

## For Public Notice via Internet

### REASONS FOR DECISION UNDER *ENVIRONMENT EFFECTS ACT 1978* (REFERRAL NUMBER 2023-R08)

#### Proponent

Pacific National Pty. Ltd.

#### Project

Little River Logistics Precinct

#### Description

Pacific National proposes to develop 390 of 595 ha of private land into a new freight logistics precinct with rail terminals, freight handling, warehousing and supporting activities over the next 25 plus years. The project is proposed to deliver a new, open access, interstate intermodal terminal with the capacity to ultimately process more than 2 million twenty-foot equivalent units (TEUs) and handle 1,800 m long, double-stacked trains. The interstate terminal will incorporate integrated 'Cargolink' warehousing that enables freight to be transported directly between the terminal and warehouses.

In addition to being a Pacific National freight hub, the proposal encompasses development of discrete import/export intermodal terminal connected to the Port of Melbourne (and other prospective ports proposed to the west of Melbourne); locomotive provisioning and wagon maintenance areas; warehousing, and other functions necessary for a facility of this type.

The project is proposing to protect 205 hectares of land with biodiversity values as an on-site, first party offset. The project includes ancillary infrastructure to support the works proposed on private land. These include changes to the external road network, rail connection works and the installation and upgrade of utility services (electricity, sewer, potable water and telecommunications).

#### Decision

The Minister for Planning has decided that an environment effects statement (EES) is required for the Little River Logistics Precinct project, as described in the referral accepted on 13 October 2023.

#### Reasons

- The project has the potential for a range of significant effects that require rigorous assessment. In particular the project as proposed could have significant effects on:
  - threatened species and communities listed under the *Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act 1988* and *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999*;
  - native vegetation and ecology of the area's terrestrial environments and freshwater environments; including ephemeral wetlands and creeks;
  - aboriginal cultural heritage;
  - landscape and visual amenity; and
  - social values and amenity impacts.

- There is uncertainty about the extent and magnitude of potential effects related to Port Phillip Bay (Western Shoreline) and Bellarine Peninsula Ramsar Site, traffic soils, land-use / planning and historic heritage that also require further assessment.
- The project has the potential for cumulative adverse effects on local and regional environmental values in combination with nearby existing and potential infrastructure.
- An EES is warranted to enable an integrated assessment of the environmental effects of the project and associated uncertainties, to inform decision-making for required approvals. The EES will evaluate feasible, relevant alternatives, the effectiveness of proposed mitigation and offsetting measures, including opportunities to avoid or minimise significant adverse effects through alternative design layouts, designs and other mitigation measures.

**Date of decision:**

21/12/2023