REFERRAL OF A PROJECT FOR A DECISION ON THE NEED FOR ASSESSMENT UNDER THE *ENVIRONMENT EFFECTS ACT 1978*

REFERRAL FORM

The *Environment Effects Act 1978* provides that where proposed works may have a significant effect on the environment, either a proponent or a decision-maker may refer these works (or project) to the Minister for Planning for advice as to whether an Environment Effects Statement (EES) is required.

This Referral Form is designed to assist in the provision of relevant information in accordance with the *Ministerial Guidelines for assessment of environmental effects under the Environment Effects Act 1978* (Seventh Edition, 2006). Where a decision-maker is referring a project, they should complete a Referral Form to the best of their ability, recognising that further information may need to be obtained from the proponent.

It will generally be useful for a proponent to discuss the preparation of a Referral with the Impact Assessment Unit (IAU) at the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP) before submitting the Referral.

If a proponent believes that effective measures to address environmental risks are available, sufficient information could be provided in the Referral to substantiate this view. In contrast, if a proponent considers that further detailed environmental studies will be needed as part of project investigations, a more general description of potential effects and possible mitigation measures in the Referral may suffice.

In completing a Referral Form, the following should occur:

- Mark relevant boxes by changing the font colour of the 'cross' to black and provide additional information and explanation where requested.
- As a minimum, a brief response should be provided for each item in the Referral Form, with a more detailed response provided where the item is of particular relevance. Cross-references to sections or pages in supporting documents should also be provided. Information need only be provided once in the Referral Form, although relevant cross-referencing should be included.
- Responses should honestly reflect the potential for adverse environmental effects. A Referral will only be accepted for processing once IAU is satisfied that it has been completed appropriately.
- Potentially significant effects should be described in sufficient detail for a reasonable conclusion to be drawn on whether the project could pose a significant risk to environmental assets. Responses should include:
    - a brief description of potential changes or risks to environmental assets resulting from the project;
    - available information on the likelihood and significance of such changes;
    - the sources and accuracy of this information, and associated uncertainties.
- Any attachments, maps and supporting reports should be provided in a secure folder with the Referral Form.
- A CD or DVD copy of all documents will be needed, especially if the size of electronic documents may cause email difficulties. **Individual documents should not exceed 2MB as they will be published on the Department's website.**

- A completed form would normally be between 15 and 30 pages in length. Responses should not be constrained by the size of the text boxes provided. Text boxes should be extended to allow for an appropriate level of detail.
- The form should be completed in MS Word and not handwritten.

The party referring a project should submit a covering letter to the Minister for Planning together with a completed Referral Form, attaching supporting reports and other information that may be relevant. This should be sent to:

Postal address

Minister for Planning
GPO Box 2392
MELBOURNE VIC 3001

Couriers

Minister for Planning
Level 20, 1 Spring Street
MELBOURNE VIC 3001

In addition to the submission of the hardcopy to the Minister, separate submission of an electronic copy of the Referral via email to ees.referrals@delwp.vic.gov.au is required. This will assist the timely processing of a referral.

PART 1 PROPONENT DETAILS, PROJECT DESCRIPTION & LOCATION

1. Information on proponent and person making Referral

Name of Proponent:	Beveridge Property Management Services Pty Limited
Authorised person for proponent: **Position:** **Postal address:** **Email address:** **Phone number:** **Facsimile number:**	Michael Barrow General Manager, Delivery Level 27, 45 Clarence Street Sydney Michael.barrow@qube.com.au (02) 9080 1900
Person who prepared Referral: **Position:** **Organisation:** **Postal address:** **Email address:** **Phone number:** **Facsimile number:**	Sarah Horsfield Director Urbis Level 12, 120 Collins Street Melbourne Sarah.horsfield@urbis.com.au (03) 8663 4888
Available industry & environmental expertise: (areas of 'in-house' expertise & consultancy firms engaged for project)	**Project Team Consultants:** • Ecology and Heritage Partners (Biodiversity, Cultural Heritage) • Urbis (Planning and Economics) • Nicholas and Alexander Architects (Industrial Architect) • SMEC (Engineering) • Arcadis (Engineering) • GTA Consultants (Traffic Assessment) • Marshall Day (Acoustic)

2. Project – brief outline

Project title: Beveridge Intermodal Freight Terminal
Project location: Beveridge, Victoria
Short project description Development of an intermodal freight terminal and associated precinct infrastructure including: • Intermodal terminals for the processing of both import/export (IMEX) and interstate freight including containers and bulk commodities • Hardstands and rail track, arrival/departure sidings for trains up to 1,800 metres in length • Locomotive refuelling areas • Associated truck loading and circulation areas • Distribution centres and warehousing

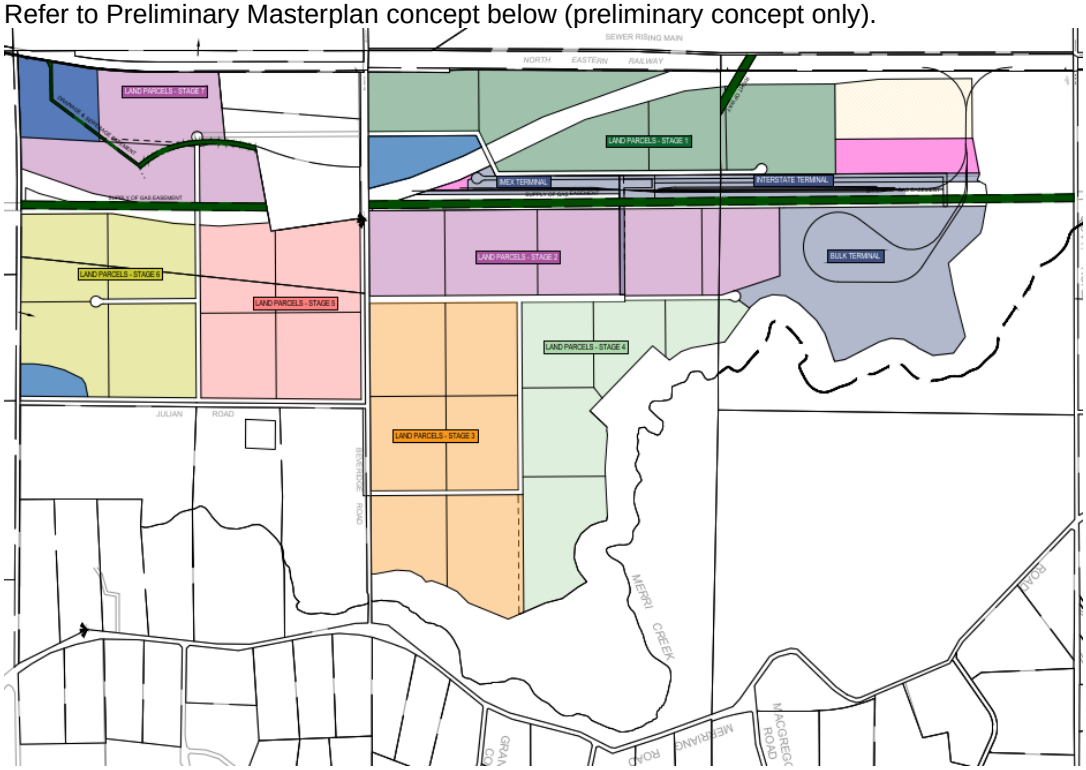
3. Project description

Aim/objectives of the project:
Early delivery of the Beveridge Intermodal Freight Terminal and employment hub, in accordance with Plan Melbourne, the Northern Growth Corridor Plan, and the Victorian Freight Strategy.

Background/rationale of project
The Victorian Freight Plan, *Delivering the Goods* (2018), proposes the establishment of a network of interconnected freight terminals across the metropolitan area to support Victoria's significant projected growth in freight movements. The plan anticipates the delivery of two major intermodal facilities in the north and west of Melbourne, with the Western Interstate Freight Terminal (WIFT) expected to support existing distribution centres, while the Beveridge Intermodal Freight Terminal will service regional and interstate freight and connect directly into the Inland Rail project.

The project is identified in metropolitan planning policy as a "state-significant transport gateway" and is strongly supported for focused investment, employment, and growth.

Main components of the project
Refer to Preliminary Masterplan concept below (preliminary concept only).



Ancillary components of the project
Ancillary components of the project are to be determined once the land use details, tenancy requirements, and surrounding area requirements have been developed.

Key construction activities:
Construction of terminal facilities, warehousing and supporting precinct infrastructure.

It is anticipated that the initial construction period for stage 1 would likely be in the order of 2 years from planning approval.

Key operational activities:
Operation of rail terminals, distribution centres and warehousing, and supporting services and amenities. In line with the significant freight task to be undertaken at the facility, 24/7 operation is expected.

Key decommissioning activities (if applicable): N/A

Is the project an element or stage in a larger project?

☒ **No** ☐ Yes

The proposal is to develop the project in its entirety, however the construction of the BIFT will be 'phased' in line with market demand.

Is the project related to any other past, current or mooted proposals in the region?

☒ **No** ☐ Yes If yes, please identify related proposals.

Both the Beveridge Intermodal and Western Interstate Freight Terminal represent vital pieces of state significant infrastructure, playing discrete but complementary roles in the realisation of the Victorian Freight Strategy.

With the forthcoming completion of the Inland Rail Project by the Federal Government in 2025, BIFT is of particular significance in establishing a strategic gateway to the national economy and a crucial link and priority for Australia's supply chain network. In a metropolitan sense it is also an essential component of the state's freight solution, given its position in a highly connected and rapid growth region and its role in supporting the movement of freight across the northern, central and southeastern regions of Melbourne.

4. Project alternatives

Brief description of key alternatives considered to date
Alternative site locations for the proposal were not considered, as the site has been repeatedly earmarked as the location of the future BIFT in Plan Melbourne and the Northern Growth Corridor Plan. It is also recognised in the VPA's program of PSPs as forming part of the Northern Freight Terminal PSP.

The conceptual layout of the proposal within the site has been designed in careful response to the environmental values of the site.

These values are documented in the biodiversity assessment (Biodiversity Assessment of the Proposed Beveridge Intermodal Freight Terminal, Ecology and Heritage Partners, March 2020), which confirm that the environmental values of the site are focused around:

- Merri Creek and its environs;
- Conservation Area 34 which is located along the western side of the Merri Creek;
- 15 scattered native trees, including seven River Red-gums;
- Hearnes Swamp in the north-west corner of the site, which has been extensively grazed, with cattle hoofs resulting in extensive soil pugging.

Areas of current wetlands have also been modelled by DELWP on the site, however EHP has found no evidence of environmental values in these areas due to their extensive use in agricultural activities.

Targeted surveys for Growling Grass Frog, Golden Sun Moth and the EPBC Act-listed Seasonal Herbaceous Wetlands (Freshwater) of the Temperate Lowland Plains were also undertaken and did not record/observe any species or the ecological community.

The site design seeks to minimise impacts on the areas of environmental value noted above, with the development footprint largely avoiding encroachment into these areas.

Brief description of key alternatives to be further investigated (if known)**:**

N/A

6. Project implementation

Implementing organisation: Beveridge Property Management Services Pty Ltd

Implementation timeframe: Proponent is ready to commence construction as soon as project approvals are in place. Completion of Stage 1 of the facility expected by 2022, assuming an expedited approvals process is put in place.

Proposed staging (if applicable): To be developed in line with market demand.

7. Description of proposed site or area of investigation

Has a preferred site for the project been selected?

☐ No ☒ **Yes**

General description of preferred site

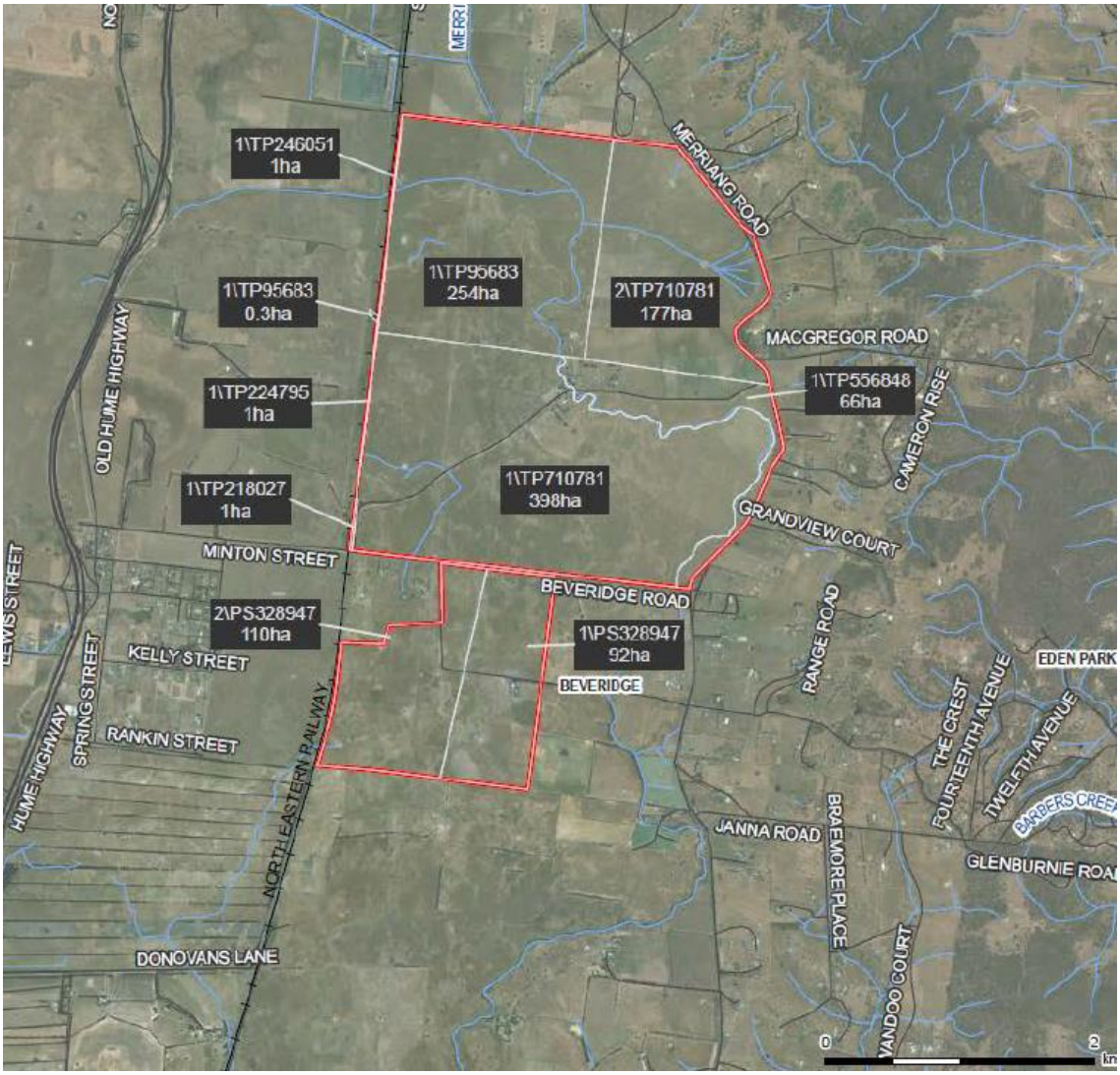
The proposed site is located east of Beveridge township, and comprises two major parcels:

- Mossrock (202ha)
- Camoola (898ha)

The Mossrock area corresponds to Certificate of Title Volume 10217, Folio 426 and the Camoola area corresponds to two titles:

- Lots 1 and 2 on Title Plan 7100781V within Certificate of Title, Volume 09511, Folio 339,
- Lot 1 on Title Plan 095683U within Certificate of Title, Volume 09511, Folio 338.

It is noted that some land within the Camoola titles is outside the Urban Growth Boundary (designated Green Wedge Zone). **All proposed development is limited to areas within the UGB (i.e. land west of Merri Creek).**



Site area : 1100ha

Route length (for linear infrastructure) …N/A……. (km) **and width** …….. (m)

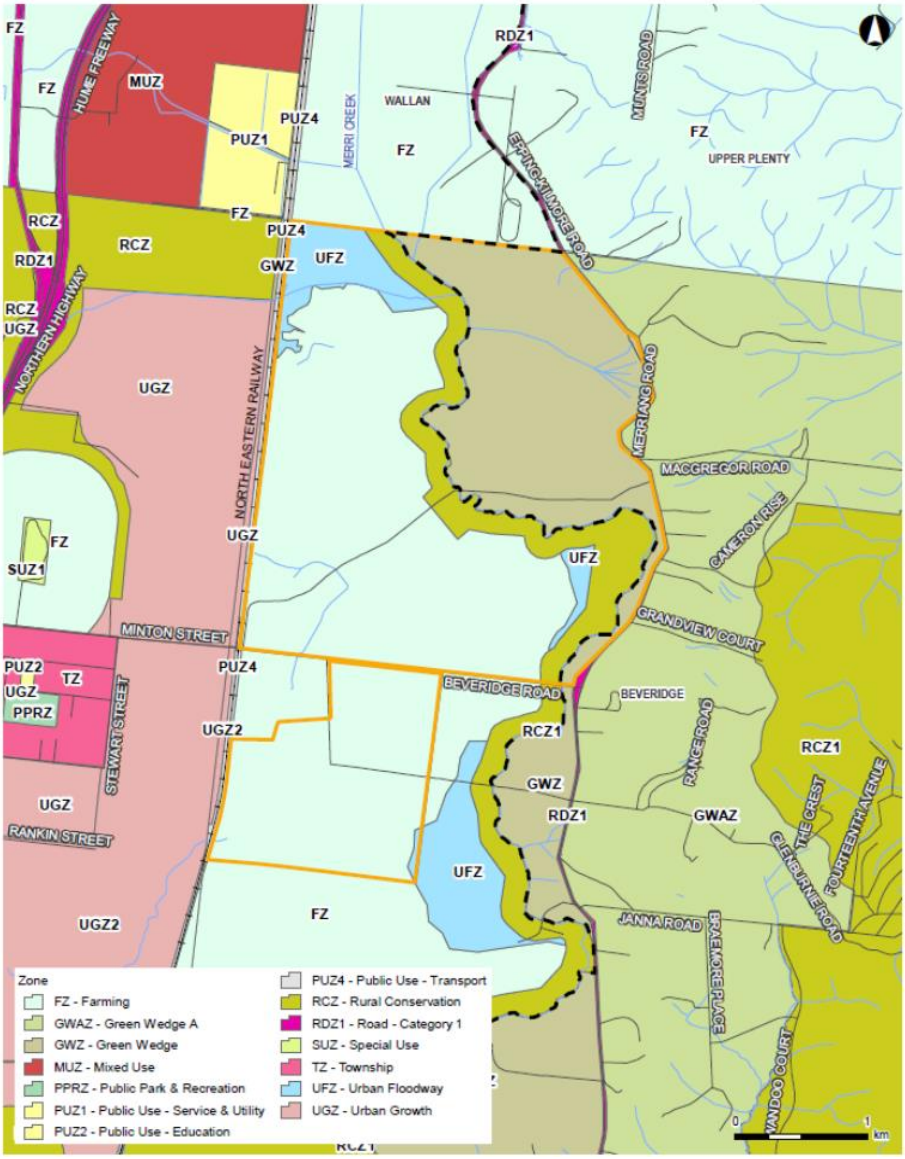
Current land use and development:
Farming land.

Description of local setting
Undeveloped rural land, situated inside the Urban Growth Boundary (UGB) and proposed for future urban growth. Land to the west is planned for future residential development as part of the Beveridge East PSP. Land to the immediate north and south forms part of the Northern Freight PSP area. Land further east beyond Merri Creek is outside the UGB and zoned for green wedge purposes.

Planning context

The majority of the site is presently included in a Farming Zone. Land in the north-west corner of the site is included in an Urban Floodway Zone, while land along the Merri Creek is included in a Rural Conservation Zone. The Urban Growth Boundary is defined along the alignment of the Merri Creek. All land east of Merri Creek is included in a Green Wedge Zone. A Public Use Zone (Transport) applies along the western site boundary, aligned with the north eastern rail corridor.

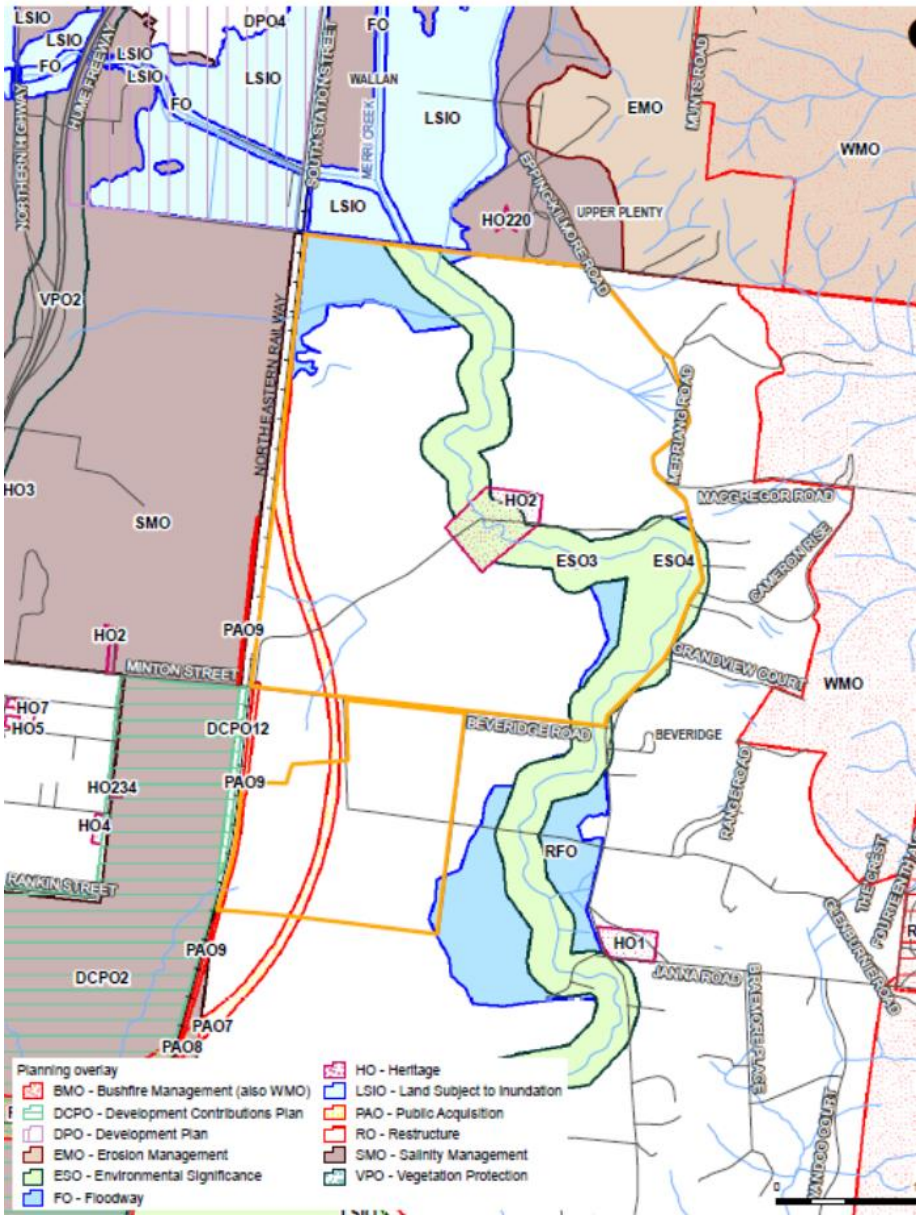
Current Zoning



Various planning overlays apply to the land including:

- Environmental Significance Overlay
- Public Acquisition Overlay
- Heritage Overlay
- Rural Floodway Overlay

Planning Overlays



Local government area(s): City of Whittlesea

8. Existing environment

Overview of key environmental assets/sensitivities in project area and vicinity

BIFT integrates with Melbourne's rail freight system including interstate and intrastate services and port shuttle services via the existing rail reserve and track along the west boundary of the Site. Key existing and planned surrounding rail infrastructure includes Inland Rail, the Port of Melbourne/Port rail shuttles, the NE Rail Line Upgrade and the Craigieburn Line upgrade to a metropolitan service.

The main road network access is via the Hume Freeway with current access via Beveridge Road-Minton Street and the Old Hume Highway/Lithgow Street Interchange. The future Outer Metropolitan Road (OMR) / E6 Corridor is located to the south with these two key road links making up the spine of the principal freight network (PFN) in the corridor. Much of the existing local and sub-arterial road network near the Site is rural in nature or in relatively undeveloped

form, and is to be upgraded over time in line with the development of neighbouring Precinct Structure Plans.

Aerial photography of the subject site and surrounds indicates a number of existing noise-sensitive dwellings in proximity to the subject site boundary. The nearest receivers to proposed site infrastructure consist of a limited number of dwellings located between 100 and 150 m from the site boundary, to the north of the site and between the northern and southern sections of the site.

In the broader area around the site, the Beveridge township is located approximately 815 metres to the west of the subject site and features a number of dwellings. There are also a number of dwellings located along Hadfield and Merriang Roads to the east of the site (near to the site boundary but in excess of 500 metres from proposed site infrastructure).

The Merri Creek flows through the Camoola site, from the north-west corner to the south-east corner of the land. The site is subject to flooding and portions of the site have been included in a Rural Floodway Overlay and Urban Floodway Zone.

The site is highly undulating, with the lowest points being along approximately the northern 600 metres of the site and towards the eastern boundary where Merri Creek changes direction from being east-west to north-south. The highest point is along a short ridgeline between the existing farmhouse and sheds, and the sites eastern boundary. The remainder of the site is relatively level.

The only native vegetation within the site are 15 eucalypts, a very sparse (i.e. less than 1%) coverage of native herbs, grasses and rushes distributed throughout the site and limited native reeds and other species within Merri Creek. The remining site is covered with exotic pasture grasses and planted exotic trees around the farmhouse and sheds. Ten different species of noxious weeds under the CaLP Act are also present within the site.

An Aboriginal and Historical Heritage Assessment has been conducted by Ecology and Heritage Partners, which indicates there have been 69 Aboriginal Places and 31 historical heritage places previously recorded within a 3 km radius of the study area.

9. Land availability and control

Is the proposal on, or partly on, Crown land?

☒ **No** ☒ Yes

Current land tenure: The land is freehold land.

Intended land tenure To be confirmed.

Other interests in affected land

- A main gas pipeline runs north-south through the subject land, 570m east of the western site boundary, within a 35m wide easement.
- A public acquisition overlay extends into the site from the western boundary to provide for the alignment of the future high-speed rail connection.

10. Required approvals

State and Commonwealth approvals required for project components (if known):
To facilitate the use and development of the land for an intermodal facility, an Amendment to the Whittlesea Planning Scheme will be required to rezone the land from the current Farming Zone to an appropriate zone.

No Commonwealth approvals are anticipated to be required.

The proposed zoning framework is yet to be resolved, but it may comprise some form of special purpose zone (Comprehensive Development Zone or Special Use Zone) that is tailored to allow the use and development of the land for an intermodal facility and associated industrial/commercial uses.

The Planning Scheme Amendment may also introduce appropriate overlay controls to the site to deal with environmental, landscape, flooding, infrastructure contributions and siting/design issues. It is anticipated that the zoning framework may also specify requirements for the preparation and approval of various technical reports and/or management plans prior to the issue of a permit for use or development on the land (ie: Environmental Management Plan, Cultural Heritage Management Plan, Sustainability Management Plan, Integrated Transport Plan, etc).

The Planning Scheme Amendment will be required to be approved by the Minister for Planning.

Once the land is rezoned, planning permits will be required for the development of the site. Any conditions and requirements for the development that are described in the zoning framework will be required to be addressed at the planning permit stage.

Have any applications for approval been lodged?

☒ **No** ☐ Yes If yes, please provide details.

Approval agency consultation (agencies with whom the proposal has been discussed):
Victorian State Government:

- Department of Transport (Freight and Ports);
- Freight Victoria;
- Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning.

Federal Government:

- Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Cities and Regional Development

Other agencies consulted:
Australian Rail Track Corporation

PART 2 POTENTIAL ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS

11. Potentially significant environmental effects

Overview of potentially significant environmental effects

The Biodiversity Assessment of the Proposed Beveridge Intermodal Freight Terminal (Ecology and Heritage Partners, March 2020) identified 15 native scattered trees within the site, including seven River Red-gums, six Swamp Gums, one Manna Gum and one dead eucalypt stag as part of the site assessment in July 2019. No native vegetation patches were identified as part of the site assessment. There are five patches of Current Wetlands (i.e. a modelled layer created by DELWP) of various sizes across the site, with one of these also being identified as an EPBC Act-listed Seasonal Herbaceous Wetlands (Freshwater) of the Temperate Lowland Plains ecological community (and also known as Hearnes Swamp). Targeted surveys for the Growling Grass Frog, Golden Sun Moth and the above-mentioned ecologcal community were undertaken in line with the Biodiversity Assessment's recommendations.

The targeted surveys were carried out by Ecology and Heritage Partners between November 2019 and January 2020 in line with relevant survey guidelines, however no observations of these species' of ecological community were recorded during the targerted surveys. The targeted survey for the Growling Grass Frog was undertaken on three separate nights in December 2019 and was in accordance with the *Significant Impact Guidelines for the Vulnerable Growling Grass Frog* (DEWHA 2009). The Golden Sun Moth targeted survey was undertaken on five separate occasions between November 2019 and early-January 2020 and complied with the survey requirements in the *Significant Impact Guidelines for the Critically Endangered Golden Sun Moth* (DEWAH 2009). One site assessment was undertaken for the area identified as the Seasonal Herbaceous Wetlands (Freshwater) of the Temperate Lowland Plains ecological community (i.e. Hearnes Swamp) in early November 2019, with the appropriate seasonal timeframe to undertake this assessment being mid-October to early November.

The proposed development is very unlikely to have any significant adverse effects on the ecological values within the site, as all but one tree (a Swamp Gum) are proposed to be retained (i.e. Tree number 1 on Figure 3 of the Biodiversity Assessment report). The development footprint will avoid Merri Creek and the area designated as Conservation Area 34 and all land east of Merri Creek.

Beneficial ecological outcomes are expected as part of the development, as the cattle currently grazing the site will be removed. The cattle negatively impact the site, causing extensive soil pugging and problems along Merri Creek through bank soil erosion, water sedimentation and defication. Removing the cattle will therefore allow Merri Creek to recover and provide more suitable habitat for native aquatic and riparian species such as the Growling Grass Frog.

An Aboriginal and Historical Heritage Assessment has been conducted by Ecology and Heritage Partners, which indicates there have been 69 Aboriginal Places and 31 historical heritage places previously recorded within a 3 km radius of the study area.

Four Aboriginal sites and three historical places were located in the study area. The desktop assessment concluded that artefact scatters, low-density artefact distributions and scarred trees were the most likely type of Aboriginal heritage places to be present in the study area. It was also identified that the stony rise landform may be present, with which Aboriginal places are often associated. With regards to historical places, Domestic Sites, Dry Stone Walls, Tree Plantings, Farming and Pastoral Sites, and Rail Infrastructure Site were identified as the types of historical heritage places most likely to occur within the site. Site inspections were undertaken in July 2019 and September 2019.

An Operational Noise Considerations memo has been prepared by Marshall Day Acoustics (April 2020), indicating that environmental noise will be considered as an input into the detailed master planning and design development of the site. Detailed modelling and compliance assessments will be required as the design and planning of the project progresses. A key objective of this process will be to make the best practical use of layout and building form to address operational and

environmental considerations including noise. This will involve detailed modelling and assessments accounting for a range of variables including the site design, projected operational profile, land zoning and evolution of potential surrounding land uses, as is typical of future planning stages.

A Traffic and Transport Assessment has been prepared by GTA Consultants (April 2020) which provides a high-level traffic and transport assessment of the BIFT, its policy consistency, and expected short, medium and long-term traffic volumes, as trade throughput grows and the Site progressively develops over time. The results show that the expected traffic volumes can be safely and efficiently handled by the road network assuming an appropriate and staged set of road and intersection upgrades occur in line with development at the Site over time.

12. Native vegetation, flora and fauna

Native vegetation

Is any native vegetation likely to be cleared or otherwise affected by the project?

☐ NYD ☐ No ☒ **Yes** If yes, answer the following questions and attach details.

Refer to attached Biodiversity Assessment Report (Ecology and Heritage Partners, March 2020).

What investigation of native vegetation in the project area has been done?

Refer to attached Biodiversity Assessment Report (Ecology and Heritage Partners, March 2020). This includes the results of the targeted surveys that were undertaken to ascertain the presence/absence of Growling Grass Frog, Golden Sun Moth, and Seasonal Herbaceous Wetlands (Freshwater) of the Temperate Lowland Plains during the period November 2019 to January 2020.

What is the maximum area of native vegetation that may need to be cleared?

☒ NYD **Estimated area**:

There will be no vegetation clearance within the area covered by the Guidelines given this is outside the development footprint of the project.

Within the Biodiversity Conservation Strategy area, the concept Masterplan seeks to avoid any encroachment on Conservation Area 34, and limits removal of native vegetation to several areas mapped as 'Current Wetlands' and one scattered tree, which is not a River Red-gum.

Within the Hearnes Swamp and 200 metre exclusion zone the development footprint of the Concept Masterplan is yet to be finalised, however it is anticipated that some areas mapped as 'Current Wetlands' will be impacted (approximately 8ha). The Biodiversity Assessment Report (Ecology and Heritage Partners, March 2020), found that there was very little native vegetation observed within these Current Wetland areas.

How much of this clearing would be authorised under a Forest Management Plan or Fire Protection Plan?

☒ **N/A** ……. approx. percent (if applicable)

A Forest Management Plan or Fire Protection Plan do not apply to the site.

Which Ecological Vegetation Classes may be affected?

☐ NYD ☒ Preliminary/**Detailed assessment completed**. If assessed, please list.

Tall Marsh (EVC 821) occurs along Merri Creek within the BCS Conservation area. The Concept Masterplan does not encroach upon this area. The scattered trees identified as part of the field assessment are allocated to Plains Grassy Woodland (EVC 55) or Swampy Riparian Woodland (EVC 83).

Have potential vegetation offsets been identified as yet?

☐ NYD ☒ **Yes** If yes, please briefly describe.

Based on DELWP's interactive NVIM tool that calculates the total habitat compensation fee for areas in the BCS (ie west of Merri Creek) a total of **$6,210,773.92** (GST inclusive) would apply to the study area if all vegetation within the BCS is impacted/cleared.

This value is very indicative, as the NVIM model does not exclude Hearnes Swamp and the 200m buffer zone around it from the fee (which needs to be calculated separately). Furthermore, subject to DELWP approval, the habitat compensation obligation fee could be also be restricted to the development footprint and not assume total land parcel impacts.

An EnSym report has been prepared to calculate vegetation offsets for land to the east of Merri Creek, which is covered by Clause 52.17 of the Planning Scheme. The EnSym report is included at Appendix 3 of the Biodiversity Assessment Report (March 2020) prepared by EHP. This report was produced as a worst case scenario, assuming all vegetation was removed. The project does not contemplate **any** vegetation removal on land east of Merri Creek, as the development footprint is wholly contained on land to the west of the creek. The EnSym report is therefore not pertinent to the project's assessment.

Other information/comments? (eg. accuracy of information)

Flora and fauna

What investigations of flora and fauna in the project area have been done?

A full biodiversity assessment was carried out for the site in July 2019 to ascertain the ecological values of the site, the policy and legislation implications and whether targeted flora and/or fauna surveys should be undertaken. This assessment recorded 47 flora species (14 indigenous and 33 non-indigenous). No recorded species were of national significance and only one species was of state significance (Salt Paperbark), however it is planted, indigenous to western Victoria and along the site's eastern boundary where no development is proposed.

Three different targeted surveys were recommended as part of the biodiversity assessment, being for the Growling Grass Frog, Golden Sun Moth and Seasonal Herbaceous Wetlands (Freshwater) of the Temperate Lowland Plains ecological community. These surveys were undertaken between November 2019 to January 2020 in accordance with survey guidelines. Neither fauna species nor the ecological community were recorded/observed during the targeted surveys.

Have any threatened or migratory species or listed communities been recorded from the local area?

☐ NYD ☐ No ☒ **Yes** If yes, please:

- List species/communities recorded in recent surveys and/or past observations.

Refer to attached Biodiversity Assessment Report (Ecology and Heritage Partners, March 2020). Victorian Biodiversity Atlas data indicates that several listed flora and fauna species have been observed within ten kilometres of the study area.

- Indicate which of these have been recorded from the project site or nearby.

Refer to attached Biodiversity Assessment Report (Ecology and Heritage Partners, March 2020).

Targeted surveys were undertaken to ascertain the presence/absence of Growling Grass Frog, Golden Sun Moth, and Seasonal Herbaceous Wetlands (Freshwater) of the Temperate Lowland Plains between November 2019 to January 2020 within the study area. No observations of these species or ecological community were recorded during the targeted surveys.

If known, what threatening processes affecting these species or communities may be exacerbated by the project? (eg. loss or fragmentation of habitats) Please describe briefly.

The targeted surveys conducted in November 2019 through to January 2020 did not record the presence of Grass Frog, Golden Sun Moth or Seasonal Herbaceous Wetlands (Freshwater) of the Temperate Lowland Plains within the study area.

The removal of cattle from the study area will likely improve the condition of Merri Creek and the existing dams, and thus potentially encourage the return of the Growling Grass Frog to this section of Merri Creek. Any process that impacts Merri Creek (e.g. erosion/sedimentation, chemical runoff) may therefore be considered a threatening process during/post-development.

Are any threatened or migratory species, other species of conservation significance or listed communities potentially affected by the project?

☐ NYD ☒ **No** ☐ Yes If yes, please:

- List these species/communities:

The Biodiversity Assessment Report (Ecology and Heritage Partners, March 2020) recommended targeted surveys for the Growling Grass Frog, Golden Sun Moth and Seasonal Herbaceous Wetlands (Freshwater) of the Temperate Lowland Plains ecological community as part of its biodiversity assessment. No evidence of these species/ecological community were however recorded during the initial biodiversity assessment or targeted surveys.

The Biodiversity Assessment Report (Ecology and Heritage Partners, March 2020) does specify a moderate likelihood for Growling Grass Frog presence within the site based on suitable habitat in some locations along the creek and recent records in the area. However, Merri Creek is overall in relatively poor condition due to cattle eroding the banks, causing sedimentation along the creekline and defecating into/around it. The development would therefore improve creekline conditions by removing cattle from the property, and since the development will not encroach within the area designated as Conservation Area 34, the improved creekline will become a better-quality habitat for this species. Furthermore, this frog also occupies farm dams, which are largely concentrated east of Merri Creek and will therefore not be impacted.

The development will not impact the Golden Sun Moth, as its general footprint occupies land not associated with suitable habitat. That is, the Golden Sun Moth prefers native grasses (or as a substitute Chilean Needle Grass, which is a noxious weed) when flying in order to feed and find a mate. The grass species within the development footprint are exotic pasture grass species.

While no evidence of the Seasonal Herbaceous Wetlands (Freshwater) of the Temperate Lowland Plains ecological community was found, the development footprint will avoid a large majority of this area nonetheless.

- Indicate which species or communities could be subject to a major or extensive impact (including the loss of a genetically important population of a species listed or nominated for listing) Comment on likelihood of effects and associated uncertainties, if practicable.

The development would not have a major or extensive impact on the Growling Grass Frog, the Golden Sun Moth or the Seasonal Herbaceous Wetlands (Freshwater) of the Temperate Lowland Plains even if they were present for the reasons noted above.

Is mitigation of potential effects on indigenous flora and fauna proposed?

☐ NYD ☐ No ☒ **Yes** If yes, please briefly describe.

Refer to attached Biodiversity Assessment Report (Ecology and Heritage Partners, March 2020). Mitigation measures proposed include sensitive construction and micro-siting techniques, establishing Tree Protection Zones around trees to be retained, stockpiling construction materials and machinery away from areas of native vegetation, establishing best practice sedimentation and pollution control measures to prevent impacts to waterways and revegetating/landscaping with indigenous flora.

It is expected that these mitigation measures will be formalised as conditions of any planning permit issued for the use and development of the land. As part of the proponent's Amendment request to the responsible authority for rezoning of the site, the proposed zone schedule will also

include requirements for preparation of a Construction Management Plan and Environmental Management Plan to ensure environmental impacts are managed and mitigated in accordance with all relevant standards. It is anticipated that these measures will be formalised by DELWP/Council at the time the Amendment and any associated planning permits are considered and determined.

Other information/comments? (eg. accuracy of information)

13. Water environments

Will the project require significant volumes of fresh water (eg. > 1 Gl/yr)?

☐ NYD ☒ **No** ☐ Yes If yes, indicate approximate volume and likely source.

Yet to be determined, but likely to be similar volumes of other typical construction projects.

Will the project discharge waste water or runoff to water environments?

☐ NYD ☒ **No** ☐ Yes If yes, specify types of discharges and which environments.

An initial Stormwater Strategy Plan was completed, however a surface water assessment has not yet been completed.

Stormwater will be localised into the existing wetlands present on the site. Water treatment will take place in the wetlands in accordance with the Melbourne Water guidelines and standards. Water will then be discharged into Merri Creek through natural drainage lines and a new culvert.

Discharged water is unlikely to impact on the SEPP (Water) beneficial uses for water for Merri Creek as the stormwater will be treated to the appropriate standard before being discharged. Further, a “Permit to Discharge” will be sought from the relative authority.

The site is partially located within the Beveridge East DSS. Areas within the Beveridge East DSS will be designed in accordance with the DSS. Any locations outside of a defined DSS shall be developed by adopting the same design criteria as adopted within the Beveridge East DSS.

Stormwater quality is to be developed to meet Best Practice Environmental Management targets as outlined in the SEPP (Water). Stormwater quality is to be modelled with MUSIC in accordance with the Infrastructure design manual, Melbourne Water MUSIC modelling guidelines and the Melbourne Water Wetland Design Manual.

All design options will be assessed following the above processes. The preferred option has not yet been identified.

Are any waterways, wetlands, estuaries or marine environments likely to be affected?

☐ NYD ☐ No ☒ **Yes** If yes, specify which water environments, answer the following questions and attach any relevant details.

<u>Hearne’s Swamp</u>

Currently water flows through Hearne’s Swamp to Merri Creek, through natural drainage lines. Due to the implications of the long-term presence of livestock in the project area, the overall habitat quality of the swamp is low, and the area is devoid of relevant wetland flora species. Without intervention the native vegetation and ecosystem values of the swamp are unlikely to improve.

The project will include the construction of a culvert which will maintain water passage through the swamp to Merri Creek at a rate likely to be faster than the currently-occurring natural process. However water will continue to flow through the swamp and into Merri Creek and the project will not disrupt this process.

Merri Creek
The project will involve the construction of a culvert over existing drainage lines from Hearne's Swamp to Merri Creek. Merri Creek will be minimally impacted.

The streamflow through the swamp and drainage lines will likely increase in speed due to the increase of water flow through the culvert as opposed to reaching the creek naturally. This affect is likely to be minimal, and not expected to have downstream impacts.

Constructed waterbodies
There are a number of existing constructed waterbodies on the project site, mostly being farm dams. These are not proposed to be impacted by the project.

Are any of these water environments likely to support threatened or migratory species?
☐ NYD ☐ No ☒ **Yes** If yes, specify which water environments.

Based on several targeted surveys of Merri Creek (both within and in close proximity to the study area), the area has been determined as likely to support Growling Grass Frog. A 100m wide growling grass frog conservation area occurs either side of Merri Creek, along the Eastern boundary of the site. Additionally, drainage lines from the swamp have been identified as potential habitat for the growling grass frog and are likely to be used as habitat corridors for the species.

Vegetation within Hearnes Swamp did not meet condition thresholds to be considered EPBC Act-listed threatened ecological community Seasonal Herbaceous Wetlands (freshwater) of the temperate lowland plains, and is considered unlikely to contain threatened flora.

There are a number of constructed waterways exist on the site. Due to their proximity to Merri Creek, they have been identified as a potential breeding resource for the growling grass frog, with nearby drainage lines offering further accessibility between the dams and suitable habitat within the creek line. The majority if not all drainage lines are not proposed to be impacted by the project.

Potential habitat for the Latham's Snipe was found within the project site. However, due to agricultural disturbance, its presence is unlikely to be regular, and the swamp is not considered important habitat for this species.

Are any potentially affected wetlands listed under the Ramsar Convention or in 'A Directory of Important Wetlands in Australia'?
☐ NYD ☒ **No** ☐ Yes If yes, please specify.

There are no Ramsar listed sites in or within proximity of the study area. The Port Philip Bay and Bellarine Peninsula Ramsar site is the closest to the project site and is approximately 40 kms from the site.

Hearne's Swamp is not listed in the 'Directory of Important Wetlands in Australia'.

Could the project affect streamflows?
☐ NYD ☐ No ☒ **Yes** If yes, briefly describe implications for streamflows.

A hydrology assessment undertaken for the project indicates that the stream flows of Merri Creek will be affected by the project.

The construction of a culvert, which will transport water though Hearne's Swamp to Merri Creek, will increase the streamflow rate. These impacts are considered minimal and are unlikely to have downstream affects.

Additional temporary or permanent structures are yet to be confirmed (i.e.

bridges for vehicle access). Streamflow, sediment and erosion impacts will be considered.

Could regional groundwater resources be affected by the project?

☒ **NYD** ☐ No ☐ Yes If yes, describe in what way.

A groundwater assessment has not yet been completed. However, based on desktop information and a geotechnical assessment completed for the site, groundwater levels are expected to be variable across the site. Groundwater is expected to be shallower than 5 m below ground level in the following areas:

- The north of the site;
- the south-east corner of the site;
- A localised area in the west; and
- An area along Merri Creek.

Groundwater levels for the majority of the site is expected to be 5-10 m below ground level.

The geotechnical study identified that the subject site has not been subject to historical mining activity, and majority of the site has 'Extremely Low Probability of Occurrence of Acid Sulfate Soils'. The south-eastern part of the site has a 'Low Probability of Occurrence of Acid Sulfate Soils'. Although, it is important to note that there is a scoria quarry located south of Mount Fraser which is situated east of the subject site (approx. 1-1.5 kms from the western end of the site.

Minimal excavations, i.e. cut and fill are proposed for construction due to high amounts of subsurface rock present.

Changes to groundwater recharge are likely to occur due to the constructed project creating an increase in impervious surfaces in the project area. This is likely to increase flow of water into surface water channels and culverts, rather than seeping into the ground.

Could environmental values (beneficial uses) of water environments be affected?

☒ **NYD** ☐ No ☐ Yes If yes, identify waterways/water bodies and beneficial uses (as recognised by State Environment Protection Policies)

The beneficial uses of the present waterbodies and channels on the site are unlikely to be impacted. Construction works will be limited to minor extensions and construction of culverts. SEPP (Waters) water quality targets for upgraded discharge points will be confirmed with Port Phillip and Westernport catchment management authority and are proposed to be achieved using water quality control systems which will be confirmed through the finalisation of the design.

Site environmental controls will be applied to mitigate potential impacts on aquatic habitats during construction and consequently no impact to beneficial uses of the water environments are predicted.

During construction, works are required to comply with SEPP (Waters) for the protection of beneficial uses of waterbodies. Contractors will be required to undertake construction works in accordance with a CEMP to manage identified environmental risks to water quality and streamflow's. The CEMP will contain requirements and measures for monitoring and reporting any construction related impacts to waterbodies.

Could aquatic, estuarine or marine ecosystems be affected by the project?

☒ **NYD** ☐ No ☐ Yes If yes, describe in what way.

A review of the VicMap Groundwater Dependent Ecosystems (GDE) Atlas within the project site identified a number of GDEs present within the project area, primarily including Merri Creek.

The project proposes to build a culvert over Hearne's Swamp and drainage lines which discharge into Merri Creek. New constructed wetlands and retarding basins capturing runoff from the site will discharge into Merri Creek at various points along the boundary between the site and Merri Creek.

Is there a potential for extensive or major effects on the health or biodiversity of aquatic, estuarine or marine ecosystems over the long-term?

☒ **No** ☐ Yes If yes, please describe. Comment on likelihood of effects and associated uncertainties, if practicable.

Is mitigation of potential effects on water environments proposed?

☐ NYD ☐ No ☒ **Yes** If yes, please briefly describe.

Development design will avoid encroachment on the Merri Creek and preserve a sizeable buffer around the creek environment. An Integrated Water Management Strategy for the site will include on-site detention to mitigate stormwater runoff. Engineering design will seek to minimise impacts to flood zoned areas.

Other information/comments? (eg. accuracy of information)

14. Landscape and soils

Landscape

Has a preliminary landscape assessment been prepared?

☒ **No** ☐ Yes If yes, please attach.

A preliminary landscape assessment is a specific requirement for a referral of a wind energy facility, and is therefore not applicable to the proposal.

Is the project to be located either within or near an area that is:

- **Subject to a Landscape Significance Overlay or Environmental Significance Overlay?**
  ☐ NYD ☐ No ☒ **Yes** If yes, provide plan showing footprint relative to overlay.

  Refer to page 6 of this referral form for ESO maps

- **Identified as of regional or State significance in a reputable study of landscape values?**
  ☐ NYD ☒ **No** ☐ Yes If yes, please specify.

- **Within or adjoining land reserved under the *National Parks Act 1975* ?**
  ☐ NYD ☒ **No** ☐ Yes If yes, please specify.

- **Within or adjoining other public land used for conservation or recreational purposes ?**
  ☐ NYD ☒ **No** ☐ Yes If yes, please specify.

Is any clearing vegetation or alteration of landforms likely to affect landscape values?

☐ NYD ☒ **No** ☐ Yes If yes, please briefly describe.

Is there a potential for effects on landscape values of regional or State importance?

☐ NYD ☒ **No** ☐ Yes Please briefly explain response.

Is mitigation of potential landscape effects proposed?

☐ NYD ☒ **No** ☐ Yes If yes, please briefly describe.

Other information/comments? (eg. accuracy of information)

Note: A preliminary landscape assessment is a specific requirement for a referral of a wind energy facility. This should provide a description of:

- The landscape character of the site and surrounding areas including landform, vegetation types and coverage, water features, any other notable features and current land use;
- The location of nearby dwellings, townships, recreation areas, major roads, above-ground utilities, tourist routes and walking tracks;

- Views to the site and to the proposed location of wind turbines from key vantage points (including views showing existing nearby dwellings and views from major roads, walking tracks and tourist routes) sufficient to give a sense of the overall site in its setting.

Soils

Is there a potential for effects on land stability, acid sulphate soils or highly erodible soils?

☐ NYD ☐ No ☒ **Yes** If yes, please briefly describe.

Land Stability

- Steep slopes are expected in areas adjacent to Merri Creek;
- The presence of weaker / softer material, shallow groundwater and steep slope may result in ground stability issue;
- Consideration of slope stability measures (i.e. flatter slope, retention system, slope surface stabilisation) should be given for any development around the Merri Creek area;

Acid Sulphate Soils

A review of the Acid Sulphate Map (CSIRO Land and Water, 2020) indicates the majority of the site area has Extremely Low Probability of Occurrence of Acid Sulphate Soils. The south-eastern lobe of the site (specified as 'Open Recreational Space' in the masterplan) also has Low Probability of Occurrence of Acid Sulphate Soils.

Highly Erodible Soils

Merri Creek exhibits steep eroded banks. Hence erosion near creek is expected. Consideration of slope stability measures (i.e. flatter slopes, retention systems, slop surface stabilisation) will be given for any development around the Merri Creek area.

Any impacts arising from the site conditions above will be addressed in the Construction and Environmental Management Plan, which will be prepared by the project engineers as part of the Planning Scheme Amendment and Permit Application processes.

Are there geotechnical hazards that may either affect the project or be affected by it?

☐ NYD ☒ **No** ☐ Yes If yes, please briefly describe.

Geotechnical hazards include undulating rock outcrops and steep slopes in areas adjacent to Merri Creek.

Other information/comments? (eg. accuracy of information)

15. Social environments

Is the project likely to generate significant volumes of road traffic, during construction or operation?

☐ NYD ☐ No ☒ **Yes** If yes, provide estimate of traffic volume(s) if practicable.

The project is likely to generate increased volumes of traffic during construction and potentially significant volumes of road traffic during operations of the precinct in its ultimate state. The increase in operational traffic is likely to occur over an extended period, with minimal traffic volumes initially, up to significant traffic volumes in the scenario where terminal operations and warehousing operations are at capacity.

However, the site has been well established in state planning policy as the location for a major intermodal freight terminal, based on its excellent connectivity to existing and planned arterial and freight routes. It is therefore considered that the site and surrounding transport network is capable of accommodating the projected traffic generation. It is also noted that the future planning approval for the development is likely to include traffic mitigation conditions to ensure the operation of the road network and amenity of the surrounding area are not unreasonably impacted as a result of the development.

Refer to the attached Traffic and Transport Impact Memo (GTA Consultants, April 2020).

Is there a potential for significant effects on the amenity of residents, due to emissions of dust or odours or changes in visual, noise or traffic conditions?

☒ NYD ☒ No ☒ **Yes**

Potential for amenity impacts on future residential areas to the west of the site (primarily truck traffic and noise).

Traffic: The project is likely to generate increased volumes of traffic during construction and potentially significant volumes of road traffic during operations of the precinct in its ultimate state.

The results of the Traffic and Transport Impact Assessment (GTA Consultants, April 2020) show that the expected traffic volumes can be safely and efficiently handled by the road network assuming an appropriate and staged set of road and intersection upgrades occur in line with development at the Site over time. Further details will be determined during the planning process for the Site.

Traffic mitigation will be controlled and enforced through conditions included on any future planning approval for the development, to ensure the amenity of the surrounding area is not unreasonably impacted as a result of the development.

Noise: The preliminary noise assessment indicates that environmental noise will be an important consideration to feed into the master planning and design development of the site. Detailed modelling and compliance assessments will be required as the design and planning of the project progresses. A key objective of this process will be to make the best practical use of layout and building form to address operational and environmental considerations including noise. This will involve detailed modelling and assessments accounting for a range of variables including the site design, projected operational profile, land zoning and evolution of potential surrounding land uses.

Noise management measures are likely to consist of a combination of design and control measures implemented at the site, as well as offsite planning and targeted mitigation measures. Mitigation measures that are to be implemented within the site will be included as conditions of the planning permit for the project approval. Conditions requiring further acoustic monitoring once the site is operational may also form part of the permit approval.

Importantly, recognising the strategic significance of the infrastructure proposed at the site, suitable planning measures are likely to include planning controls applied to neighbouring development sites, consistent with the types of measures used in Melbourne for the protection of state and nationally significant freight transport infrastructure. This is particularly relevant to land associated with the Beveridge North East PSP, to the west of the subject site, which is in the early stages of planning.

The preliminary assessment, and the detailed studies that will be required subsequently, are framed by legislated policy requirements and common assessment standards referenced in Victoria. This assessment framework, and the level of investigation required to address environmental noise, applies irrespective of the selected approval pathway for the project.

Is there a potential for exposure of a human community to health or safety hazards, due to emissions to air or water or noise or chemical hazards or associated transport?

☒ **NYD** ☒ No ☒ Yes If yes, briefly describe the hazards and possible implications.

Noise: As with all noise emitting developments / operations, there is a risk that noise may cause nuisance or sleep disturbance if not properly mitigated. These risks will be addressed with reasonable strategic site layout planning and noise mitigation measures, as identified above.

Is there a potential for displacement of residences or severance of residential access to community resources due to the proposed development?

☒ NYD ☒ **No** ☒ Yes If yes, briefly describe potential effects.

Are non-residential land use activities likely to be displaced as a result of the project?
☐ NYD ☐ No ☒ **Yes** If yes, briefly describe the likely effects.

Current farming land use activities.

Do any expected changes in non-residential land use activities have a potential to cause adverse effects on local residents/communities, social groups or industries?
☐ NYD ☒ **No** ☐ Yes If yes, briefly describe the potential effects.

Is mitigation of potential social effects proposed?
☒ **NYD** ☐ No ☐ Yes If yes, please briefly describe.

Other information/comments? (eg. accuracy of information)

Cultural heritage

Have relevant Indigenous organisations been consulted on the occurrence of Aboriginal cultural heritage within the project area?
☒ **No** Site concept plans are still under development. Consultation is not proposed until there is further resolution of the concept design.
☐ Yes If yes, list the organisations so far consulted.

What investigations of cultural heritage in the project area have been done?
Ecology and Heritage Partners Pty Ltd was commissioned by Beveridge Property Management Services Pty Limited, to prepare an Aboriginal and Historical Heritage Assessment (AHHA) Report for the project (refer to attached AHHA Report).

Is any Aboriginal cultural heritage known from the project area?
☐ NYD ☐ No ☒ **Yes** If yes, briefly describe:

The desktop assessment conducted by EHP indicated that there have been 69 Aboriginal Places previously recorded within a 3 km radius of the study area.

Four Aboriginal sites were located in the study area. The desktop assessment concluded that artefact scatters, low-density artefact distributions and scarred trees were the most likely type of Aboriginal heritage places to be present in the study area. It was also identified that the stony rise landform may be present, with which Aboriginal places are often associated. The level of assessment undertaken for this site visit is not considered to meet the requirements for a formal archaeological survey in accordance with Aboriginal Victoria.

Are there any cultural heritage places listed on the Heritage Register or the Archaeological Inventory under the *Heritage Act 1995* within the project area?
☐ NYD ☐ No ☒ **Yes** If yes, please list.

H7823-0054 (Former Beveridge Station Complex) listed on Victorian Heritage Inventory.

Is mitigation of potential cultural heritage effects proposed?
☐ NYD ☐ No ☒ **Yes** If yes, please briefly describe.

1. Avoidance (where possible) of culturally sensitive areas;
2. Cultural Heritage Management Plan;
3. Archaeological investigations if the proposed development impacts VHI site H7823-0054 (Former Beveridge Station Complex) and/or Heritage Overlay site HO2; and
4. Dry Stone Wall Management Plan if the proposed development cannot avoid impacts to the dry stone walls.

Other information/comments? (eg. accuracy of information)

16. Energy, wastes & greenhouse gas emissions

What are the main sources of energy that the project facility would consume/generate?

- ☒ Electricity network. If possible, estimate power requirement/output …….. Power usage level dependent upon tenancy requirements for lighting, lifting equipment, re-charging electric vehicles, and warehouse sorting equipment.
- ☒ Natural gas network. If possible, estimate gas requirement/output ……... Potentially, but will be dependent upon tenancy requirements, mainly in relation to heating.
- ☒ Generated on-site. If possible, estimate power capacity/output ……. Potential for renewables from roof top solar. Potential for an energy to waste facility
- ☐ Other. Please describe.

Please add any relevant additional information.

What are the main forms of waste that would be generated by the project facility?

- ☒ Wastewater. Describe briefly. Anticipated to be minimal and from relatively small sewage discharges in operations.
- ☐ Solid chemical wastes. Describe briefly. None
- ☒ Excavated material. Describe briefly. Minimal during construction and would be re-used on site and none in operations.
- ☐ Other. Describe briefly.

Please provide relevant further information, including proposed management of wastes.

What level of greenhouse gas emissions is expected to result directly from operation of the project facility?

- ☒ Less than 50,000 tonnes of CO_2 equivalent per annum
- ☐ Between 50,000 and 100,000 tonnes of CO_2 equivalent per annum
- ☐ Between 100,000 and 200,000 tonnes of CO_2 equivalent per annum
- ☐ More than 200,000 tonnes of CO_2 equivalent per annum

Please add any relevant additional information, including any identified mitigation options.

The level of greenhouse gas emissions will be largely dependent on tenancy requirements. For example, if there is cold or chilled storage, the volume would double for even a relatively small facility, and is then also dependent on the power source.

17. Other environmental issues

Are there any other environmental issues arising from the proposed project?

☒ No ☐ Yes If yes, briefly describe.

18. Environmental management

What measures are currently proposed to avoid, minimise or manage the main potential adverse environmental effects? (if not already described above)

☐ Siting: described above.

☐ Design: described above.

☐ Environmental management: described above.

☐ Other:

Add any relevant additional information.

19. Other activities

Are there any other activities in the vicinity of the proposed project that have a potential for cumulative effects?

☐ NYD ☒ **No** ☐ Yes If yes, briefly describe.

20. Investigation program

Study program

Have any environmental studies not referred to above been conducted for the project?

☒ **No** ☐ Yes If yes, please list here and attach if relevant.

Has a program for future environmental studies been developed?

☒ **No** ☐ Yes If yes, briefly describe.

Consultation program

Has a consultation program conducted to date for the project?

☒ **No** ☐ Yes If yes, outline the consultation activities and the stakeholder groups or organisations consulted.

Has a program for future consultation been developed?

☐ NYD ☒ **No** ☐ Yes If yes, briefly describe.

Authorised person for proponent:

I, Michael Barrow, General Manager, Delivery confirm that the information contained in this form is, to my knowledge, true and not misleading.

Signature _____

Date 13 May 2020

Person who prepared this referral:

I, Sarah Horsfield, Director Urbis Pty Ltd, confirm that the information contained in this form is, to my knowledge, true and not misleading.

Signature _____

Date 13/5/20