

Victorian Renewable Energy Terminal EES



Department
of Transport
and Planning

Updated Draft Scoping Requirements Q&As

Background

On 11 October 2023, the Minister for Planning determined under the *Environment Effects Act 1978* that the Port of Hastings Corporation is to prepare an environment effects statement (EES) to assess the potential environmental effects of the proposed Victorian Renewable Energy Terminal project.

The Port of Hastings Corporation proposes to develop the Victorian Renewable Energy Terminal as a facility to serve as a base of operations for the construction of offshore wind infrastructure in the Commonwealth waters adjacent to Victoria. Longer term, the facility may be used to support maintenance, repowering and decommissioning activities of the offshore wind infrastructure.

The site is situated within the Port of Hastings. It is located to the southeast of Melbourne, approximately 72 km from the Melbourne CBD, and 2.6 km northeast of the centre of Hastings. The terminal is proposed to be situated between BlueScope's steel manufacturing plant, Esso's Long Island Point fractionation plant, at the Old Tyabb Reclamation Area (OTRA) and the adjoining Western Port Bay.

The onshore component of the site borders the Western Port Ramsar site, an area identified to be of international importance, in particular to waterfowl habitat. The Ramsar site extends across the Western Port area which is connected to Bass Strait by a wide channel between Flinders and Phillip Island, and a narrow channel between San Remo and Phillip Island.

The project would include landside development, land reclamation, construction of a quay wall and quay apron and dredging to allow for ship berthing and access. Outside the facility, a utilities corridor within the road reserve is proposed to accommodate electrical, communications, and water infrastructure.

What is the purpose of draft scoping requirements?

The Port of Hastings Corporation is preparing an EES for the Victorian Renewable Energy Terminal. The draft scoping requirements set out the matters to be investigated and documented within the EES.

Why have the draft scoping requirements been updated?

The Department of Transport and Planning (DTP) has prepared updated draft EES scoping requirements for public comment following consideration of public comments received on a draft exhibited between 19 November and 11 December 2024.

The Commonwealth has determined that the project also requires approval under the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (EPBC Act) due to the potential for impacts on matters of national environmental significance. The EES process will assess impacts on these matters to inform decisions under the EPBC Act. Therefore, the updated draft EES scoping requirements also address relevant matters of national environmental significance.

Why have the updated draft scoping requirements been advertised?

Under the Ministerial guidelines for the assessment of environmental effects under the *Environment Effects Act 1978*, draft scoping requirements for an EES are advertised for public comment for a period of at least 15 business days. It is important that the community and stakeholders have their say about environmental



matters relevant to the assessment of this proposed project. DTP will consider comments received in finalising the EES scoping requirements and then brief the Minister on the proposed final scoping requirements.

Where can I see the updated draft scoping requirements?

From 3 September 2025, the updated draft EES scoping requirements document will be available on the Engage Victoria website: <https://engage.vic.gov.au/victorian-renewable-energy-terminal-ees-scoping-requirements>

When is the public comment period?

DTP will accept public submissions on the updated draft EES scoping requirements from 3 September until midnight on 24 September 2025.

How do I make a submission?

Submissions can be made via the survey form on the Engage Victoria website. Written submissions can also be uploaded via the survey form on the Engage Victoria website.

If you are unable to make a submission using the survey form, please contact DTP Impact Assessment Unit on (03) 8572 7980 or email environment.assessment@transport.vic.gov.au.

Comments received will be considered during the finalisation of the EES scoping requirements. Please note that any submissions on the draft scoping requirements will be treated as public documents.

Who is the proponent?

The proponent is the Port of Hastings Corporation.

What happens next?

After the public comment period finishes on 24 September 2025, DTP will consider all submissions and then amend the scoping requirements in light of the comments received. The Minister for Planning will then consider the final EES scoping requirements, which need to be approved for publishing on the planning website:

<https://www.planning.vic.gov.au/environmental-assessments/browse-projects/referrals/victorian-renewable-energy-terminal>


The proponent will continue to progress their investigations and preparation of the EES to address the scoping requirements issued for this project.

What happens after the Minister issues the final scoping requirements?

The proponent will proceed with the necessary information-gathering and investigations to inform the EES. This is expected to take a number of months and conclude in 2026. The proponent will conduct its studies and prepare the EES in close consultation with DTP, the Technical Reference Group (TRG) and the Independent Expert Group (IEG), which DTP has put in place for this EES.

The proponent's EES will include a detailed description of the proposed project and a rigorous assessment of its potential effects on the environment and approaches to mitigation.

When completed, the EES will be placed on public exhibition, and the Minister for Planning will invite public comments. At the end of the process, the Minister will issue an assessment of the environmental effects of the project. The Minister's assessment will inform statutory/approval decisions needed for the project to proceed.



The proponent has finalised and begun to implement its EES consultation plan to engage with the public and stakeholders about the EES process and its associated investigations, ensuring it provides opportunities for input and feedback on its investigations. The consultation plan is reviewed and amended in consultation with DTP and the TRG prior to being published on the DTP website.

When the proponent believes the EES is ready, it will be reviewed by DTP, and the Minister for Planning will decide whether to authorise the EES to be exhibited. If authorised, the EES will be advertised for public comment for no less than 30 business days.

The Port of Hastings Corporation is targeting public exhibition of their EES in late 2026.

The EES and the submissions received will be referred to an inquiry to be appointed under the *Environment Effects Act 1978*. The inquiry will consider all the information before it and will report to the Minister, who will then make an assessment and provide it to decision-makers.

Why is an environment effects statement required for the Victorian Renewable Energy Terminal?

An EES is the state's most rigorous and transparent environmental assessment and is typically reserved for those projects that require integrated assessment across a range of potential adverse effects when there is potential for significant impacts. The EES will provide an integrated and transparent examination of the proposed project and its environmental effects to inform both the proponent's refinement of the proposal and the statutory decisions/ approvals needed for the project to proceed.

In October 2023, the Minister for Planning determined under the *Environment Effects Act 1978* that an EES is required for the proposed Victorian Renewable Energy Terminal. The project as proposed could have a range of significant impacts, including on:

- Biodiversity and ecological values within and near the proposed facility at Port of Hastings, including the Western Port Ramsar site;
- Tangible and intangible Aboriginal and historic cultural heritage values;
- Surface water environments and groundwater;
- Air quality and noise on nearby sensitive receptors; and
- Land uses and socio-economic values, at local and regional scales, as well as landscape and visual impacts, increased traffic movement and other amenity impacts.

What about the Commonwealth Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act?

When an *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (EPBC Act) referral is submitted for any project, the Commonwealth Minister will determine whether it is a 'controlled action' requiring assessment and approval under the EPBC Act.

Should the project be a controlled action due to significant impacts on a matter of national environmental significance (such as the Western Port Ramsar site and, or listed threatened species or communities), the Victorian EES process can address those matters, as it is an accredited process under the Bilateral Agreement in place between the Commonwealth and Victorian Governments.

This EES is being undertaken as an accredited process set out in the bilateral agreement under the EPBC Act. It will have to assess the relevant matters of national environmental significance identified in the Commonwealth decision that the project is a 'controlled action' requesting approval under the EPBC Act.