

## For Public Notice via Internet

### REASONS FOR DECISION UNDER *ENVIRONMENT EFFECTS ACT 1978* (REFERRAL NUMBER 2023-R006)

#### Proponent

Port of Hastings Corporation

#### Project

Victorian Renewable Energy Terminal Project

#### Description

The project is situated within the Port of Hastings and plans to develop a facility to serve as a base of operations for the assembly of offshore wind (OSW) farms along the coast of Victoria. This includes landside development, land reclamation, construction of a reinforced quay and dredging to allow for ship access. The facility is approximately 43 ha in size and includes an onshore operational area, a quayside assembly area, and a shipping operational area. Outside the facility, there may be potential extensions and/or upgrades required to electrical, communications, water and sewer services, and road infrastructure. The facility may also be used to support other typical seaborne trades and export locally manufactured items in the future.

#### Decision

The Minister for Planning has decided that an environment effects statement (EES) is required for the Victorian Renewable Energy Terminal Project as described in the referral accepted on 11 August 2023.

#### Reasons

- The project has the potential for significant environmental effects on biodiversity values, including impacts on the habitat of threatened species and communities, as well as risks to the conservation and ecological values of the Western Port Ramsar Site including a number of *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* and *Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act 1988* listed waterbird and migratory bird species.
- There are potential effects from construction and operation of the facility on the marine ecosystem that may be significant, through increased sedimentation, disturbance of potential acid sulphate soils, dredging and potential introduction of pest species.
- The project also has the potential to impact cultural and historic heritage values, including submerged Aboriginal cultural values (known, unknown, tangible, and intangible).
- While these potentially significant effects and other residual effects could be examined through a range of separate statutory processes, there is a need for rigorous, integrated consideration of the proposal's effects and relevant uncertainties, as part of a single assessment process, to inform statutory decision-making.
- An EES is warranted to enable an integrated, transparent assessment of the environmental effects of the project and associated uncertainties, including to evaluate feasible, relevant alternatives, the effectiveness of proposed mitigation and

offsetting measures, and opportunities to avoid or minimise significant adverse effects (such as through layout, design, construction methods).

- The EES process would inform relevant statutory decision-making, particularly under the *Planning and Environment Act 1987*, *Marine and Coastal Act 2018*, *Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006*, *Environment Protection Act 2017* and *Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act 1988*.

**Date**

11/10/2023