33.862	8	Goulburn Broken	Greater Bendigo City	Yes	Yes	No	VegLink

These sites meet your requirements using alternative arrangements for general offsets.

Credit Site ID	GHU	LT	CMA	LGA	Land owner	Trader	Fixed price	Broker(s)
----------------	-----	----	-----	-----	------------	--------	-------------	-----------

There are no sites listed in the Native Vegetation Credit Register that meet your offset requirements when applying the alternative arrangements as listed in section 11.2 of the Guidelines for the removal, destruction or lopping of native vegetation.

These potential sites are not yet available, land owners may finalise them once a buyer is confirmed.

Credit Site ID	GHU	LT	CMA	LGA	Land owner	Trader	Fixed price	Broker(s)
VC_CFL-3701_01	10.574	18	Goulburn Broken, North Central	Greater Bendigo City	Yes	Yes	No	Bio Offsets

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VC_CFL-3747_01	11.546	332	Goulburn Broken	Mansfield Shire	Yes	Yes	No	Contact NVOR
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LT - Large Trees

CMA - Catchment Management Authority

LGA - Municipal District or Local Government Authority

Next steps

If applying for approval to remove native vegetation

Attach this report to an application to remove native vegetation as evidence that your offset requirement is currently available.

If you have approval to remove native vegetation

Below are the contact details for all brokers. Contact the broker(s) listed for the credit site(s) that meet your offset requirements. These are shown in the above tables. If more than one broker or site is listed, you should get more than one quote before deciding which offset to secure.

Broker contact details

Broker Abbreviation	Broker Name	Phone	Email	Website
	Fully traded			
Abezco	Abzeco Pty. Ltd.	(03) 9431 5444	offsets@abzeco.com.au	www.abzeco.com.au
Baw Baw SC	Baw Baw Shire Council	(03) 5624 2411	bawbaw@bawbawshire.vic.gov.au	www.bawbawshire.vic.gov.au
Bio Offsets	Biodiversity Offsets Victoria	0452 161 013	info@offsetsvictoria.com.au	www.offsetsvictoria.com.au
Contact NVOR	Native Vegetation Offset Register	136 186	nativevegetation.offsetregister@deeca.vic.gov.au	www.environment.vic.gov.au/native-vegetation
Ecocentric	Ecocentric Environmental Consulting	0410 564 139	ecocentric@me.com	Not available
Ethos	Ethos NRM Pty Ltd	(03) 5153 0037	offsets@ethosnrm.com.au	www.ethosnrm.com.au
IDES	ID Ecological Management	(03) 9437 0555		www.idecological.com.au
Nillumbik SC	Nillumbik Shire Council	(03) 9433 3316	offsets@nillumbik.vic.gov.au	www.nillumbik.vic.gov.au
TFN	Trust for Nature	8631 5888	offsets@tfn.org.au	www.trustfornature.org.au
VegLink	Vegetation Link Pty Ltd	(03) 8578 4250 or 1300 834 546	offsets@vegetationlink.com.au	www.vegetationlink.com.au
Yarra Ranges SC	Yarra Ranges Shire Council	1300 368 333	biodiversityoffsets@yarraranges.vic.gov.au	www.yarraranges.vic.gov.au

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For more information contact the DEECA Customer Service Centre 136 186 or the Native Vegetation Credit Register at nativevegetation.offsetregister@delwp.vic.gov.au

Disclaimer

This publication may be of assistance to you but the State of Victoria and its employees do not guarantee that the publication is without flaw of any kind or is wholly appropriate for your particular purposes and therefore disclaims all liability for any error, loss or other consequence which may arise from you relying on any information in this publication.

Obtaining this publication does not guarantee that the credits shown will be available in the Native Vegetation Credit Register either now or at a later time when a purchase of native vegetation credits is planned.

Notwithstanding anything else contained in this publication, you must ensure that you comply with all relevant laws, legislation, awards or orders and that you obtain and comply with all permits, approvals and the like that affect, are applicable or are necessary to undertake any action to remove, lop or destroy or otherwise deal with any native vegetation or that apply to matters within the scope of Clauses 52.16 or 52.17 of the Victoria Planning Provisions and Victorian planning schemes

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Appendix 8 – MNES Significant Impact Assessment

Two separate SIAs have been undertaken to account for the criteria associated with each conservation status. Gang-gang Cockatoo (Endangered) has been assessed separately to Painted Honeyeater, White-throated Needletail, and Diamond Firetail, which are all listed as Vulnerable. The Vulnerable species have been assessed collectively, as their habitats and potential impacts within the study area are very similar.

Table 13: MNES SIA for Gang-gang Cockatoo (Endangered)

Significant impact criteria: An action is likely to have a significant impact on a critically endangered or endangered species if there is a real chance or possibility that it will:	Assessment
Lead to a long-term decrease in the size of a population	The main factor that makes the species eligible for listing in the Endangered category is that the population has declined by approximately 69% from 1999 – 2019 (i.e., before the 2019/2020 bushfires), based on the most reliable survey methods for the species (Cameron et al. 2021). In addition to this continuous and major decline in population numbers, the species also suffered mortality and habitat loss during the 2019/2020 bushfires. Estimates of the distribution impacted by fire range from 28 to 36%. The Bushfires may have resulted in a 10% reduction on overall population size. There are an estimated 25,300 (range 17,600 – 35,200) mature individuals in the wild with a declining trend (high reliability) (Cameron et al. 2021). In Victoria, the species is widespread throughout northeast and southern regions. There are also a small number of Gang-gang Cockatoo as recently as 2023-2024 in the nearby Lugg Hills and Winton Wetlands, within 10 km of the Project area. Gang-gang Cockatoos are frequently recorded (including in 2026) in nearby Benalla. During summer months, Gang-gang Cockatoos primarily inhabit mature, wet sclerophyll forests, typically dominated by eucalypts. During winter months, Gang-gang Cockatoos tend to range beyond montane forests to inhabit woodland assemblages at lower, drier altitudes. Most birds occur in open eucalypt assemblages during this period (Shields & Crome 1992; Higgins 1999). Breeding usually occurs between October and January and requires hollow bearing trees with hollow entrance diameter of greater than 7cm (NSW OEH). Records indicate that the species can be found in woodland habitat near the Project area, most likely during cooler months, in line with its seasonal ranges. It is unlikely (due to seasonal habitat usage) that Gang-gangs would breed near the study area, or within the region more generally. The removal of the five hollow bearing trees within the study area would not lead to a long-term decrease in the size of a population, particularly considering the species is unlikely to breed in the study area. None of the trees recorded hollows with an entrance diameter of > 7cm. Three of the five trees were dead trees, so expansion of hollows is unlikely. Tree removal is scheduled to occur outside of breeding seasons regardless, and any adult bird would move into adjacent retained habitat if disturbed. Up to 11 planted gum trees may require removal within the Glenrowan Terminal Station to connect the 220 kV cable to the terminal station (see map 5). None of these trees are considered large, and none contain hollows (See preliminary tree report in Appendix 9). They are also likely to be removed prior to construction of this project, during construction of another BESS project, where they were previously referred and assessed under EPBC 2025/10398).

Significant impact criteria: An action is likely to have a significant impact on a critically endangered or endangered species if there is a real chance or possibility that it will:	Assessment
<i>Reduce the area of occupancy of the species</i>	The species' extent of occurrence (EOO) and area of occupancy (AOO) are estimated to be stable at 400,000 km² and 30,000 km², respectively (Cameron et al. 2021). Gang-gang Cockatoos are endemic to south-eastern Australia. The species is rare at the extremities of its range, with isolated records known from as far north as Coffs Harbour and as far west as Mudgee (Higgins 1999). It is adapted to cooler conditions and has always been more common at higher elevations and more southern latitudes. Records within 10 km the study area are scattered and infrequent, which may indicate that their occupancy within the region is on an itinerant basis in accordance with seasonal movements. The loss of 0.286 ha of woodland vegetation will not reduce the area of occupancy of the species
<i>Fragment an existing population into two or more populations</i>	No physical barrier will occur because of the removal of 0.286 ha of woodland vegetation. It is expected that the species will continue to utilise suitable habitat within the study area and broader geographic landscape on a seasonal basis. The proposed impacts will not fragment an existing population into two or more populations.
<i>Adversely affect habitat critical to the survival of a species</i>	Habitat critical to the survival of the Gang-gang Cockatoo includes all foraging habitat during both the breeding and non-breeding season. Gang-gang Cockatoos rely on stands of suitable hollow-bearing trees (NSW OEH 2017; Davey & Mulvaney 2020), which are a key component of their breeding habitat. Habitat critical to the survival includes hollow bearing trees with known or potential Gang-gang Cockatoo hollow chambers that are generally around 20 cm in diameter, around 50.5 cm deep (range 22–90 cm) and around 20 cm in diameter, around 5–9.4 m) above the ground. Stands of trees within or adjacent to known breeding areas, which are likely to become hollow-bearing in future years, are also key components of this species' habitat. No Critical Habitat as defined under section 207A of the EPBC Act has been identified or included in the Register of Critical Habitat. The hollow-bearing trees proposed for removal as part of the project are not considered suitable habitat for the species, as the trees are isolated and with hollow dimensions too small for suitability (<7 cm diameter) The proposed native vegetation removal extent will not adversely affect habitat critical to the survival of a species.
<i>Disrupt the breeding cycle of a population</i>	The removal of the five hollow bearing trees within the study area would not disrupt the breeding cycle of a population, particularly considering the species is unlikely to breed in the study area. None of the trees recorded hollows with an entrance diameter of > 7cm. Three of the five trees were dead trees, so expansion of hollows is unlikely. Tree removal is scheduled to occur outside of breeding seasons regardless, and any adult bird would move into adjacent retained habitat if disturbed.
<i>Modify, destroy, remove, isolate or decrease the availability or quality of habitat to the extent that the species is likely to decline</i>	Records within 10 km the study area are scattered and infrequent, which may indicate that their occupancy within the region is on an itinerant basis in accordance with seasonal movements. Habitat to be impacted by the project would include foraging habitat only, and the loss of 0.286 ha as proposed would not decrease the availability or quality of habitat to the extent that the species is likely to decline
<i>Result in invasive species that are harmful to a critically endangered</i>	Introduction of weeds to suitable habitat within the Project area is unlikely. Suitable habitat mostly occurs within Glenwest Lane, where construction

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Significant impact criteria: An action is likely to have a significant impact on a critically endangered or endangered species if there is a real chance or possibility that it will:	Assessment
<i>or endangered species becoming established in the endangered or critically endangered species' habitat</i>	activities will be restricted to the existing road surface only. Remnant vegetation (suitable habitat) will be protected by No-Go Zones during construction. Any weed incursions that could occur, would not be harmful to the species or its habitat.
<i>Introduce disease that may cause the species to decline</i>	Psittacine Beak and Feather Disease (PBFD transmission) could potentially impact the species, but there is no evidence that the Project could introduce it to the species.
<i>Interfere with the recovery of the species.</i>	Most recovery actions for the species are based around protecting critical habitat, and in particular, hollow bearing trees suitable for breeding. The Project will not impact any critical habitat or suitable hollow bearing trees.

Table 14: MNES SIAs for Painted Honeyeater, white-throated Needletail, and Diamond Firetail

Significant impact criteria: An action is likely to have a significant impact on a critically endangered or endangered species if there is a real chance or possibility that it will:	Assessment
<i>Lead to a long-term decrease in the size of an important population of a species</i>	This copied document to be made available for the sole purpose of enabling its consideration and review as part of a planning process under the Planning and Environment Act 1987. The document must not be used for any other purpose. Painted Honeyeater may breach any copyright. Painted honeyeater and Diamond Firetail have numerous records in the broader landscape (within 10 km of the study area), particularly within remnant roadside woodland, and vegetation associated with the Regent Honeyeater Project. There is only one record of White-throated Needletail in the broader landscape, however, has abundant records at the nearby towns of Benalla and Wangaratta (likely due to increased observers). Painted Honeyeater The total number of mature individuals of this species is limited, the geographic distribution is precarious for the survival of the species because 100% of mature individuals exist in one subpopulation, and a decline in extent of occurrence, area of occupancy, habitat, number of individuals and number of locations may be inferred or projected. The species inhabits mistletoes in eucalypt forests/woodlands, riparian woodlands of black box and river red gum, box-ironbark-yellow gum woodlands, acacia-dominated woodlands, paperbarks, casuarinas, callitris, and trees on farmland or gardens. The species prefers woodlands which contain a higher number of mature trees, as these host more mistletoes. Breeding occurs from October to March when mistletoe fruits are most available. The loss of 0.286 ha of woodland vegetation within the study area would not lead to a long-term decrease in the size of a population, particularly noting that tree clearing is scheduled to occur outside of usual breeding season. White-throated Needletail The breeding distribution of the White-throated Needletail is fragmented, with two subspecies occurring in different parts of Asia. The nominate subspecies <i>H. c. caudacutus</i> breeds from northern Japan west to central and eastern Siberia, while subspecies <i>H. c. nudipes</i> breeds from south-western China to northern Pakistan. In Australia, the White-throated Needletail is mostly aerial. The species roosts in trees amongst dense foliage in the canopy or in hollows.

Significant impact criteria: An action is likely to have a significant impact on a critically endangered or endangered species if there is a real chance or possibility that it will:	Assessment
	The loss of 0.286 ha of woodland vegetation within the study area would not lead to a long-term decrease in the size of a population, particularly noting that the species does not breed in Australia and is mostly aerial. Potential roosting habitat removal would not be significant at population level. Diamond Firetail The species population has declined by an estimated 30–50% over the last ten years. The underlying reason for the decline of the species is the clearance of native vegetation for large scale agriculture which has reduced the size and quality of important nesting and breeding habitats. Breeding occurs between August and January. The loss of 0.286 ha of woodland vegetation within the study area would not lead to a long-term decrease in the size of a population, particularly noting that tree clearing is scheduled to occur outside of usual breeding season.
Reduce the area of occupancy of an important population	Painted Honeyeater The species is sparsely distributed from south-eastern Australia to north-western Queensland and eastern Northern Territory. The greatest concentrations and almost all records of breeding come from south of 26°S, on inland slopes of the Great Dividing Range between the Grampians, Victoria and Roma, Queensland. The removal loss of 0.286 ha of woodland vegetation within the study area would not reduce the species area of occupancy, particularly giving consideration that it is considered one population. White-throated Needletail The species is migratory and a vagrant in Victoria. It is nearly exclusively aerial in Australia. The loss of 0.286 ha of woodland vegetation within the study area would not reduce the species area of occupancy, particularly giving consideration that it rarely utilises vegetation in Australia. Diamond Firetail Diamond firetails occur on the south-east mainland of Australia from south-east Queensland to Eyre Peninsula, South Australia, and about 300 km inland from the sea. It has an estimated extent of occurrence of 1,500,000 km², and an estimated area of occupancy of 25,000 km². The loss of 0.286 ha of woodland vegetation within the study area would not reduce the species area of occupancy,
Fragment an existing population into two or more populations	All three species have extremely large extents of occurrence within south and eastern Australia, and internationally for White-throated Needletail. loss of 0.286 ha of woodland vegetation within the study area would not cause any population fragmentation for any of these species.
Adversely affect habitat critical to the survival of a species	Relevant critical habitat for each species as it relates to the study area includes: • Box-ironbark-yellow gum woodlands. • Woodlands which contain a higher number of mature trees, as these host more mistletoes. • Airspace above wooded areas, including open forest and rainforest; and • Eucalypt, acacia or casuarina woodlands, open forests and other lightly timbered habitats.

Significant impact criteria: An action is likely to have a significant impact on a critically endangered or endangered species if there is a real chance or possibility that it will:		Assessment
		The proposed native vegetation removal extent will not adversely affect habitat critical to the survival of any of these species.
		White-throated Needletail does not breed within Australia.
Disrupt the breeding cycle of an important population		The breeding cycles for Painted Honeyeater and Diamond Firetail will be avoided by scheduling clearing work between January and April. No disruptions to breeding cycles of any important populations will occur.
Modify, destroy, remove, isolate or decrease the availability or quality of habitat to the extent that the species is likely to decline		Habitat to be impacted by the project would include foraging habitat only, and the loss of 0.286 ha as proposed would not decrease the availability or quality of habitat to the extent that any of the three species is likely to decline
Result in invasive species that are harmful to a critically endangered or endangered species becoming established in the endangered or critically endangered species' habitat		Introduction of weeds to suitable habitat within the Project area is unlikely. Suitable habitat mostly occurs within Glenwest Lane, where construction activities will be restricted to the existing road surface only. Remnant vegetation (suitable habitat) will be protected by No-Go Zones during construction. Any weed incursions that could occur, would not be harmful to the species or its habitat.
Introduce disease that may cause the species to decline		Psittacine Beak and Feather Disease (PBFD transmission) could potentially impact the species, but there is no evidence that the Project could introduce it to the species.
Interfere with the recovery of the species.		Measures implemented to the species available around protecting critical habitat. The Project will not impact any critical habitat.

Further information on inclusion of Gang-gang Cockatoo and exclusion of Swift Parrot and Regent Honeyeater in the

The reason for the increased emphasis on Gang-gang Cockatoo is mostly anecdotal, but the frequency of Gang-gang sightings across Northeast Victoria has increased since 2019/2020 bushfires, which lead to the listing of the species under the EPBC Act. It was estimated that 36% of the species range was impacted from those fires¹, half of which had been burnt by high severity fire. The loss of critical breeding habitat (hollow bearing trees) and foraging habitat in its typical range is likely pushing the species further south in search of these required resources.

¹: [Fears for gang-gang cockatoos as numbers plummet after fires, Guardian Australia 2021](#)

The assessment of Gang-gang cockatoo as having a medium chance of occurrence within the study area is likely a very conservative one but is trying to account for the effect of the fires on the species range, based largely on anecdotal evidence and observations accrued throughout northeast Victoria since 2021.

The ecological assessment details the vegetative composition within the study area, and this was considered in the Swift Parrot likelihood of occurrence (Appendix B). This determined that Swift Parrot could utilise the study area (i.e. suitable foraging habitat), but that it was unlikely based on the highly fragmented nature of vegetation within the study area, and likely preferable foraging habitat nearby. The distribution of records would support this assertion (Figure 22).

The ecological assessment did not discount the distribution of Swift Parrot overlapping the study area and considered nearby records. Targeted surveys were not recommended based on the highly fragmented nature of vegetation in the study area, and the lack of records within 5 km. The ecological assessment also considered citizen science records from the e-bird platform to identify records that may

not have yet been uploaded to the VBA. There are two nearby e-bird birdwatching hotspots to the proposed action site:

- [Mokoan Rest Area](#); and
- [Eleven Mile Creek Road, Winton](#)

Between the two sites, over 70 user checklists have been submitted since 2020 within 2.5 km of the proposed BESS. This is a considerable amount of citizen science survey effort in suitable habitat within the study area that did not produce any records of Swift Parrot, which is a conspicuous species and often sought after observation for bird enthusiasts.

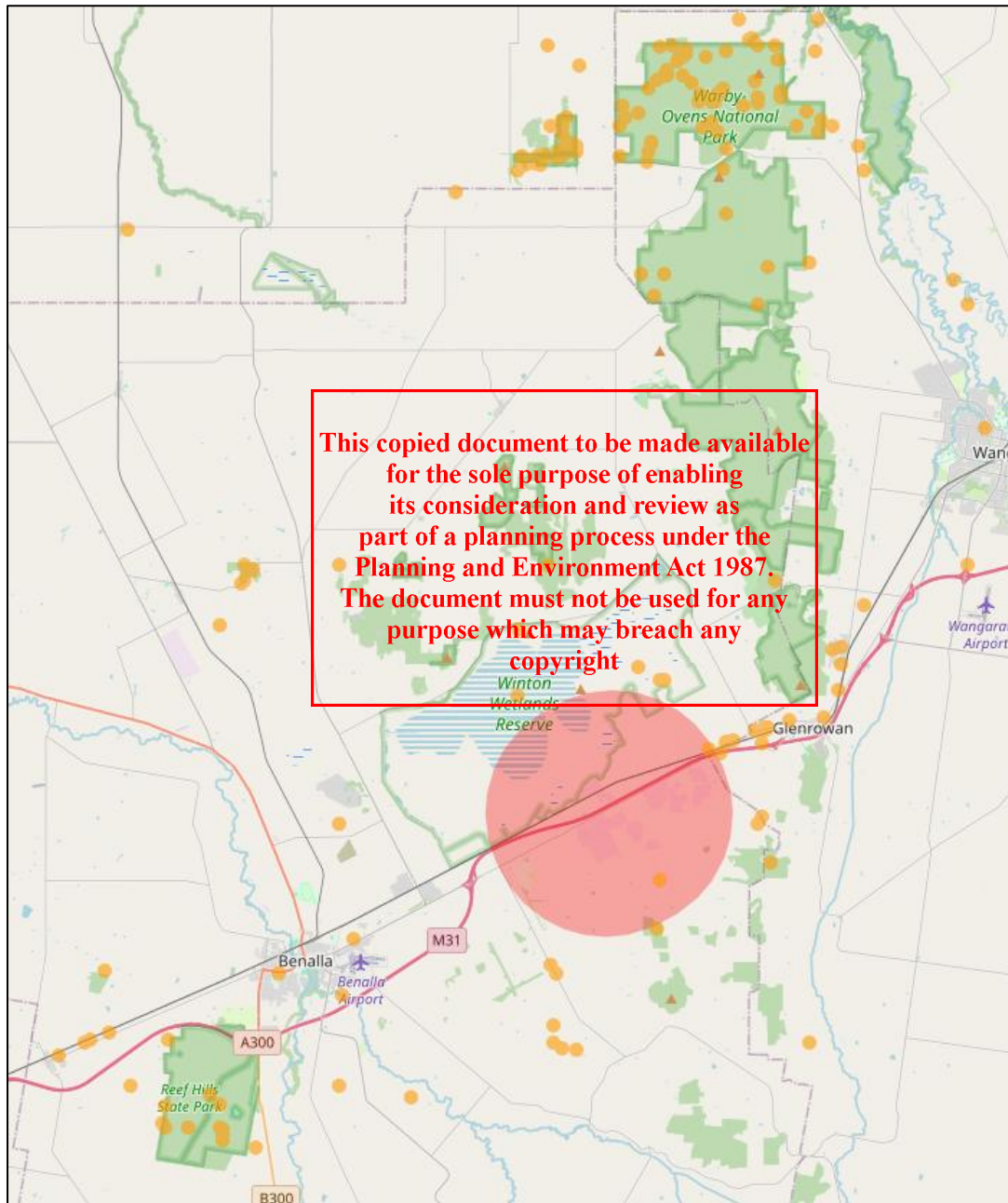


Figure 22: Records of Swift Parrot (orange) outside of the 5 km study area buffer (red) showing propensity towards large, in-tact woodland areas like the Warby-Ovens National Park and Reef Hills State Park (Atlas of Living Australia, 2026)

The ecological assessment details the vegetative composition within the study area and this was considered in the Regent Honeyeater likelihood of occurrence (Appendix B). This determined that the habitat value within the study area was limited by the lack of understory species and diversity, not the lack of suitable tree species. The species is associated with forests and woodlands and though remnant patches within the study area were classified as woodlands, they are highly modified. Remnant patches within Winton-Glenrowan Road Reserve were subject to a Vegetation Quality Assessment (VQA) in line with the [Vegetation Quality Assessment Manual – Guidelines for applying the habitat hectares scoring method Version 1.3](#) where they were scored 0.50/1 (Table 7 in ecological assessment). By way of comparison, a single, small, scattered tree isolated in a paddock is assigned a score of 0.2/1. The understory component scored 5/15.

This indicates an open woodland habitat which is typically dominated by more generalist species, i.e. the Noisy Miner² which was recorded during the ecological site assessments. Degradation of woodland habitats and competition with the Noisy Miner are key threats to the Regent Honeyeater³ and limit its likelihood of occurrence within the study area.

Though likelihood of occurrence within the study area was considered low based on degraded and fragmented habitat, and the low numbers of nearby records, the ecological assessment states that the occurrence within the study area and surrounds was likely to increase over time because of the work of the Regent Honeyeater Project. The Regent Honeyeater Project was thoroughly considered throughout the ecological assessment.

The distribution of records more broadly (Figure 23) supports the determination that likelihood of occurrence within the study area is considered low.

The ecological assessment did not discount the distribution of Regent Honeyeater overlapping the study area and considered nearby records. Targeted surveys were not recommended based on the highly degraded and fragmented nature of vegetation in the study area, and the lack of records within 5 km. The ecological assessment also considered citizen science records from the e-bird platform to identify records that may not have yet been uploaded to the VBA. There are two nearby e-bird birdwatching hotspots to the proposed action site:

- [Mokoan Rest Area](#); and
- [Eleven Mile Creek Road, Winton](#)

Between the two sites, over 70 user checklists have been submitted since 2020 within 2.5 km of the proposed BESS. This is a considerable amount of citizen science survey effort in suitable habitat within the study area that did not produce any records of Regent Honeyeater, which is a conspicuous species and often sought after observation for bird enthusiasts.

²: [State Wide Flora and Fauna Teams \(SWIFFT\) Regent Honeyeater](#)

³ [Australian Government Conservation Advice for Regent Honeyeater](#)

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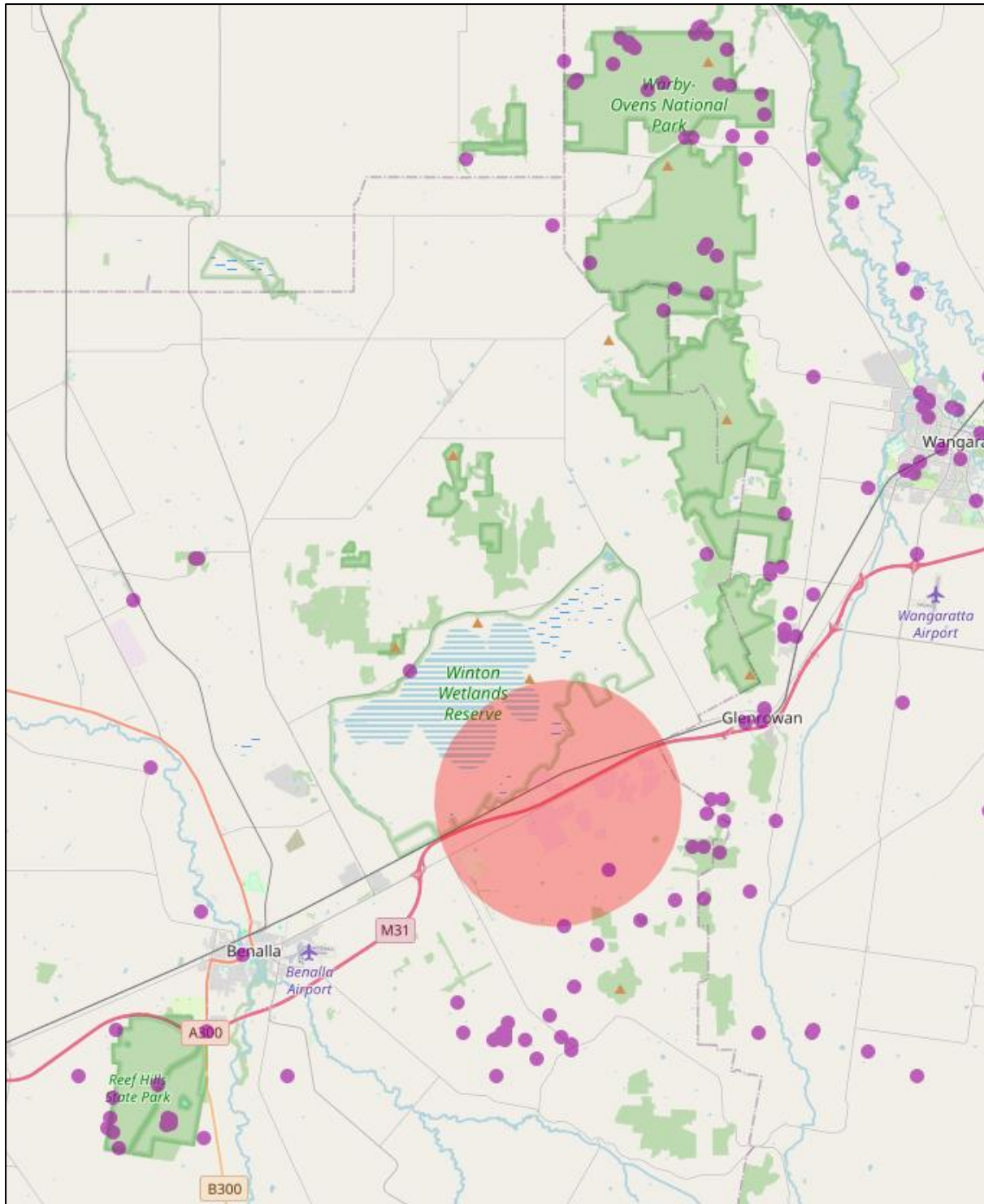


Figure 23: Records of Regent Honeyeater (purple) outside of the 5 km study area buffer (red) showing propensity towards large, in-tact woodland areas like the Warby-Ovens National Park and Reef Hills State Park (Atlas of Living Australia, 2026)

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Appendix 9 – Preliminary Tree Report

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ARBORICULTURAL PRELIMINARY TREE REPORT

Location:

Winton Solar Farm
558 Winton-Glenrowan Road, Winton

Date of Assessment:

30 March 2026

Prepared by:

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Stage	Report title	Type	Date	Author
>	8633 Wintonsolar0326_PTR	Preliminary Tree Report	31 March 2026	Rhys Oldmeadow

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1. INTRODUCTION

Arboressence has been engaged by Dylan McWhinney of DM Ecological to assess trees within and at proposed access points to Winton Solar Farm, Winton VIC 3673.

The purpose of the assessment was establish the condition of the tree population at these locations to inform future decisions regarding alignment of access from the Winton-Glenrowan Road and alignment of infrastructure into the Glenrowan Terminal Station from the southwest.

2. METHODOLOGY

A site inspection was conducted by Rhys Oldmeadow and Tom Fahy of Arboressence on 30 March 2026.

A Limited Visual Assessment (LVA) was carried out for each tree, comprising a ground-level inspection of overall form, structure, and condition without the use of climbing equipment or diagnostic tools. The assessment was conducted from limited vantage points, noting general health, visible defects, and any obvious indicators that may warrant further investigation.

During the site inspection the following tasks were completed:

- Site details collected
- Tree assessment performed

Tree details provided in this report include:

- Botanical name
- Tree details (origin, age, health, structure, and life expectancy)
- Tree dimensions: approximate height, Diameter at Standard Height -DSH, Diameter Above Root Buttress (DARB), Notional Root Zone (NRZ) and Structural Root Zone (SRZ)
- Tree Retention Value and Tree Significance
- Discussion around possible impacts

Tree data and detailed information has been collected for each individual tree/s. This information is presented in **3.3 Individual Tree Details**.

Definitions for each data field are also presented in **9 Appendix 1: Arboricultural Descriptors**.

Documents viewed for the preparation of this report

- General Site Layout. Concept Design. | Drawn by. R.Riverson | Rev. B | Dated. 13/03/2026 | No. WTBS-EP-DWG-LAY-01-005 | Grid-Link.

Limitations and assumptions

- No instruments were used to record internal tree structure
- Environmental weeds, shrubs, dead specimens, and juvenile exotic trees considered to have negligible amenity or retention value were excluded from individual assessment.
- A development impact assessment cannot be determined until plans have been finalised and as such, only estimations of likely impacts have been made in this report.

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3. OBSERVATIONS

3.1 Site Details

Tree protection legislation

The solar generation site which includes 458 Winton-Glenrowan Road, 34 Glenwest Lane and 576 Winton Glenrowan Road is covered by the Benalla Planning Scheme and is zoned Farming Zone – Schedule (FZ).

The Glenrowan Terminal Station at 17 Glenwest Lane Winton is zoned Special Use Zone (SUZ4).

Relevant planning overlays

- Bushfire Management Overlay (BMO)
- Vegetation Protection Overlay, Schedule 3 (VPO3)

Relevant planning provisions

- Clause 52.17 – Native vegetation

Other Provisions

- Designated Bushfire Prone Area

The subject site was previously utilised for agricultural and grazing land. The existing tree population in the fenced area to the southwest of the existing Glenrowan Terminal Station is primarily comprised of planted native trees, including *Eucalyptus leucoxylon* (Yellow Gum), *Eucalyptus sideroxylon* (Mugga Ironbark) and *Eucalyptus botryoides* (Southern Mahogany). There was a notable *Eucalyptus microcarpa* (Grey Box) within the compound as the only remnant tree assessed in that area.

The potential access points from the Winton-Glenrowan Road pass through predominantly indigenous *Eucalyptus microcarpa* (Grey Box), including some established large specimens, and occasional other species such as *Eucalyptus camaldulensis* (Red Gum), and *Eucalyptus goniacalyx* (Long-leaf Box).

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3.2 Site Maps

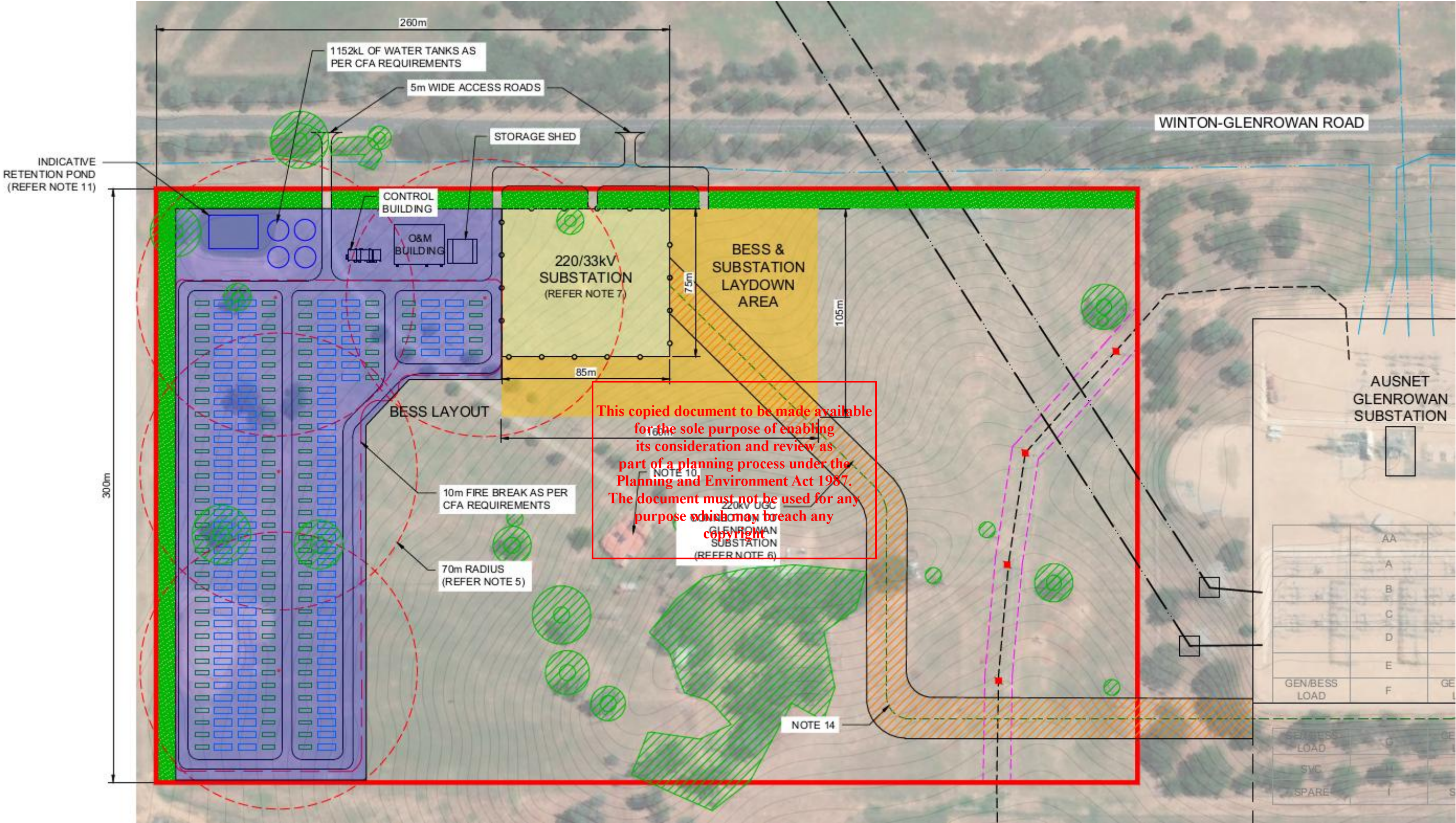


Plate 1: General Site Layout. Concept Design. Prepared by Grid-Link.

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Mature specimen tree on the edge of the existing dam which could be incorporated into the design. Avoid excavation inside the NRZ.



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Tree Retention Value [37]

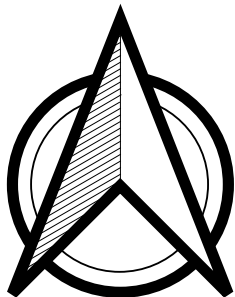
- High [12]
- Moderate [14]
- Low [11]

SRZ

TPZ

Generic Features

- Cadastre
- Proposed trench
- Proposed crossover sweep zone



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Crossover Option A. Possible removal of Tree 33 to retain all other trees in the area. Tree 32 should remain without further impact given the existing crossover within the NRZ.



Tree Retention Value [37]

- High [12]
- Moderate [14]
- Low [11]

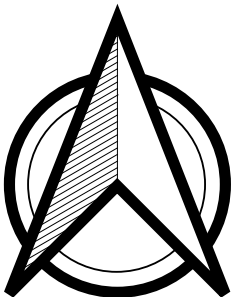
SRZ

TPZ

Generic Features

- Cadastral
- Proposed trench
- Proposed crossover sweep zone

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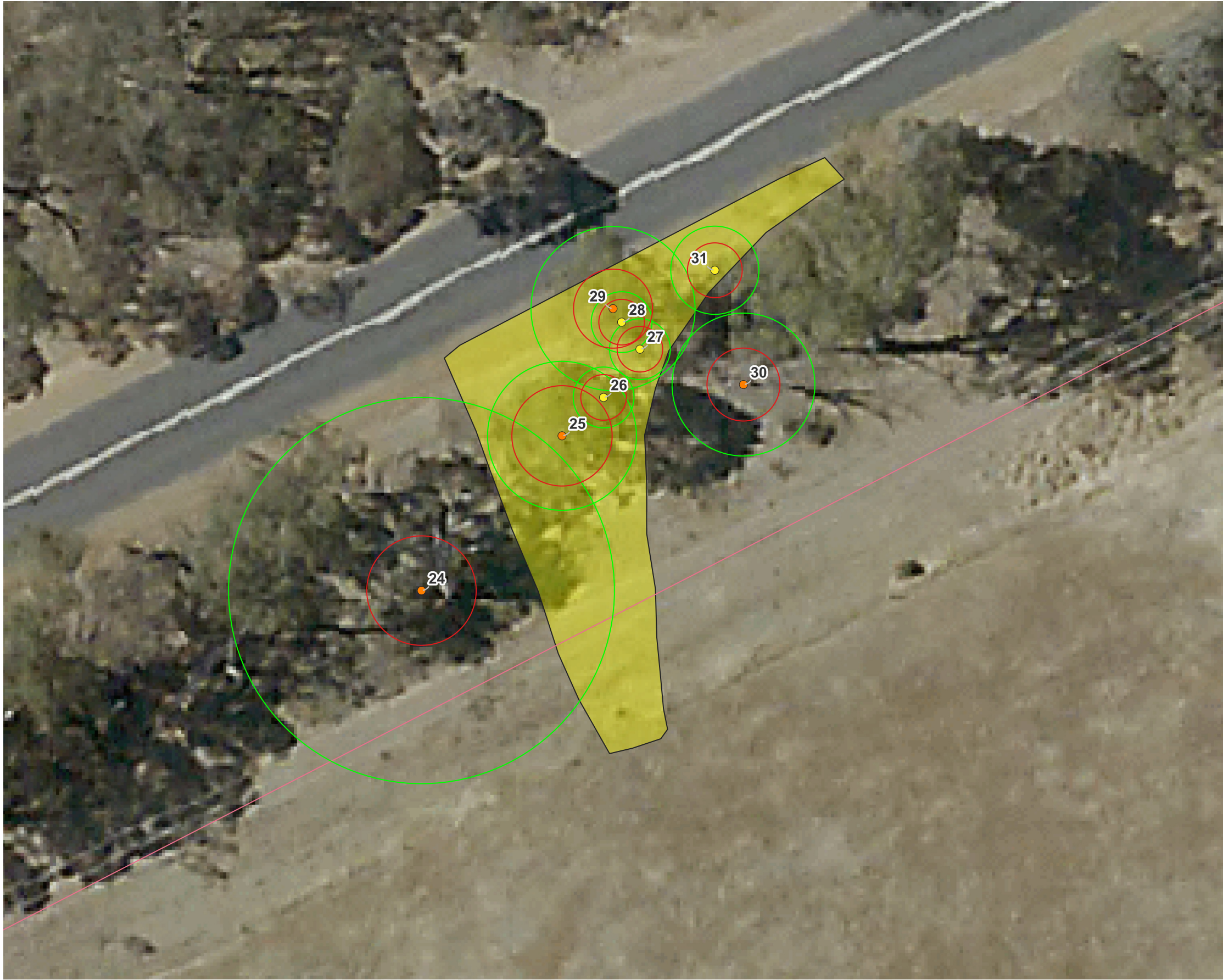


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Crossover Option B. NRZ for Tree 24 and Tree 30 is irrelevant as these trees are dead. The removal of the cluster of Trees (24-29 & 31) would likely be required to facilitate this access. The dead stags at either end could be retained. There is a significant drain which would likely require a culvert and substantial fill material.



Tree Retention Value [37]

- High [12]
- Moderate [14]
- Low [11]

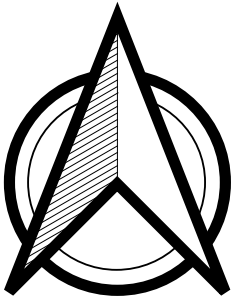
SRZ

TPZ

Generic Features

- Cadastre
- Proposed trench
- Proposed crossover sweep zone

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Crossover Option C. Existing crossover beneath the canopy of Tree 19. Removal of Trees 20 and 21, and likely Tree group 22 required. Possible impacts to tree 23 depending on required turning space. Utilise fill material as far as practicable, avoid excavation.



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Tree Retention Value [37]

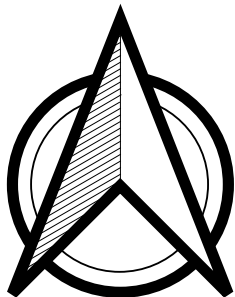
- High [12]
- Moderate [14]
- Low [11]

SRZ

TPZ

Generic Features

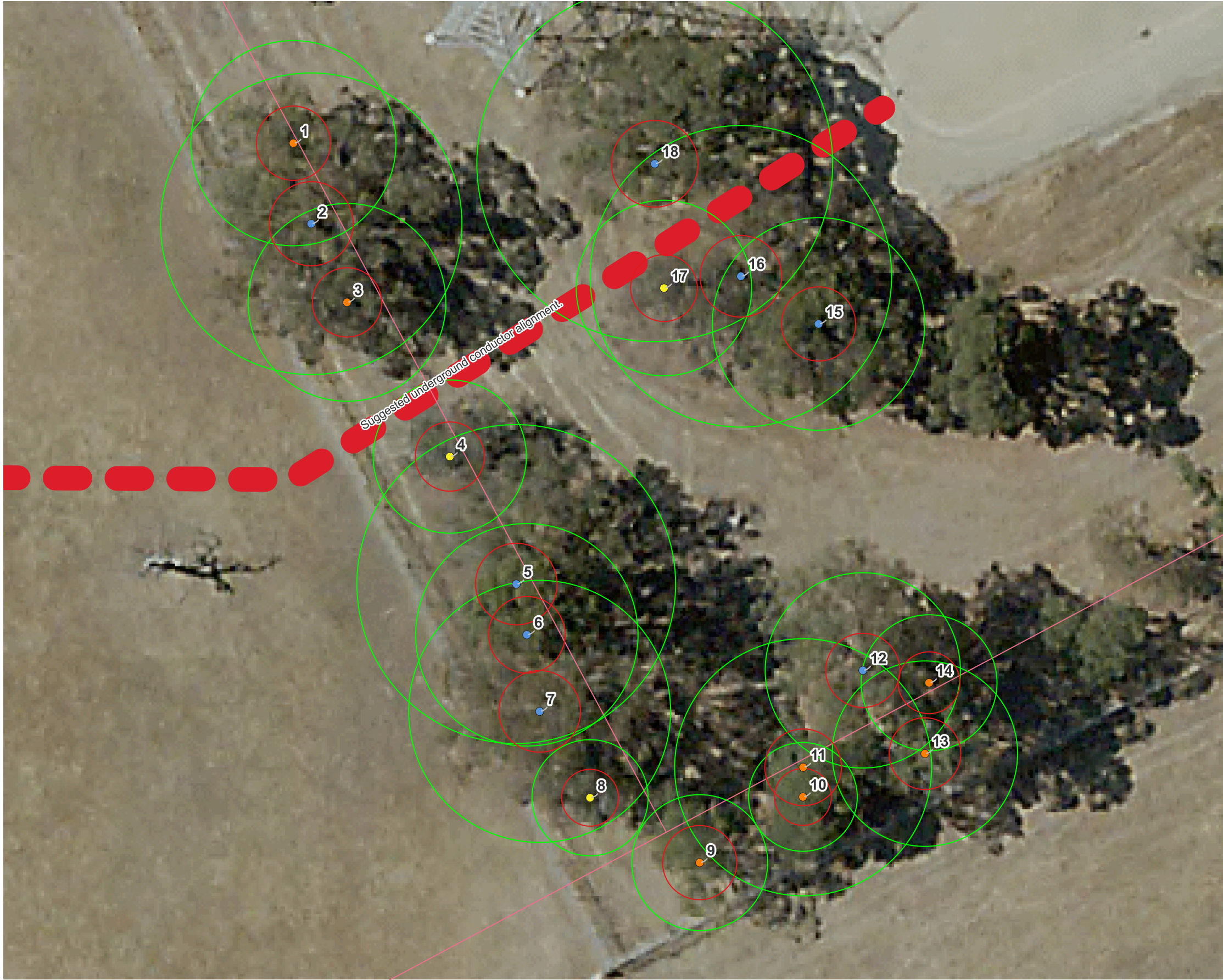
- Cadastre
- Proposed trench
- Proposed crossover sweep zone



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Suggested underground conductor alignment. Tree 4 and 17 are low value trees, however the dead stag in the paddock to the west should be avoided. Impacts to Trees 16 and 18 could be minimised by finding the most central route, or, impacts can be avoided entirely with trenchless construction technology is used (underbore).



Tree Retention Value [37]

- High [12]
- Moderate [14]
- Low [11]

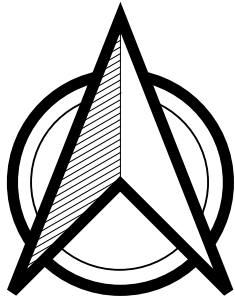
SRZ

TPZ

Generic Features

- Cadastre
- Proposed trench
- Proposed crossover sweep zone

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3.3 Individual Tree Details

ID	Species	Origin	Indigenous	Age	DSH	DARB	NRZ	SRZ	Height	Width	Health	Structure	Arb Rating	ULE	Retention	Comments	Recommendations
1	Eucalyptus sideroxylon Red Ironbark	Vic native	No	Mature	32, 33, 52	82	0	3	8	10	Poor	Moderate	Moderate	15 - 40	Moderate	Mistletoe in canopy. Suppressed and leaning form due to crowding.	None required.
2	Eucalyptus leucoxylon Yellow Gum	Vic native	No	Mature	102	106	12.2	3.4	15	20	Fair	Moderate	Moderate	>40	High	Unusual presentation.	None required.
3	Eucalyptus leucoxylon Yellow Gum	Vic native	No	Mature	46, 48	68	8	2.8	9	12	Poor	Moderate	Moderate	15 - 40	Moderate	Unusual presentation. Poor form and health, likely due to crowding.	None required.
4	Eucalyptus leucoxylon Yellow Gum	Vic native	No	Mature	20, 35, 26, 20	68	6.2	2.8	10	12	Poor	Moderate	Low	5 - 15	Low	Canopy heavily impacted by pests. Poor condition.	Remove this tree as required to facilitate electrical connection alignment.
5	Eucalyptus leucoxylon Yellow Gum	Vic native	No	Mature	45, 98	100	12.9	3.3	16	19	Good	Moderate	Moderate	>40	High	Mistletoe throughout canopy.	None required.
6	Eucalyptus sideroxylon Red Ironbark	Native	No	Mature	58, 47	86	9	3.1	19	16	Good	Moderate	Significant	>40	High	Upright form, tree is in good condition.	None required.
7	Eucalyptus leucoxylon Yellow Gum	Vic native	No	Mature	88	98	10.6	3.3	17	20	Good	Moderate	Moderate	>40	High	Tree is in good condition.	None required.
8	Eucalyptus sideroxylon Red Ironbark	Native	No	Semi-mature	39	44	4.7	2.3	8	7	Fair	Moderate	Low	>40	Low	Smaller, stunted tree, likely due to crowding.	None required.
9	Eucalyptus botryoides Southern Mahogany	Vic native	No	Semi-mature	46	81	5.5	3	9	10	Fair	Moderate	Moderate	15 - 40	Moderate	Multiple low, large, upright stems.	None required.
10	Acacia prominens Golden Rain Wattle ?	Native	No	Mature	37	44	4.4	2.3	10	12	Good	Moderate	Moderate	>40	Moderate	Very close to adjacent southern mahogany.	None required.
11	Eucalyptus botryoides Southern Mahogany	Vic native	No	Mature	87	84	10.4	3.1	18	15	Fair	Poor	Moderate	5 - 15	Moderate	Codominant stems with decay. Large, low, upright stem.	None required.
12	Eucalyptus microcarpa Grey Box	Vic native	Yes	Mature	66	79	7.9	3	22	24	Good	Moderate	Significant	>40	High	Remnant grey box- tree is in good condition.	There only remnant tree within this area which was assessed and detailed. Ensure proposed alignment does not encroach into the NRZ of this tree.
13	Eucalyptus botryoides Southern Mahogany	Vic native	No	Semi-mature	43, 45	74	7.5	2.9	10	12	Fair	Moderate	Moderate	15 - 40	Moderate	Codominant stems from near ground level.	None required.
14	Eucalyptus nicholii Narrow-leaved Black Peppermint	Native	No	Semi-mature	40, 23	52	5.5	2.5	11	14	Fair	Moderate	Moderate	15 - 40	Moderate	Codominant stems from near ground. Canopy lean to the north.	None required.
15	Eucalyptus sideroxylon Red Ironbark	Vic native	No	Mature	72	80	8.6	3	17	20	Good	Moderate	Significant	>40	High	Good, larger specimen.	None required.
16	Eucalyptus sideroxylon Red Ironbark	Vic native	No	Mature	102	98	12.2	3.3	19	22	Fair	Moderate	Significant	>40	High		Underbore electrical connection alignment through NRZ or, align centrally between this tree and Tree 18.
17	Eucalyptus leucoxylon Yellow Gum	Vic native	No	Semi-mature	59	59	7.1	2.7	7	10	Poor	Poor	Low	1 - 5	Low	DSH measured below multiple stems. Stunted specimen in poor condition.	Remove this tree as required to facilitate electrical connection alignment.
18	Eucalyptus leucoxylon Yellow Gum	Vic native	No	Mature	120	114	14.4	3.5	18	22	Fair	Moderate	Significant	>40	High	Multi-stemmed structure. Mistletoe throughout canopy.	Underbore electrical connection alignment through NRZ or, align centrally between this tree and Tree 16.
19	Eucalyptus microcarpa Grey Box	Vic native	Yes	Mature	138	149	15	3.9	15	20	Good	Moderate	Significant	>40	High	Previously pruned for HV clearance south side. Large specimen, located adjacent to existing crossover.	If Crossover Option C is utilised. Remove smaller trees to the east rather than impact this larger tree. Ensure no works within the NRZ west of existing crossover. Utilise fill material to facilitate access for large vehicles from the road. Ensure any pruning required is undertaken by a minimum AQF level III arborist. Minimise pruning requirements.
20	Eucalyptus microcarpa Grey Box	Vic native	Yes	Semi-mature	42	56	5	2.6	13	13	Fair	Moderate	Moderate	15 - 40	Moderate	Supressed due to crowding. Remove this tree rather than impact Tree 19.	If Crossover Option C is utilised, remove as required.
21	Eucalyptus microcarpa Grey Box	Vic native	Yes	Semi-mature	43, 30	72	6.3	2.9	14	14	Good	Moderate	Moderate	15 - 40	Moderate	Codominant stems from base.	If Crossover Option C is utilised, remove as required.
22	Eucalyptus microcarpa Grey Box	Vic native	Yes	Semi-mature	30	35	3.6	2.1	6	6	Poor	Poor	Low	1 - 5	Low	Cluster of small or deceased trees. Two dead trees: largest DSH 40, two smaller, semi-mature trees.	If Crossover Option C is utilised, remove as required.

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ID	Species	Origin	Indigenous	Age	DSH	DARB	NRZ	SRZ	Height	Width	Health	Structure	Arb Rating	ULE	Retention	Comments	Recommendations
23	Eucalyptus microcarpa Grey Box	Vic native	Yes	Mature	73	92	8.8	3.2	16	16	Fair	Moderate	Significant	>40	High	Wound at base, likely from failed codominant stem. Old branch stub extends from the low trunk wound.	Retain this tree. Ensure that any NRZ encroachment is less than 10%. Minimise any excavation, utilise fill material to facilitate construction.
24	Eucalyptus microcarpa Grey Box	Vic native	Yes	Senescent	106	120	12.7	3.6	8	7	Dead	Poor	Moderate	5 - 15	Moderate	Dead stag with habitat value. NRZ irrelevant as the tree is deceased.	Do not excavate within the SRZ.
25	Eucalyptus microcarpa Grey Box	Vic native	Yes	Semi-mature	20, 20, 30	100	4.9	3.3	10	11	Fair	Poor	Moderate	15 - 40	Moderate	Multiple stems from ground, possible stump regrowth.	If Crossover Option B is utilised, remove as required.
26	Eucalyptus microcarpa Grey Box	Vic native	Yes	Semi-mature	10	12	2	1.5	5	3	Fair	Moderate	Low	>40	Low	Small juvenile to semi-mature tree.	If Crossover Option B is utilised, remove as required.
27	Eucalyptus goniacalyx Long-leaved Box	Vic native	Yes	Juvenile	8	12	2	1.5	3	2	Poor	Moderate	Low	1 - 5	Low	Poor specimen. Eucalyptus goniacalyx?	If Crossover Option B is utilised, remove as required.
28	Eucalyptus microcarpa Grey Box	Vic native	Yes	Semi-mature	14	16	2	1.5	6	5	Fair	Moderate	Low	>40	Low	Possibly a basal stem from adjacent Tree 29.	If Crossover Option B is utilised, remove as required.
29	Eucalyptus microcarpa Grey Box	Vic native	Yes	Mature	32, 32	54	5.4	2.6	12	10	Fair	Moderate	Moderate	>40	Moderate	Codominant stem from near ground level. Close to asphalt.	If Crossover Option B is utilised, remove as required.
30	Eucalyptus microcarpa Grey Box	Vic native	Yes	Mature	39	48	4.7	2.4	8	5	Dead	Poor	Significant	5 - 15	Moderate	Dead stag with habitat value. NRZ irrelevant.	Do not excavate within the SRZ.
31	Eucalyptus goniacalyx Long-leaved Box	Vic native	Yes	Semi-mature	24	25	2.9	1.8	5	4	Fair	Poor	Low	5 - 15	Low	Codominant stems from near ground.	If Crossover Option B is utilised, remove as required.
32	Eucalyptus microcarpa Grey Box	Vic native	Yes	Mature	110		13.2	0	17	17	Good	Moderate	Significant	>40	High	Large, remnant tree in good condition. Active beehive at base of trunk, south side. Canopy has previously been pruned for high voltage overhead conductor clearance.	Retain tree. Do not excavate within NRZ west of existing crossover. Remove smaller Tree 33 to the east to improve access as required. Utilise fill material to facilitate crossover.
33	Eucalyptus microcarpa Grey Box	Vic native	Yes	Mature	36	42	4.3	2.3	8	7	Fair	Moderate	Low	>40	Low		If Crossover Option A is utilised, remove as required.
34	Eucalyptus microcarpa Grey Box	Vic native	Yes	Semi-mature	14	16	2	1.5	4	4	Fair	Moderate	Low	15 - 40	Low	Small specimen.	Ensure any proposed works have less than 10% NRZ encroachment.
35	Eucalyptus microcarpa Grey Box	Vic native	Yes	Semi-mature	29	33	3.5	2.1	8	5	Fair	Moderate	Low	>40	Low		Ensure any proposed works have less than 10% NRZ encroachment.
36	Eucalyptus microcarpa Grey Box	Vic native	Yes	Mature	51	67	6.1	2.8	5	5	Dead	Moderate	Moderate	5 - 15	Moderate	Dead stag with habitat value.	Do not excavate with the SRZ.
37	Eucalyptus melliodora Yellow Box	Vic native	Yes	Mature	94	92	11.3	3.2	17	20	Fair	Moderate	Significant	>40	High	Low cambium dieback on trunk. Codominant stems from 1.5m. Mistletoe in canopy. Recent branch failure ~300mm diameter.	Reduce NRZ encroachment to less than 10% or within existing encroachment (i.e., existing dam footprint).
- Indigenous: Indigenous to the area and naturally grown (not a planted specimen) - DSH: Diameter at standard height - DARB: Diameter above root buttress						- NRZ: Notional root zone - SRZ: Structural root zone - ULE: Useful life expectancy											

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4. ALIGNMENT DISCUSSION

4.1 Crossover Option A

Crossover Option A utilises the existing crossover and driveway that provides access to the homestead. Tree 32, a large remnant *Eucalyptus microcarpa* (Grey Box), is located adjacent to this access point. There is a beehive at the base of the trunk and the tree offers significant amenity and environmental value to the site. Every effort should be made to ensure this tree is retained without impact to its health or structure.

The removal of Tree 33, a semi-mature Grey Box, may be necessary to accommodate the turning space required for large vehicles. To minimise associated tree impacts, vehicles should be directed to access and egress the site by turning to and from the east. Provided that any works required to facilitate large vehicle movements are confined to the east of the existing crossover, Tree 32 should remain unaffected.



Plate 2: Possible removal of Tree 33 required for crossover. Tree 32 to be retained without impacts.

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4.2 Crossover Option B

Crossover Option B is bounded to the east and west by dead stag trees which offer habitat value to the site. The calculated Notional Root Zones for these stags is essentially irrelevant as the trees are deceased; however, no excavation should be undertaken in the Structural Root Zones to ensure that the trees remain stable.

Trees 25-29 and Tree 31 would require removal to facilitate the construction of this crossover option.

There is a significant drainage ditch in the centre of the road reserve here which would likely require a large diameter culvert and substantial fill material to facilitate construction.



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Plate 3: Tree 24 and drainage ditch visible to right of image (east).

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4.3 Crossover Option C

Crossover Option C utilises an existing dirt crossover which accesses a gated entrance into the paddock. There is a significant *Eucalyptus microcarpa* (Grey Box), Tree 19, adjacent to, and to the west of the crossover. This tree offers substantial amenity and environmental value and should be retained without impacts. Removal of the lowest limb may be required however, the tree should tolerate this pruning. Ensure that all pruning is undertaken by a minimum AQF Level III arborist and in accordance with natural target pruning principles as per AS4373-2007 *Pruning of amenity trees*.

Depending on the size of the required turning sweep, Trees 20-22 may require removal, noting that Tree 22 includes a small cluster of 4 trees, 2 of which are deceased. There may also be some impacts to Tree 23, a moderate sized Grey Box which also offers significant amenity and environmental value to the site. Impacts to Tree 23 should be minimised by ensuring that no excavation is required within the Notional Root Zone and only fill material is utilised to facilitate to the construction.



Plate 4: Existing dirt crossover to the east of Tree 19. Widening to allow for turning sweep may be required to the east. Pruning of the lowest limb on Tree 19 may be required.

4.4 Electrical Connection Alignment

The proposed electrical connection alignment enters the AusNet substation from the south-west, passing through a fenced compound that contains a number of established, mature trees. In determining the preferred alignment, Arborescence has selected a route that prioritises the retention of higher value trees by directing impacts toward trees assessed as having lower retention value.

Open trenching is assumed to be the preferred construction method; however, underboring at least a portion of the alignment is recommended to avoid impacts to mature trees on site. Trees 4 and 17 are both assessed as being in poor condition, and their removal is considered a preferable outcome to compromising the health or structure of adjacent trees with higher retention value.

With respect to Trees 16 and 18, it is considered possible that these trees may tolerate open trenching between them given their current condition and notional root zone (NRZ) spacing. Notwithstanding this, the preferred approach would be to underbore beneath the NRZs of both trees, minimising the risk of root damage and the associated impacts on long-term tree health.

4.5 Construction of retention pond

Only Tree 37 is in proximity to the proposed retention pond. It appears that this tree should be easily retainable with the current designs. Ensure that encroachment within the NRZ of this tree is minimised to less than 10% or located within existing disturbed areas (i.e., within the existing dam footprint).

5. GENERAL DISCUSSION

5.1 Encroachment/ Impacts on Trees

Works such as site cut and fill, re-grading, trenching, installation of underground services, building footings, landscaping or reducing the rain catchment within Notional Root Zones (NRZ) are considered as encroachment. These activities may damage trees; this may be via direct (physical wounding) or indirect (soil alteration) impacts. Encroachment may result in wounds, decay, increased deadwood, thinning foliage, decreased health, instability and ultimately tree death.

Likely impacts are assessed based on the degree of encroachment, the type of proposed works, the tree, and surrounding conditions inclusive of existing site conditions as detailed above.

5.2 Soil Compaction

Soil compaction reduces both the number and size of soil pores, limiting the availability of water and oxygen to tree roots. This restricts respiration and energy use, increases physiological stress, and can lead to significant decline. Symptoms commonly include canopy thinning, dieback, increased deadwood, reduced or absent annual shoot growth, heightened susceptibility to decay, limb failure, and potentially tree mortality (Craul, 1994). Trees may also attract insects and pests as their natural defence systems weaken.

Compaction may also cause the development of surface roots, which are vulnerable to lawn mowers and mechanical injury, further increasing decay risk.

Compaction can be prevented by utilising existing compacted surfaces such as roads, or by using protection such as suitable track mats or rumble boards installed over mulch.

5.3 Root Damage

Damage to tree roots can have significant long-term impacts on tree health and structural stability. Root injury creates entry points for decay-causing pathogens and disrupts the translocation of water, nutrients, and carbohydrates throughout the tree. This reduction in resource uptake, combined with the loss of stored energy reserves within severed roots, limits the tree's capacity to support normal physiological processes and respond to stress.

As a result, affected trees may exhibit reduced vigour, canopy dieback, reduced shoot extension, and an overall decline in health. Structural consequences may also arise, including compromised anchorage

and an increased likelihood of limb failure or whole-tree failure. In severe cases, progressive decline or tree mortality may occur.

The site showed evidence of soil cultivation to facilitate the re-vegetation process. In some instances, this soil cultivation occurred within the structural root zone of retained trees. The exact depth of the soil disturbance could not be determined, but it is possible that this activity may have impacted the health and longevity of some of the retained trees.

There were some retained trees that had died within the past 24 months. However, the cause of death could not be conclusively identified, especially given the extended dry period experienced during the 2025-2026 summer season.

5.4 Pruning standards / Lopping

An Australian Standard exists to give guidance on pruning of trees, AS4373-2007 *Pruning amenity trees* (Standards Australia, 2007).

It is important that all remedial works are carried out by a competent arboricultural contractor in accordance with the Australian Standard.

Lopping, as defined within the standard, is detrimental to trees and often results in decay and poorly attached epicormic shoots. Natural target pruning methods should be used wherever possible when removing sections from trees.

6. CONCLUSION

Arboressence has been engaged by DM Ecological to undertake an assessment of the tree population at the Winton Solar Farm, Winton VIC 3673, to assess trees that may be impacted by proposed works including installing power connection infrastructure to the Glenrowan Terminal Station from the southwest and construction of new overhead power lines to the site from the Winton-Glenrowan Road.

A site inspection and tree assessment has been undertaken by Rhys Oldmeadow and Tom Fahy of Arboressence on 30 March 2026. Only a Limited Visual Tree Assessment was performed, with no climbing assessment or root system excavation undertaken.

Three separate site access routes were assessed for feasibility and possible impacts to adjacent trees, as well as a proposed electrical connection alignment into the AusNet Substation. An additional, single tree was assessed within the site as it is noted for retention and located next to a proposed retention pond (existing dam in this location).

A total of thirty-seven (37) trees were individually assessed and detailed within this report, see **3.3 Individual Tree Details**.

Possible impacts to assessed trees are summarised below:

Crossover Option A

- Remove Tree 33.
- Possible impacts to Tree 32 if tree protection measures are not implemented.

Crossover Option B

- Remove Trees 25-29 and Tree 31.

Crossover Option C

- Remove Trees 20 and 21. Remove trees within Tree Group 22 (4 trees total, undetermined how many may require removal).
- Possible impacts to Tree 19 and 23 if tree protection measures are not implemented.

Electrical connection alignment

- Possible removal of Trees 4 and 17.
- Likely significant impacts to Trees 16 and 18 if tree protection measures are not implemented.

Construction of retention pond

- Possible impacts to Tree 37 if tree protection measures are not implemented.

7. RECOMMENDATIONS

- Include assessed trees as well as Notional Root Zones (NRZ) and Structural Root Zones (SRZ) on site plans as well as any encroachments into NRZs from proposed works.
- To minimise associated tree impacts, vehicles should be directed to access and egress the site by turning to and from the east.
 - Crossover Option A
 - Remove Tree 33 if required.
 - Ensure there is no encroachment into the NRZ of Tree 32 west of the existing crossover.
 - Crossover Option B
 - Remove Trees 25-29 and 31 to facilitate crossover.
 - Do not excavate within the SRZs of Trees 24 and 30. Retain these dead stags for habitat.
 - Crossover Option C
 - Ensure there is no encroachment into the NRZ of Tree 19 west of the existing crossover.
 - Ensure any pruning of Tree 19 is undertaken by a minimum AQF Level III Arborist and in accordance with natural target pruning principles as per AS4373-2007 *Pruning amenity trees*.
 - Remove trees 20-22 as required to facilitate construction.
 - Minimise encroachment into the NRZ of Tree 23 to less than 10% encroachment.
 - Electrical Connection Alignment.
 - Remove Trees 4 and 17 as required.
 - Utilise trenchless technology (underboring) through the NRZs of Trees 16 and 18 or, ensure open trench is situated in the middle of these trees (significant impacts may still occur).
 - Avoid impacts to the dead stag in the paddock to the west of the AusNet compound.
 - Construction of retention pond
 - Ensure that encroachment into the NRZ of Tree 37 is minimised to less than 10%, or situated within existing encroachments (i.e., within the existing dam footprint).

Kind regards,



Rhys Oldmeadow
Diploma of Arboriculture

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8. WORKS CITED

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Hitchmough, J. (1994). *Urban Landscape Management*. Sydney: Inkata Press.

Standards Australia. (2007). *Australian Standard: Pruning of Amenity Trees (AS 4373-2007)*. NSW, AUS: Standards Australia.

Standards Australia. (2025). *Australian Standard: Protection of Trees on Development Sites (AS 4970- 2025)*. NSW: AUS: Standards Australia.

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9. APPENDIX 1: ARBORICULTURAL DESCRIPTORS

Age

Relates to the physiological stage of the tree's life cycle.

Category	Description
Juvenile	A young tree, given normal environmental conditions for that tree it will not yet flower or fruit.
Semi-mature	Able to reproduce yet still to achieve expected size in situation
Maturing	Specimen approaching expected size in situation, with reduced incremental growth
Over-mature	Tree is senescent and in decline

Arboricultural Rating/Amenity value

Arboricultural rating relates to a combination of tree condition factors, including health and structure (arboricultural merit), and also conveys an amenity value. Amenity relates to the trees biological, functional and aesthetic characteristics (Hitchmough, 1994) within an urban landscape context. The presence of any serious disease or tree-related hazards that would impact risk potential are taken into account.

Category	Description
Highly Significant	The tree is a large, mature example of the species, generally in fair to good condition. It may be a remnant specimen or have substantial habitat value. The tree may have specific landscape context or be very prominent in the broader environment. This tree may be suitable for inclusion on a significant tree register at local or state government level. Significant efforts should be made to retain this tree.
Significant	The tree is a mature example of the species in good condition and/or have particular prominence in the landscape. There may be evidence of the tree being used as a habitat tree by local fauna and/or it may be a remnant specimen. It has a long ULE and should be considered for retention. The loss of the tree may have a significant impact on the surrounding landscape
Moderate	The tree is a semi mature to mature example of the species in good condition, may be well sited in the landscape and/or may have habitat value. The removal of this tree would be noticed in the landscape.
Low	The tree is generally a smaller specimen or may be in decline. It is not located in a prominent position and its removal would have little impact on the broader landscape.

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None	Trees of low quality with an estimated remaining life expectancy of less than 5 years. Tree has either a severe structural defect or health problem or combination that cannot be sustained with practical arboricultural techniques and the loss of the tree would be expected in the short term. Trees that are dead or are showing signs of significant, immediate, and irreversible overall decline. Tree infected with pathogens of significance to either the health or safety of the tree or other adjacent trees. Trees whose retention would not be viable after the removal of adjacent trees (including trees that have developed in close spaced groups and would not be expected to acclimatise to severe alterations to surrounding environment – removal of adjacent shelter trees). Tree has a detrimental effect on the environment, for example, the tree is recognised environmental woody weed with potential to spread into waterways or natural areas. Unremarkable tree of no material landscape, conservation or other cultural value.
------	--

Trees have many values, not all of which are considered when an arboricultural assessment is undertaken. However, individual trees or tree group features may be considered important community resources because of unique or noteworthy characteristics or values other than their age, dimensions, health or structural condition. Recognition of one or more of the following criteria is designed to highlight other considerations that may influence the future management of such trees.

Significant	Description
Horticultural Value/Rarity	Outstanding horticultural or genetic value; could be an important propagating stock, including specimens that are particularly resistant to disease or exposure. Any tree of a species or variety that is rare.
Historic, Aboriginal Cultural or Heritage Value.	Tree could have value as a remnant of a particular important historical period or a remnant of a site or activity no longer in action. Tree has a recognised association with historic aboriginal activities, including scar trees. Tree commemorates a particular occasion, including plantings by notable people, or having association with an important event in local history.
Ecological Value	Tree could have value as habitat for indigenous wildlife, including providing breeding, foraging or roosting habitat, or is a component of a wildlife reserve. Remnant indigenous vegetation that contributes to biological diversity.

Diameter at Standard Height (DSH)

Indicates the trunk diameter (expressed in centimetres) of an individual tree measured at 1.4m above the existing ground level or where otherwise indicated, multiple leaders are measured individually. Plants with multiple leader habit may be measured at the base. The range of methods to suit particular trunk shapes, configurations and site conditions can be seen in Appendix A of Australian Standard AS 4970-2025 *Protection of trees on development sites* (Standards Australia, 2025). Measurements undertaken with foresters Ø tape or builders tape.

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Health

Assesses various attributes to describe the overall health and vigour of the tree.

Category	Vigour/Extension growth
Good	A healthy tree possessing a full canopy of foliage with minimal deadwood. The tree should be producing good or exceptional extension growth of laterals. The tree should be free of or have only minor pest or disease problems.
Fair	A tree that is in satisfactory condition with an adequate canopy of foliage. It may have some deadwood in the crown. The tree should be producing reasonable extension growth of laterals. Some insect or possum damage may be observed.
Poor	A tree that is in an unsatisfactory condition and not growing to its full capacity. The canopy may be thinning or sparse. The tree may possess large amounts of deadwood throughout the crown. The tree should be producing minimal extension growth of laterals. Significant pest and disease problems may be obvious. Symptoms of stress may be indicating tree decline.
Dead	The tree is dead.

Height and Width

Indicates height and width of the individual tree; dimensions are expressed in metres. Crown heights are measured with a laser height meter where possible. Due to the topography of some sites and/or the density of vegetation it may not be possible to do this for every tree. Tree heights may be estimated in line with previous height meter readings in conjunction with author's experience. Crown widths are generally paced (estimated) at the widest axis or can be measured on two axes and averaged. In some instances the crown width can be measured on the four cardinal direction points (North, South, East and West).

Name

Provides botanical name, (genus, species, variety and cultivar) according to accepted international code of taxonomic classification, and common name.

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Retention value

Retention value is a determination based on a combination of arboricultural value, the ownership/ location of the tree, the landscape/ ecological and or cultural/ heritage significance of the tree. It also takes into account the suitability of the tree in the current and future landscapes.

Category	Description
High	A tree or group of trees of high retention value may be considered to be in good condition overall and suitably located within the subject site. The tree will generally have a high arboricultural value and a ULE of greater than 20 years. Future development should consider a high retention value tree worthy of protection and incorporation into the design.
Moderate	A tree or group of trees of moderate retention value may be considered to be in fair to good condition overall and suitably located within the subject site. The tree will generally have a medium or high arboricultural value and a ULE of greater than 20 years. The tree may be semi mature or in the early mature stage of life. Future development should consider a high retention value tree worthy of protection and incorporation into the design where practicable.
Low	A tree or group of trees of low retention value may be considered to be in poor or fair good condition overall or poorly situated within the subject site. Future development should not consider a low retention value tree worthy of protection and or incorporation into the design where.

Structure

An assessment of the physical attributes of the tree, based on tree balance, buttressing, trunk or major scaffold defects, strength of branch unions, and structural faults that may predispose the tree to failure. This includes the main scaffold branches and roots that may influence the probability of major trunk, root or limb failure. (Harris, Clark, & Matheny, 2004) The structure of a tree can influence the retention value of the tree, the value of the tree as an asset, the likelihood of any failure, and the works required on that tree. Other factors can cause a well-structured tree to fail. The structure of a tree is assessed as:

Category	Description
Good	The tree has a well-defined and well-balanced crown with adequate buttressing. The trunk and major scaffold branches are free of obvious defects. Major branch unions appear to be strong. The tree contains no obvious major structural faults. There are no obvious signs of significant root damage. The tree is not considered likely to suffer major branch or trunk failure under normal conditions. The tree is considered a good example of the species, with a well-developed form.
Moderate	The tree has some minor problems in the structure of the crown. If the tree is single trunked this may be on a slight lean. The crown may be slightly out of balance, or display minimal buttressing. There may be minor defects in the trunk and scaffold branches. Some branch unions may exhibit minor structural faults, or have the potential to create faults. The root system may be restricted, or have suffered some minor damage.
Poor	The tree has some significant problems in the structure of the crown. It may be unbalanced or have large gaps in the crown. The tree may have a substantial lean. Buttressing may be considered inadequate. The tree may have some degree of basal damage. The trunk and scaffold branches may exhibit defects. Large branches may be rubbing or crossing over. Branch unions may be poor and faults at the point of attachment or along the branches may be evident. The tree may have suffered significant root damage. These faults may expose the tree to major branch or trunk failure.
Very Poor	The tree has already failed, or has some severe problems in the structure of the crown that are likely to cause a major branch or trunk failure in the near future. The tree may have severe include bark or an actively splitting attachment have suffered severe root loss or the tree may be heaving.

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Type

Describes the general geographic origin of the species and its type e.g. deciduous or evergreen.

Category	Description
Indigenous	Occurs naturally in the area or region of the subject site
Victorian native	Occurs naturally within some part of the State of Victoria (not exclusively) but is not indigenous
Australian native	Occurs naturally within Australia but is not a Victorian native or indigenous
Exotic deciduous	Occurs outside of Australia and typically sheds its leaves during winter
Exotic evergreen	Occurs outside of Australia and typically holds its leaves all year round
Exotic conifer	Occurs outside of Australia and is classified as a gymnosperm
Native conifer	Occurs naturally within Australia and is classified as a gymnosperm
Native Palm	Occurs naturally within Australia. Woody monocotyledon
Exotic Palm	Occurs outside of Australia. Woody monocotyledon

10. APPENDIX 2: ASSUMPTIONS AND LIMITING CONDITIONS

- i. Every reasonable effort has been made to provide information that is true and correct. However, the author cannot guarantee the accuracy of information provided by others.
- ii. The loss, damage, or alteration of any part of this report will render the entire report void.
- iii. Any maps, graphs, diagrams, or sketches contained in this report have been provided as a visual aid only. They have not necessarily been drawn to scale.
- iv. While this report has been prepared under a contractual arrangement, it has been prepared with neutral and unbiased opinions based on the views of the author and scientific fact. These opinions are not influenced by financial incentives.
- v. Every reasonable effort has been made to provide accurate information on the subject of this report based on research and studies available at the time of publication. However, as the subject often involves natural, biological organisms, it is not possible to cover all potential outcomes.
- vi. The information contained in this document is based on information collected at the precise date and time stated. Any changes occurring since will not form part of this report.
- vii. This report has been developed specifically for use by the client for the purposes stated. Responsibility will not be accepted for use by parties other than those stated, or for purposes other than those stated.
- viii. This report has been prepared on the facts requested or required. Other facts in relation to the subject tree/s may not be included in this report.
- ix. This report, or part thereof, shall not be copied or publicised without the authority of the author.
- x. The author shall not be required to appear as an expert witness by reason of this report without subsequent contractual arrangements, including the payment of an additional charge for such services.

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11. APPENDIX 3: PHOTOS



Tree 1_1



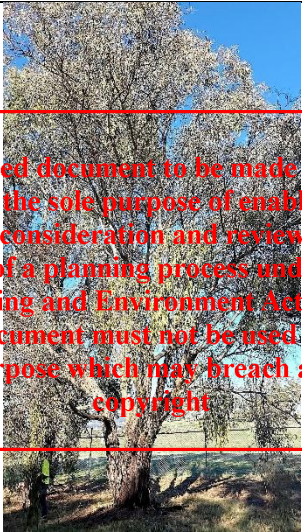
Tree 2_1



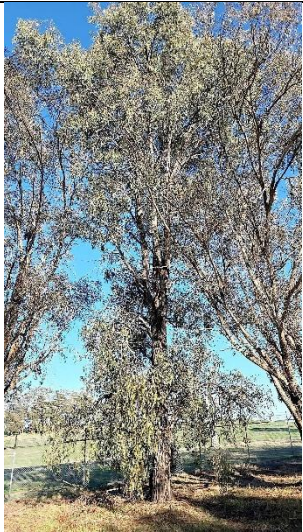
Tree 3_1



Tree 4_1



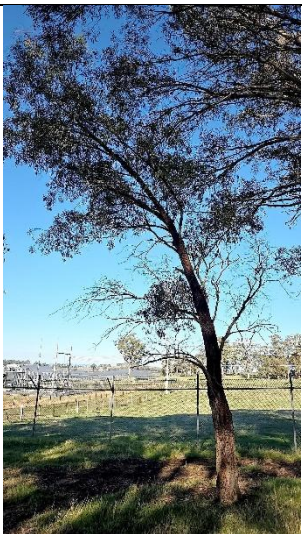
Tree 5_1



Tree 6_1



Tree 7_1



Tree 8_1



Tree 9_1

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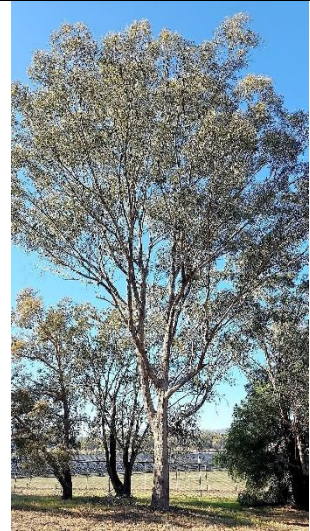
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Tree 10_1



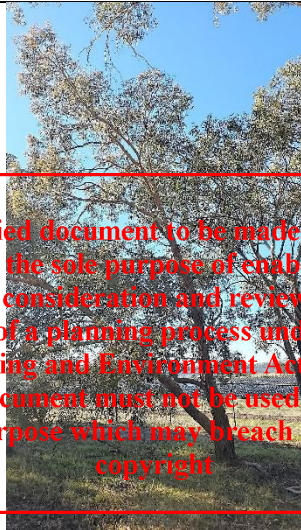
Tree 11_1



Tree 12_1



Tree 13_1



Tree 14_1



Tree 15_1

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Tree 16_1



Tree 17_1



Tree 18_1

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Tree 19_1



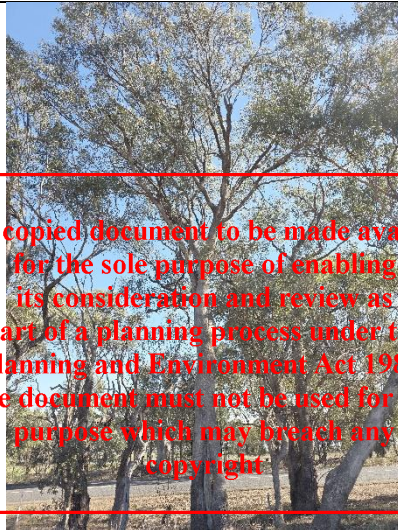
Tree 20_1



Tree 21_1



Tree 22_1 (group)



Tree 23_1



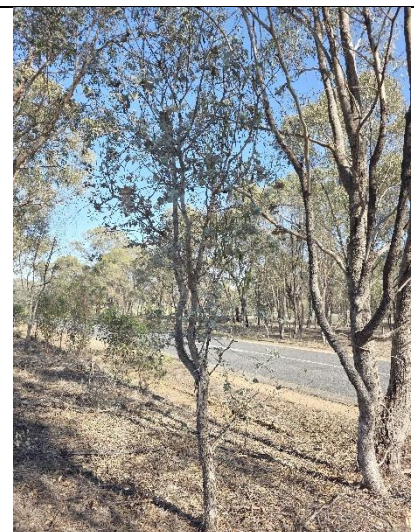
Tree 24_1



Tree 25_1



Tree 26_1



Tree 27_1

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Tree 28_1



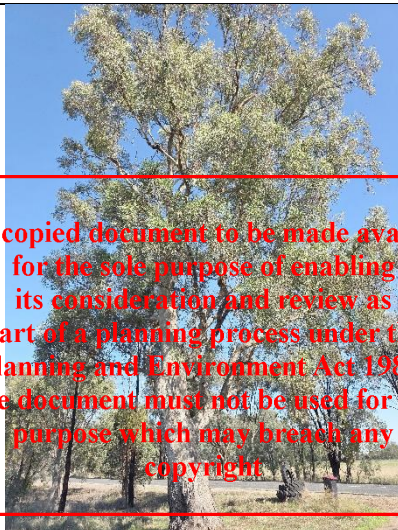
Tree 29_1



Tree 30_1



Tree 31_1



Tree 32_1



Tree 33_1

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Tree 34_1



Tree 35_1



Tree 36_1

		
Tree 37_1		

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