

8. Planning and Land Use

The Planning and Land Use Assessment examined the potential effects of the Project on land use, zoning and public infrastructure and consistency with the Pyrenees Planning Scheme and the Ararat Planning Scheme and other relevant planning strategies.

The study area spans part of Pyrenees Shire and Ararat Rural City. It includes land that has been developed for grazing, cropping, plantations, residential and rural residential purposes. The Ballarat – Ararat Railway line is within the study area, following a similar alignment to that of the existing highway.

The assessment found that most land use and planning related impacts would be experienced in the construction phase and so they are short term only. These include potential impacts on existing infrastructure due to the temporary relocation and/or disconnection of services, potential impacts on amenity such as noise and dust emissions, traffic disruptions and changes to landscape due to removal of vegetation. Noise, dust, traffic and landscape impacts have been investigated through specific studies in this EES and would be managed to an acceptable level through the implementation of the Project Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP).

Smaller isolated allotments created as a result of land acquisition for the Project that are below the minimum lot size of the relevant zone, could be subject to development pressure for a dwelling. These smaller allotments, if required for a use other than agriculture, would be considered for consolidation with adjoining lots. The potential for a reduction in the long term economic viability of allotments subject to acquisition due to severance and/or changed access arrangements has been investigated through the agricultural assessment. It is considered unlikely that the Project would significantly affect long term agricultural productivity of the locality. Property specific mitigation measures such as reinstatement of existing property infrastructure, structures, drainage and access, after construction is complete, should mitigate most impacts on farming operations in the long term.

Overall, land acquisition impacts on individual land holdings have been minimised as both Options 1 and 2 generally extend adjacent to existing property boundaries or fence lines. Compensation for land acquisition impacts would be provided in accordance with the *Land Acquisition and Compensation Act 1986*.

The Project would result in longer term benefits for the economy and tourism in the area due to improved accessibility following the duplication of the highway. It would also deliver benefits for Buangor in particular, due to the diversion of freight and other vehicles out of the town centre, thereby improving the safety and amenity of the town.

The Planning and Land Use Assessment concluded that the Project as a whole would not result in any significant inconsistency with planning policy, nor would it result in any broad change of land use within the study area. On balance, Option 2 has less land severance impacts than Option 1 because it aligns more closely with property boundaries, the existing highway and the railway line.

8.1 EES Objectives

The EES objectives relevant to the Planning and Land Use Assessment are:

- *To avoid or minimise disruption and other adverse effects on infrastructure, land use (including agriculture and residential) and households, as well as road users resulting from the construction and operation of the highway duplication.*

This chapter discusses planning and land use within the EES study area, the potential impacts from the Project on planning and land use, and the management measures proposed to be implemented to minimise these impacts. More specifically, this chapter:

- Characterises the project area in terms of land use and development (existing and likely), zoning and public infrastructure that support current patterns of economic and social activity.
- Describes the consistency of the proposed works and relevant alternatives with the provisions of the Ararat and Pyrenees Planning Schemes and other relevant planning strategies. This includes an analysis of the proposed works and relevant alternatives against relevant planning scheme provisions, which highlights potential Project implications in light of the relevant provisions.
- Identifies potential long-term and short-term effects of the Project on existing and potential future land uses, development and zoning and public infrastructure. Attention is given to potential effects of the Project on residential uses, agricultural uses including blue gum plantations, wind farm infrastructure, the Ballarat-Ararat railway line, the Buangor Primary School and Ararat Aerodrome. The assessment also includes an identification of key affected stakeholders, potential implications for future shifts in patterns of economic and social activity

and associated implications for land use and development.

- Identifies measures to avoid, mitigate and manage any potential land use effects.
- Identifies residual effects of the Project on existing and potential future land uses.

This chapter also identifies whether any Planning Scheme Amendments (PSAs) and/or planning permits are required to facilitate the Project, outlines what the amendment/permit proposes, and includes an assessment of the amendment and Project against any relevant considerations and/or requirements, where appropriate.

This chapter is based on a Planning and Land Use Assessment report completed by GHD Pty Ltd (2012a), that is included in Technical Appendix C. The chapter also draws upon other relevant assessments, including Economic (refer Chapter 19), Social (refer Chapter 18), Biodiversity and Habitat (refer Chapter 13), and Cultural Heritage (refer Chapter 14).

8.2 Study Area

The study area, for the purposes of the EES, encompasses a corridor extending approximately 1500m either side (north and south) of the edge of the existing Western Highway (encompassing the extent of alignment Options 1 and 2). Figure 8-1 shows the study area, and the precincts which are relevant to the Planning and Land Use chapter.

8.3 Methodology

The Planning and Land Use Assessment has been prepared largely by desktop methods, involving the review of relevant legislation, policies and strategies. The assessment also involved the review of land titles and aerial photography, provided by VicRoads.

Meetings were also conducted with planning officers from Ararat Rural City Council and Pyrenees Shire Council, and the regional office of the Department of Planning and Community Development (DPCD), who provided information regarding current and future strategic projects and developments in their respective municipalities or region.

A site inspection of the study area was undertaken to confirm existing land uses and subdivision patterns in the study area.

Other tasks completed were:

- Participation in an environmental risk assessment process.
- Consideration of potential impacts on planning and land use during construction of the Project.
- Consideration of potential ongoing impacts of the Project on planning and land use after construction.



Aerial view looking north-east towards Buangor

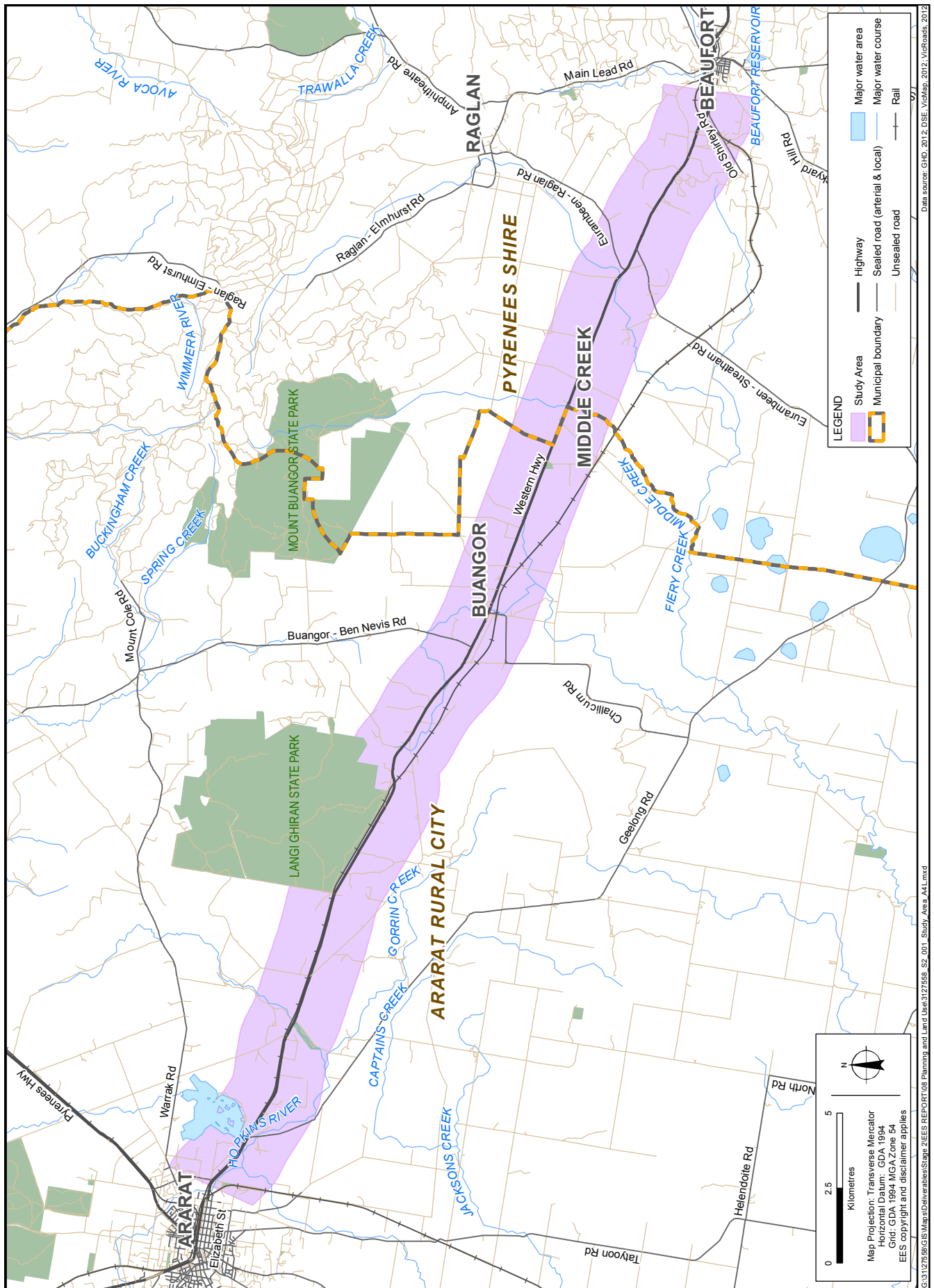


Figure 8-1 Planning and Land Use study area

8.4 Legislation and Policy

The relevant legislation and government policies and strategies for planning and land use are shown in Table 8-1.

Table 8-1 Relevant planning and land use legislation and policies

Legislation/Policy	Description
State	
<i>Planning and Environment Act 1987</i>	<p>The Act establishes a framework for planning the use, development and protection of land in Victoria in the present and long-term interest of all Victorians. The Act sets out the legislative basis to ensure that standard planning provisions are prepared and approved throughout Victoria.</p> <p>The Act sets out procedures for preparing and amending the Victoria Planning Provisions (VPP) and planning schemes, obtaining permits under planning schemes, settling disputes, enforcing compliance with planning schemes, and other administrative procedures. The Act provides for a single instrument of planning control in a particular area, the planning scheme, which sets out the way land may be used or developed. The planning scheme is a legal document, prepared and approved under the Act.</p> <p>The relevant planning schemes for the study area are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Ararat Planning Scheme; and ▪ Pyrenees Planning Scheme.
<i>Land Acquisition and Compensation Act 1986</i>	<p>The process under which private land can be compulsorily acquired is set out in the <i>Land Acquisition and Compensation Act 1986</i> (LACA). Under the LACA, land required for a public purpose can be acquired by State Government Departments and Agencies. Acquisition can be done either compulsorily or by negotiation.</p> <p>The LACA provides:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The procedures for the compulsory or negotiated acquisition of land; and ▪ The procedures for the determination of compensation, including disturbance and severance costs.
<i>Transport Integration Act 2010</i>	<p>The <i>Transport Integration Act 2010</i> (TIA) provides a policy framework for transport and land use agencies. The TIA:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Provides for an integrated sustainable transport system by unifying all elements of the transport portfolio; ▪ Provides for a triple bottom line (economic, social and environmental) assessment of the transport system; ▪ Provides for a common vision, objectives and principles for integrated and sustainable transport policies and operations; ▪ Provides for the integration of land use and transport planning by including 'interfacing bodies / agencies' under the coverage of the Act; and ▪ Recognises that the transport system should be conceived and planned as a single system rather than competing modes.
Regional	
Glenelg Hopkins Regional Catchment Strategy	<p>The Regional Catchment Strategy is a high-level plan that sets a strategic overview for natural resource management within the Glenelg and Hopkins River Catchments. It aims to integrate action plans constructed by the Glenelg Hopkins Catchment Management Authority and those of other bodies with responsibility for natural resource management.</p>
Central Highlands Regional Strategic Plan, June 2010	<p>The Central Highlands Regional Strategic Plan (CHRSP), June 2010 was prepared by member Councils of the Central Highlands Region and co-ordinated by Regional Development Victoria on behalf of State Government. The CHRSP enunciates a Regional vision and a set of strategic directions and actions to be pursued. The following excerpt from the CHRSP is of direct relevance to the Planning and Land Use directions for the Western Highway:</p> <p>" 3.3.2 <i>Transport Upgrades - The road and rail east - west transport spine across the region with the further planned improvements to the Western Highway, such as the duplication of the Western Highway from Ballarat to Stawell (funded by Auslink). The VicRoads project scope is to include in the construction the bypasses of Trawalla, Buangor and Great Western. The ultimate construction of these critical aspects of infrastructure will strengthen the region's comparative advantage against other regions in the State.</i>"</p>
Local	
<i>Ararat Planning Scheme and Pyrenees Planning Scheme</i>	<p>A planning scheme sets out objectives, policies and provisions relating to the use, development, protection and conservation of land in the area to which it applies. A planning scheme is established under the <i>Planning and Environment Act 1987</i> and regulates the use and development of land through planning provisions designed to achieve those objectives and policies.</p> <p>In this instance, the Ararat Planning Scheme and the Pyrenees Planning Scheme are relevant to the Project area.</p>
Pyrenees Shire Council,	<p>The Council Plan is a strategic document that outlines a series of strategic objectives and the goals</p>

Legislation/Policy	Description
Council Plan 2009-2013	<p>and aspirations of the Pyrenees Shire Council over the specified four years. It describes what the Council believes is important to the residents of the Pyrenees Shire, and what it hopes to achieve in the near future. The Council will focus on seven areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Road infrastructure ▪ Community infrastructure ▪ Community wellbeing ▪ Growth and employment development ▪ Governance and community leadership ▪ Organisational development ▪ The environment <p>Other strategic directions outlined in the planning document and supported through the Project include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ To maintain a safe and effective road system that caters for all road users within the Shire. ▪ To provide safe, well-maintained, functional and well utilised assets to support Communities. ▪ To enhance the quality of life of residents by building connected, active and resilient communities.
Pyrenees Shire Growth and Development Strategy 2010-2014	<p>The focus of the Economic Development Strategy is to support the sustainability and growth of existing industries and businesses, and to provide opportunities for people to live, work and invest in Pyrenees Shire, and to continue to build on the foundations already established, and help achieve Council's Growth and Development objective of "developing the local economy and increasing the population" of the Shire.</p> <p>It is acknowledged in the Strategy that for the Shire to grow employment and accommodate projected increases in population, the development of suitable infrastructure is required to support major industries. The importance of well-maintained road networks is also acknowledged as they provide critical arterial networks for transport of agricultural products to local livestock markets, processing works and ports, manufacture of products and general freight.</p> <p>Maintaining and upgrading road networks to accommodate large vehicles carrying produce would remain an area of attention, particularly with large export driven businesses located within, and being developed in the Shire.</p>
Ararat Residential Land Use Strategy 2005	<p>The objective of this strategy is to address the 30 year housing needs for the town of Ararat. Ararat has significant opportunities to address anticipated housing demand beyond the year 2035. The residential options discussed in this strategy are a high level identification of residential and rural residential land to address the housing needs of Ararat. The options also address many of the Victorian Government criteria for identifying residential land. It is important to note that to clarify a more detailed demand and supply position a local structure plan will have to be undertaken in the identified areas.</p>
Ararat Rural Zone Review 2007	<p>In 2007, a review of Rural Zones was undertaken within the Ararat Rural City. The review was undertaken to assess the 8,000 rural zoned lots which were less than the 40ha minimum lot size. The objective of the review was to provide recommendations to Council associated with the long term planning framework to guide urban, residential and rural living development and to provide a framework for the development of dwellings on land in the Farming Zone. The Ararat Rural Zones Review suggested guidelines be incorporated into the planning scheme for residential development on lots less than 40ha. Recommendations from the Review associated with rural residential development and township frameworks were incorporated into the Planning Scheme, however, the guidelines for residential development are yet to be incorporated.</p>
Ararat Environmental Sustainability Strategy 2010-2020	<p>In September 2008 Ararat Rural City completed a Local Environment Sustainability Priority Statement (LESPPS) which outlines and commits Council to key Accord Principles and forms the basis of future programs. The LESPPS forms the action component of this body of work. The Strategy explores environmental themes, prioritises a plan of action and guide's Council's long term environmental management and sustainability commitments over the next 10 years.</p>

8.5 Existing Conditions

8.5.1 Current Land Uses and Development

The Planning and Land Use Assessment considers the existing land uses within the study area and potential land uses with regard to the current planning controls. The study area has been divided based on municipal boundaries for ease of description, as outlined below:

- Pyrenees Shire: Commencement of Section 2, east of McKinnon Lane to Waldrons Road / Middle Creek; and

- Ararat Rural City: Waldrons Road / Middle Creek to the end of Section 2 at Heath Street, Ararat.

Figure 8-1 illustrates the location of the municipal boundaries in relation to the study area.

8.5.1.1 Pyrenees Shire

The study area within the Pyrenees Shire extends for approximately 11km west from McKinnon Lane (west of Beaufort) to Middle Creek (on the southern side of the Western Highway) and Waldrons Road (on the northern side of the Western Highway).

The area between Beaufort and the commencement of works is characterised by privately owned land used for grazing purposes or for hobby farm

purposes. The precinct also contains the “Red Kangaroo” (Red Roo) Roadhouse which is a service station and a truck stop along the Melbourne to Adelaide route.

The most prominent feature of the area contained within the Pyrenees Shire is Box’s Cutting, a significant roadside cutting with treed verges. The topography to Box’s Cutting rises as the Western Highway extends west from Beaufort and drops steeply on the western side. For west-bound commuters, Box’s Cutting provides views towards Mount Buangor and across the agricultural land below the cutting. North of Box’s Cutting the land is used for grazing purposes and south of Box’s cutting the land has been subdivided and used for rural living/rural residential purposes in a bushland setting.

The land west of Box’s Cutting is generally low lying and has been developed primarily for grazing purposes. The remnants of a former blue gum plantation are located on the southern side of the highway.

There are a number of dwellings within the Pyrenees Shire part of the study area, including scattered occupied and un-occupied dwellings associated with surrounding agricultural properties. There are two historic dwellings within the study area: the Eurambeen homestead to the south of the highway, which is not impacted by the Project area; and the Woodnaggerak homestead, which fronts the northern side of the highway. Neither of the properties are currently affected by Heritage Overlays. However, the Historical Heritage Impact Assessment (Appendix I) outlines the consideration of the heritage significance and recommends consideration of Woodnaggerak Homestead for a Heritage Overlay.

Land on the southern side of the Western Highway, bounded by Eurambeen-Streatham Road and Crockers Lane, comprises 12 separate titles. All of these titles are below the minimum lot size (80ha) and are affected by a Restructure Overlay.

This section of the alignment crosses Fiery Creek and Middle Creek, both of which flooded during the January 2011 flood event. Chapter 13 (Biodiversity and Habitat) details vegetation in the Project area.



Challicum Hills Wind Farm

8.5.1.2 Ararat Rural City

The study area within the Ararat Rural City extends west from Middle Creek / Waldron Road for approximately 26km. The area consists of rural living and agricultural land uses, the Buangor township, Langi Ghiran State Park, the Ararat Renewable Energy Park, the Ararat Aerodrome and the Green Hill Lake and Recreation reserve.

The eastern end of the study area within Ararat Rural City includes the Woodnaggerak Reserve (comprising a Natural Features Reserve) on the southern side of the highway.

The small township of Buangor is situated approximately 15km from the eastern commencement of Section 2 of the Western Highway Project. The Buangor Primary School and Sports Oval are currently accessed from the Western Highway. The old Buangor Cobb and Co. Staging Stables, which are located on the northern side of the Western Highway, are listed on the Victorian Heritage Register as being of State significance. They were erected in circa 1860 as a coach and livery stables. For many years the site was a Cobb & Co. changing station and it has recently been converted into a community centre. Most residential dwellings in Buangor are south of the highway.

An electricity substation associated with the Challicum Hills Wind Farm, is located at the western edge of Buangor, situated off Gravel Route Road and south of the Western Highway.

The Ballarat to Ararat railway line extends parallel to the Western Highway along the southern edge of much of the Study Area. The only railway station building in the study area is situated within a residential context to the south of the Western Highway in Buangor.

South-west of the Buangor township is the Challicum Hills Wind Farm, a prominent visual feature within the area. An existing roadside viewing point for the Wind Farm is situated on the south side of the highway west of Buangor.

West of Buangor, the study area and surrounding environs consists of agricultural land and pockets of native vegetation and tree plantations. The Western Highway currently crosses the Ballarat- Ararat railway near Hillside Road. A dwelling is located on a small lot within the Farming Zone between the junction of the railway line and Hillside Road.

The Western Highway is bounded by Langi Ghiran State Park and a tree plantation to the north and privately owned dense bushland and agricultural land to the south. The railway line continues adjacent to the northern side of the Western Highway adjacent to Langi Ghiran State Park. A truck stop is situated on the northern side of the highway for east-bound traffic.

The Western Highway extends through the locality of Dobie, prior to crossing the Hopkins River towards the western end of the study area. Further west, the

Ararat Aerodrome, Ararat Renewable Energy Park, a Service Centre, and Racecourse are located south of the Western Highway. North of the Western Highway is Green Hill Lake and the Green Hill Lake Recreation Reserve.



8.5.2 Tenure

Land titles have been reviewed for the study area.

The majority of land within the study area is freehold land, with areas of Crown Land managed by either VicRoads (Western Highway), VicTrack (railway line), or DSE and Parks Victoria (Langi Ghiran State Park and Woodnaggerak Reserve). Local access roads are generally Crown Land (government roads) managed by the respective Councils.

It is noted most of the titles are broad acre, however, there are smaller residential lot subdivisions in the following locations:

- Crockers Lane, Eurambeen-Streatham Road, where 12 small lots are within the study area;
- Rural living subdivision centred on Grampians View Road, south of Box's Cutting; and
- Buangor, where standard residential lots abut the Western Highway within the study area.

8.5.3 Infrastructure

8.5.3.1 Physical infrastructure

A review of existing services was undertaken based on available data, which identifies local services and confirms there are no State significant infrastructure pipelines or power lines within the Project area. A detailed infrastructure services search would need to be completed prior to any work being undertaken.

Roads and rail infrastructure identified within the study area are summarised in Chapter 9 (Traffic and Transport).

8.5.3.2 Community infrastructure

The main concentration of community infrastructure is located in the township of Buangor and in the major towns of Ararat and Beaufort. The details of schools, health services, and recreation and community infrastructure are outlined in Chapter 18 (Social).

8.5.4 Potential Future Land Use and Development

Potential future land uses were identified during discussions with Council planning officers. Within the Pyrenees Shire, a permit (PA1808/11) has been granted for a grain store facility at the intersection of the Western Highway and Eurambeen-Streatham Road / Crockers Lane. However, at the time of writing the EES it is understood that permit is not proposed to be acted upon.

The strategic policies of the Pyrenees Shire seek to enhance the rural service centres, such as Beaufort, east of the Project area and restrict the further subdivision of high quality agricultural areas. The duplication of the highway as part of the Western Highway Project would result in improved and safer driving conditions between the towns of Beaufort and Ararat (and further afield). This would assist in improved connectivity in the area and could indirectly assist development of Beaufort.

Within the Ararat Rural City the Project would also assist in improving the amenity of the Buangor township by relocating freight and other vehicle movements out of the town. It is understood that there is a small but strong community in Buangor and whilst the town is not identified for future expansion in the planning scheme, it could experience growth from people seeking a community in a rural area, but without the maintenance associated with large rural land titles.

The blue gum plantation on the southern side of the Western Highway between Fiery Creek and Middle Creek has largely been removed recently. The land is included within a Farming Zone and is likely to be used for agricultural land use. At the time of writing this assessment, no formal proposal had been identified.

It is anticipated that further development of the Ararat Renewable Energy Park for industrial related purposes could occur. Accordingly, maintaining access to the Renewable Energy Park will be important for the ongoing viability and economic growth of the area. The proposed duplication of the existing Western Highway would improve safety conditions for vehicles (including freight) accessing the industrial areas on the south of the Ararat town centre.

8.6 Impact Assessment

8.6.1 Key Issues

The key issues for consideration as part of the Planning and Land Use Assessment include:

- Compliance with planning policies due to the fragmentation of impacted properties within the Farming Zone;
- Temporary disruption to utility services during the construction of the Project; and

- Potential for longer term land use change associated with a new road alignment.

The following Section 8.6.2 outlines in greater detail the potential planning and land use impacts of each of the Project options.

8.6.2 Impact Pathways

The Impact Pathways for the Planning and Land Use Assessment are:

- The potential impacts on existing infrastructure (including wind farm infrastructure) or utility services, including the Ballarat-Ararat Railway Line;
- The potential impact of acquisition on short term and longer term use of land for farming / agricultural purposes, including economic and social activity; and
- The potential for inconsistency with planning policies and schemes (Pyrenees and Ararat).

The protection and enhancement of environmental, heritage, social and economic values are considered within other chapters of this EES, consistent with the State and Local Planning Policies.

8.6.2.1 Impacts on existing infrastructure

The Project is considered to have short term impacts on existing infrastructure due to the temporary relocation and/or disconnection of services whilst the new road is being built. The final location of services is yet to be determined, however, both options provide sufficient area for utility services to be located within the construction footprints.

A Powercor power line extends along the existing Western Highway corridor and would experience disruption whilst being relocated as necessary. Both options would result in the relocation of the power lines, particularly where the options extend along or are adjacent to the existing highway. Option 2 extends adjacent to (but does not directly impact) an existing electrical substation to the west of the Buangor township (Ch. 20400 / Property No. 1444) that is associated with Challicum Hills Wind Farm, located to the south of the alignment.

Existing fibre optic cables are situated along the southern side of the existing highway east of Buangor and divert south to the railway line at Ferntree Gully Road. The fibre optic cables extend along the railway line until they re-join the existing Western Highway near the south-east corner of Mt Langi Ghiran State Park. Both options would require some relocation of the fibre optic cables adjacent to the existing Western Highway and each option requires a crossing of the railway line, and therefore the fibre optic cables. Services may be disrupted whilst the relocation of the fibre optic cables occurs and therefore, communication services may be temporarily impacted. It is considered that Option 2 could have a more significant impact on the potential disruption to fibre optic services given the option extends along the railway line, in the same location

as the fibre optic cable between Buangor and Mt Langi Ghiran State Park.

Both options would require a new bridge crossing over the Ballarat-Ararat Railway line as the existing crossing is on part of the existing highway which is proposed to be converted to a local road. The construction of the new bridge could result in temporary disruption to rail services whilst works were occurring adjacent to the railway line and a new bridge is constructed over the tracks. Works would either need to be scheduled when no trains were operating or alternative transport provided. The impacts associated with the disruption to services would be addressed as part of the CEMP.

In relation to impacts on existing infrastructure, it is considered that both options have similar temporary impacts. However, Option 2 has the potential to have more significant short term impacts on communication services whilst the fibre optic cables are being relocated adjacent to the railway line. VicRoads' Construction Contract should be able to mitigate the impacts for loss of services by providing appropriate measures to maintain connection of services where possible.

8.6.2.2 Impacts on the short term and long term land uses

The Project has the potential to impact on land uses in the short and long term, as follows:

- Potential for short term amenity impacts whilst the construction of the new road is being undertaken;
- Potential for the creation of smaller, isolated allotments in the short term which could be subject to redevelopment pressure;
- Potential for longer term benefit for the Buangor township due to the diversion of freight and other vehicles out of the town centre and therefore improving the safety and amenity of the town;
- Potential for Buangor to become a more attractive town within the Ararat Shire;
- Potential for longer term benefit for the economy and tourism in the area due to improved accessibility following the duplication of the highway; and
- Potential for reduction in longer term economic viability for properties which have been partially subject to acquisition.

The Project has the potential for short term amenity impacts, including dust and noise impacts on the study area whilst the road is being constructed. This could include disruption to local traffic movements whilst construction vehicles are transporting materials or temporary road closures whilst works are underway. The construction of the new road would also include a change to the landscape where vegetation is to be removed. Potential measures to mitigate the traffic and visual impacts are included in

Chapter 9 (Traffic and Transport) and Chapter 17 (Visual and Landscape) of this EES.

The Project could result in allotments below the minimum lot size of the relevant planning zone, which could be subject to development pressure for a dwelling. The policy is to discourage allotments below the minimum size, however it does allow for a dwelling on a lot below the minimum lots size subject to Council approval. The potential for this to occur has been reduced where possible by aligning the options adjacent to the existing property boundaries. Land severance of parcels is generally limited to where the proposed options deviate from the highway, such as at Box's Cutting, the new interchange at Eurambeen-Streatham Road / Eurambeen-Raglan Road and between the Buangor township and the Langi Ghiran State Park.

Both options include the deviation of the proposed freeway north from the existing highway at Anderson Road, on the eastern side of Buangor. Both options extend across Property No. 1295 which has been developed as a blue gum plantation. This parcel comprises a total area of 111ha and the proposed acquisition comprises an area of approximately 19ha, resulting in a total balance area of 91ha, which is in excess of the 40ha minimum lot size within the Ararat Planning Scheme. Both options in this location would effectively sever the parcel of land but it is considered the property could continue to be used for a plantation with appropriate access measures in place.

Both options include an interchange at Peacocks Road which would effectively divide Property No. 1296 in half. This property is utilised for farming and could continue to be used subject to access arrangements in place. Both options would provide for access over the freeway at Peacocks Road and therefore, access could be provided to the two halves of the property. Both options would include an interchange, with elevated east bound entry and exit ramps which could impact upon the visual amenity of the property. The visual impact of the Project is considered in Chapter 17 (Landscape and Visual) of this EES.

Both options would also result in the severance of Property No. 1314. This land is immediately north of the existing Western Highway, west of the sports oval in Buangor. The proposed alignments would restrict the ongoing viability of the land; particularly given that access from the Western Highway north along Buangor-Ben Nevis Road would be restricted. This would require the landowner to travel along the existing highway from the southern parcel, along Peacocks Road and along new service roads on the northern side of the freeway to access the balance of the property.

The Planning and Land Use Assessment Report (Technical Appendix C) outlines for both Option 1 and 2 where properties could be severed and where

new allotments could be created which are smaller than the minimum lot size in the relevant zone.

Option 1 (Alternate Option): Long and Short Term Impacts

The section of Option 1 that differs from Option 2 extends close to the existing highway at Buangor-Ben Nevis Road and impacts an existing dwelling at Property No. 1438. The alignment in this location extends adjacent to the property boundary and whilst it would result in the loss of the dwelling, it has less impact on the ongoing use of the balance of the property for farming purposes when compared to Option 2.

Option 1 deviates south of the existing highway at Ch. 22800 to extend over the railway line and then in a westerly direction to the south of the existing Western Highway in order to avoid native vegetation and habitat along the existing Western Highway east of Hillside Road Extension. The deviation from the existing highway would result in partial severance of Property No.s 1483, 1491 and 1506, which effectively result in remnant parcels of land situated between the property boundaries and the new freeway alignment. These remnant parcels of land are individually of insufficient size to be utilised for farming purposes and consideration should be given as to the need for consolidation in order to avoid inappropriate development from occurring.

West of Hillside Road Extension, Option 1 extends across a small plantation and severs Property No.s 1504, 1505, 1517 and partially severs Property No.s 1519, 1516 and 1523. It is not considered that Option 1 would prevent the short or long term use of these properties for continued agricultural / rural land use as they are currently being used. Rather, the acquisition of land would impact on access between the parcels of land (where in one ownership) and access arrangements for each of these landowners have been considered as part of the Social Impact Assessment (Technical Appendix O) and Traffic and Transport Impact Assessment (Technical Appendix D).

Option 1 would result in the acquisition by VicRoads of the whole of Property Nos 1317, 1438 and 1498. Whilst there would be some land severance, in many cases existing allotments are below the existing minimum lot size in the Ararat Planning Scheme. The only potential change resulting from the acquisition of land relates to Property No.s 1483 and 1505 which would now be below the 40ha minimum lot size in the Farming Zone within the Ararat Planning Scheme.



Looking east towards Langi Ghiran State Park

Option 2 (Preferred Option): Long and Short Term Impacts

The section of Option 2 that differs from Option 1 includes a similar half diamond interchange at Peacocks Road to that proposed in Option 1. The diamond interchange would result in a similar severance of Property No. 1296 compared to Option 1 but Option 2 extends near the edge of existing property boundaries and thereby reduces its impact on Property No. 1315, which is currently being used as a blue gum plantation.

On the western side of Buangor-Ben Nevis Road, Option 2 extends through the middle of Property No.s 1440 and 1439 which are used for farming purposes. The proposed freeway in this location would result in land severance and access restrictions which would reduce the ongoing viability and productivity of the properties for agricultural land use.

South of the existing Western Highway, Option 2 extends close to an existing substation at Property No. 1443 and results in land severance of Property No. 1460. The alignment across Property No 1460 would result in long term impacts to access which is currently available via Pope Road. The new alignment would effectively divide the majority of the property from the existing point of access via Pope Road and would require an unconstructed road reserve to be constructed off Gravel Route Road to maintain access. Property No. 1460 is being used as a plantation site and the majority of the property could continue to be used for a plantation subject to access being provided off Gravel Route Road.

Option 2 would result in the acquisition of a dwelling at Property No. 1498 at Hillside Road Extension and the whole acquisition of Property nos 1257, 1317 and 1316.

Whilst there would be some land severance, in identified cases, only two lots (Property No.s 1315 and 1442) currently exceed the minimum lot size of 40ha in the Farming Zone and in both instances, these properties would remain in excess of 40ha

following partial acquisition. The balance of allotments are already below the minimum lot size.

8.6.2.3 Consistency of the Project with planning schemes and strategies

It is considered that the Project is consistent with the State and Local Planning Policies which recognise the importance of major freight arterial routes to the economy of the State.

The State Planning Policy Framework contained within both the Pyrenees and Ararat Planning Schemes provides the general principles for land use and development. In relation to the Project, both options equally support Clause 11.05 (Regional development) associated with the promotion of sustainable growth within Regional Victoria. When compared with the 'do nothing' option, both the options being considered would assist in regional employment during the construction of the Project and would also reduce travel times to regional areas as well as improving access to the Grampians and enhancing tourism potential.

In relation to Clause 12 (Environmental and Landscape Values), both options would require the removal of native vegetation, however, Option 1 has been aligned to the south of Langi Ghiran State Park in order to reduce potential impacts.

When assessing the impacts of Clause 14 (Natural Resource Management), both options are considered to have some impact on agricultural land when compared to the existing Western Highway alignment.

The Pyrenees Municipal Strategic Statement (Clause 21.05) seeks to encourage highway service facilities within Beaufort along both sides of the Western Highway. Whilst the Project commences west of the Beaufort township, it is noted that the Red Roo Service Centre is a major truck stop along the Western Highway. Both options seek to retain existing access arrangements to this service centre.

Clause 22.06 of the Pyrenees Planning Scheme seeks to conserve and enhance existing vegetation throughout the Shire wherever practicable. Both options would result in the loss of vegetation directly north of Box's Cutting. The quality and extent of this vegetation has been assessed as part of the Biodiversity and Habitat Impact Assessment (Technical Appendix H) and losses would be subject to Net Gain requirements.

The Project supports the Settlement and Housing Clause within the Ararat Planning Scheme in that it provides for improved access and opportunities to the Ararat township. In addition, both options provide for a bypass of the Buangor township, thereby improving safety and amenity of residents. The removal of heavy vehicles from the centre of Buangor could make the town more attractive for future development. It is noted there are many residential allotments within the town which are yet to be developed and it is not envisaged that either of

the options would result in sufficiently increased development pressure on the town which would require land zoned Farming to be rezoned for residential purposes.

Clause 21.05 (Economic Development) of the Ararat Planning Scheme and outlines the importance of the Western Highway for access and exposure to commercial enterprises closer to the Ararat township. Both options are the same at the western end of the alignment and seek to maintain access to the existing Renewable Energy Park and aerodrome. This access would be similar to a 'do nothing' option, however the Project would result in improved safety measures along the new carriageways.

8.7 Risk Assessment

An environmental risk assessment was undertaken on the Project options to identify key environmental

issues associated with the construction and operation of the Project. The methodology for this risk assessment has been described in Chapter 4 (EES Assessment Framework and Approach to Investigation).

A risk assessment report that explains the process in detail and contains the complete Project risk register has also been included as Technical Appendix Q.

Table 8-2 shows a summary of the following in relation to planning and land use:

- The impact pathways identified; and
- A description of the consequence of each impact pathway.

Table 8-2 Planning and land use risks

Risk No.	Impact Pathway	Consequence Description
PLU1	The Project affects existing infrastructure (including wind farm infrastructure) or utility services, including fibre optic cables, overhead electricity lines, underground water pipelines, and the Ballarat-Ararat Railway line	The safe and efficient operation or maintenance of the utility or infrastructure is disrupted during construction, with services being realigned along the new carriageway median, affecting continued service, and ongoing ability to safely maintain the utility. Whilst Option 2 extends within the Chalicum Hills Wind Farm property, it does not impact on existing infrastructure.
PLU2	Potential impact on short term and longer term use of land for farming / agricultural purposes resulting from acquisition and potential for land use change (Option 1)	Acquisition would be limited to the edge of property boundaries where possible, but some areas of land at the following Property No.s would be separated from the balance of the title due to the Project: 1106, 1295, 1296, 1314, 1483, 1491, 1506, 1504, 1505, 1517, 1519, 1516, and 1523. In each of these instances, the severed parcels of land would no longer be viable for grazing without mitigation measures in place.
PLU3	Potential impact on short term and longer term use of land for farming / agricultural purposes resulting from acquisition and potential for land use change (Option 2)	Acquisition would be limited to the edge of property boundaries where possible, but some areas of land at the following Property No.s would be separated from the balance of the title due to the Project: 1106, 1295, 1296, 1297, 1439, 1440, 1443, 1460, 1459, 1499 and 1503. In each of these instances, the severed parcels of land would no longer be viable to graze without mitigation measures in place. Property No.s 1496, 1497, 1498 have been developed as a rural residential holding and would be wholly acquired for the purposes of Option 2.
PLU5	Potential for inconsistency with planning policies and schemes including the Pyrenees and Ararat Planning Schemes	The Project would result in severance of some land parcels smaller than the minimum lot sizes and loss of native vegetation, including habitat corridors. The importance of the Western Highway is recognised as a major freight / arterial route by both the Pyrenees and Ararat Councils. Accordingly, access and connectivity along the highway should be maintained. The Bypass of Buangor has the potential to improve amenity of the town and attract future growth. The potential construction of the freeway to the north of the town could result in requests to rezone land on the northern side of the highway from a Farming to Township Zone.

8.8 Environmental Management Measures

VicRoads has a standard set of environmental management measures which are typically incorporated into its construction contracts for road works and bridge works. These measures have been used as the starting point for the assessment of construction related risks and described in detail in Chapter 21 (Environmental Management Framework). In some instances, additional Project

specific environmental management measures have been recommended to reduce risks.

Management measures specific to each identified planning and land use risk, and the residual risk rating after these environmental management measures have been applied, are outlined in Table 8-3 and in Chapter 21 (Environmental Management Framework).

Table 8-3 Planning and land use environmental management measures and residual risk

Risk No.	Environmental management measures	Residual risk
PLU1	Relocation of the assets would be undertaken in accordance with provider requirements. Where practicable, assets would be kept within the road reserve. Easements would be sought in private freehold property as necessary. Services to be located outside of clear zone where within the road reserve. Relocation of assets would be undertaken in accordance with VicRoads Contract Shell requirements 1140.02, 1140.03	Medium
PLU2	Alternate access arrangements would be made. Compensation would be paid to landowners associated with the loss of land and impact on farming operations. Allotments would be consolidated where possible in the one landownership.	Medium
PLU3	Alternate access arrangements would be made. Compensation would be paid to landowners associated with the loss of land and impact on farming operations. Allotments would be consolidated where possible in the one landownership.	Medium
PLU4	Alternate access arrangements would be made. Compensation would be paid to landowners associated with the loss of land and impact on farming operations. Allotments would be consolidated where possible in the one landownership.	Medium
PLU5	Inappropriate development of allotments is controlled by Clause 22.01 of the Pyrenees Planning Scheme. Consideration would be given to consolidation of allotments where appropriate.	Medium

8.8.1 Residual Risks

Following implementation of the recommended mitigation measures, there are not expected to be any significant impacts, with the overall risk relating to planning and land use being medium.

8.9 Planning Scheme Amendments

In addition to the EES, planning approvals are required to facilitate the Project under the zone and overlay provisions of the Pyrenees and Ararat Planning Schemes, as outlined in the Planning and Land Use Assessment (Section 6.4.5 of Technical Appendix C). Further, VicRoads cannot compulsorily acquire land under the *Land Acquisition and Compensation Act 1986* unless the land is first reserved via a 'planning instrument'. In a planning scheme, a 'Public Acquisition Overlay' is the appropriate planning instrument to facilitate the acquisition of land.

A Public Acquisition Overlay (PAO) can only be included in the Pyrenees and Ararat Planning

Schemes via a Planning Scheme Amendment (PSA). In addition to applying a PAO to the Project area, the PSA for the Project can provide for permit exemptions.

Accordingly, a PSA would be required to the Pyrenees and Ararat Planning Schemes that:

- Applies a PAO over the area to be acquired for the Project;
- Provides for site specific permit exemptions under Clause 52.03 (Specific Sites and Exclusions) for the Project; and
- Introduces an Incorporated Document under Clause 81.01 (Table of documents incorporated in the scheme) that details approvals requirements (such as compliance with a CEMP).

As per the above, a draft PSA has been prepared for both the Pyrenees and Ararat Planning Schemes to be exhibited along with the EES and is included in Technical Appendix C. The draft documents include one explanatory report which is common to both planning schemes and tailored Schedules to both schemes. The draft amendment documents will be

exhibited with one set of Public Acquisition Overlay maps for Option 1 and a second set of Public Acquisition Overlay Maps for Option 2. A summary of the proposed planning scheme amendment process for the Project is provided in Figure 3-6 in Chapter 3 (Project Approval Requirements).

8.10 Conclusion

The Project as a whole would not result in any significant planning or land use impacts. The majority of impacts would be experienced in the construction phase and are short term only. These include potential impacts on existing infrastructure due to the temporary relocation and/or disconnection of services including the power line

and the fibre optic cable which extend along the existing Western Highway and traffic disruptions.

In regard to land acquisition and severance of properties, Option 1 and Option 2 result in similar outcomes as discussed in Section 8.6.2.2. However, on balance, Option 2 has the least land severance impacts due to the alignment primarily extending along property boundaries adjacent to the existing highway and the railway line. Whilst the overall value of resources impacted is moderate, the consequences of impact are able to be mitigated to a low level, thereby resulting in a low overall planning and land use impact.

