

**Victorian Northern Interconnect Expansion
Project (Wandong to Broadford)
Cultural Heritage Management Plan 12949 -
Progress Update**

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Introduction

A Cultural Heritage Management Plan (CHMP) 12949 has been commissioned by APA Group for the Victorian Northern Interconnect Expansion (VNIE) Loop 5 Project. The VNIE Project comprises the construction of approximately 17.4km of subsurface gas pipeline situated east of the Hume Highway between Broadford and Wandong, and is hereafter referred to as the activity area. The pipeline is to be installed within an existing easement that contains the (PL101) gas transmission pipeline.

The proposed activity triggered a mandatory CHMP as the activity is a high impact activity (under r.43 of the *Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006*) and it occurs in an area of Cultural Heritage Sensitivity (under r. 22 and r.23 of the Act). CHMP 12949 consists of three assessments (under r.56 of the Act); a Desktop Assessment, Standard Assessment and Complex Assessment. The Desktop Assessment comprises a review of geographical, environmental, historical and archaeological information in the region and was undertaken on 4 February 2014. The Standard Assessment consists of a pedestrian field survey and was completed on 24 and 25 February 2014. The Complex Assessment (subsurface testing program) will be undertaken in two stages with the first stage scheduled for 22, 23 and 24 April 2014. The second stage is proposed to be undertaken on 12 to 20 May 2014.

Taungurung Clans Aboriginal Corporation (TCAC) is the Registered Aboriginal Party (RAP) for the activity area and TCAC representatives have participated in the field survey. As the RAP the TCAC has elected to evaluate the CHMP. Two meetings - a project inception meeting and post field survey meeting - were held on 20 February 2014 and 3 March 2014 respectively with TCAC to discuss the project. Joe Anka General Manager, Taungurung Clans Aboriginal Corporation), Shane Monk and Michael Harding (Board Members, Taungurung Clans Aboriginal Corporation), Anita Barker (Senior Project Archaeologist, Ochre Imprints) and Melissa Dunk (Land Services Team Leader - Heritage, Environment & Land Management APA Group) attended the meetings.

Desktop Assessment Results

The Desktop Assessment undertaken on 4 February 2014 identified that one Aboriginal place (VAHR 7923-0115), comprising five surface silcrete artefacts, had previously been recorded within the activity area and one Aboriginal place (VAHR 7923-0200), comprising 14 surface stone artefacts manufactured on silcrete, quartz and rhyolite, had been recorded c.6 m to the west of the activity area on a graded road reserve.

The Standard Assessment (Field Survey) Results

The Standard Assessment was undertaken on 24 and 25 February 2014. The archaeological field program was supervised by Anita Barker (Senior Project Archaeologist, Ochre Imprints) who was assisted by Anna Kent (Project Archaeologist, Ochre Imprints). TCAC representatives Mick Harding and Stacey Edwards participated in the field survey. Joe Price, Land Liaison Officer for APA, was present during the survey to facilitate access to properties within the activity area.

The Standard Assessment involved a pedestrian field survey of the entire activity area. Two areas containing Aboriginal cultural heritage in the form of surface stone artefact scatters (one area is associated with VAHR 7923-0115 and one newly identified Aboriginal place yet to be registered with Victorian Aboriginal Heritage Register) and one area containing a potential scarred tree were identified during the Standard Assessment. Aboriginal place VAHR 7923-0200, situated c. 6m west of the activity area, was not re-located during the survey and no Aboriginal cultural material associated with this place was identified within the activity area. However, this section of the activity area had limited visibility due to dense ground cover vegetation at the time of the survey.

Areas of Potential Archaeological Deposits (PADs) were identified during the Desktop and Standard Assessments. These PADs comprise 15 areas determined to have archaeological potential due to the presence of surface Aboriginal cultural material and/or landforms known within the geographic region to be areas of higher cultural heritage sensitivity (i.e. ridges, undulating rises, land within 200 m of waterways).

The Complex Assessment (Subsurface Testing)

The Complex Assessment (subsurface testing program) one is scheduled for 22 April 2014 to 6 May 2014 (ten working days). The Complex Assessment will involve the excavation of:

- Three 1x1 m manual Excavation Pits;
- 78-130 50x50 cm Shovel Probes (STPs) in PAD areas; and
- At least 150 STPs across the remainder of the activity area.

The methodology for the Complex Assessment has been developed in consultation with the TCAC. Upon completion of the Complex Assessment the CHMP report will be prepared and

submitted to TCAC for evaluation. The TCAC will have 30 days within which to evaluate the CHMP.

Yours sincerely,



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