***Environment Effects Act 1978***

**SCOPING REQUIREMENTS**

**For**

PALMERS ROAD CORRIDOR PROJECT -

WESTERN FREEWAY TO CALDER FREEWAY[[1]](#footnote-1)

ENVIRONMENT EFFECTS STATEMENT

July 2013

**List of Abbreviations**

AH Act *Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006*

C&LP Act *Catchment and Land Protection Act 1994*

CHMP Cultural Heritage Management Plan

DEPI Department of Environment and Primary Industries

DPCD former Department of Planning and Community Development

DTPLI Department of Transport, Planning and Local Infrastructure

EE Act *Environment Effects Act 1978*

EES Environment Effects Statement

EMF Environmental Management Framework

EMP Environmental Management Plan

EMS Environmental Management System

EP Act *Environment Protection Act 1970*

EPBC Act *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999*

FFG Act *Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act 1988*

P&E Act *Planning and Environment Act 1987*

RM Act *Road Management Act 2004*

TRG Technical Reference Group

SEPP State Environment Protection Policy

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# Introduction

## Background and Purpose of this Document

In light of the potential for significant environmental effects, the Victorian Minister for Planning (the Minister) determined under the *Environment Effects Act 1978* (EE Act) that an Environment Effects Statement (EES) needs to be prepared by VicRoads for the Palmers Road Corridor Project - Western Freeway to Calder Freeway[[2]](#footnote-2) (‘the project’). The purpose of the EES is to provide a detailed description of the project and its potential effects on the environment[[3]](#footnote-3), to inform the public and stakeholders and then to enable an Assessment of the project to be prepared by the Minister to inform decision-makers.

This document is the *Scoping Requirements for the Palmers Road Corridor Project - Western Freeway to Calder Freeway Project* (Scoping Requirements), which sets out the specific environmental matters to be investigated and documented in the EES for the project. The Scoping Requirements were finalised following the consideration of public comments.

## The Project

The Palmers Road Corridor Project involves development of a major north-south arterial road in the west of Melbourne between the Calder Freeway and Western Freeway (Deer Park Bypass).

In the short term the project involves reserving a 16 kilometre long and 40-60 metre wide corridor for the future development of the arterial road in the Melton and Brimbank planning schemes, which corresponds with and connects the corridors of existing local roads: Robinsons Road, Westwood Drive and Calder Park Drive.

The project will ultimately involve construction of a six lane divided road (i.e. three lanes in each direction), with off-road shared bicycle and pedestrian facilities on both sides of the road. Two existing railway crossings would be removed, one at the Melbourne-Bendigo rail line crossing with Calder Park Drive and another at the Melbourne-Ballarat rail line with Robinsons Road. An additional new three lane bridge would be constructed over Kororoit Creek.[[4]](#footnote-4) It is also proposed to construct a raised interchange where the route concludes at the Calder Freeway in the north.

Complete development of the arterial road is expected to be a longer term project that would result in it being constructed potentially by 2046.

The project area, for the purposes of the EES, encompasses the road corridor between Western Freeway and Calder Freeway, as shown on Figure 1 below.



Figure 1. Northern section of Palmers Road Corridor

## Key Potential Environmental Effects

The Minister’s decision to require an EES outlined the procedures and requirements applying to its preparation, in accordance with section 8B(5) of the EE Act. These requirements included the following key matters:

* 1. *“Before commencing the EES process and to inform the development of scoping requirements for the EES:*
* *The proponent is to provide a preliminary report on the availability of potentially suitable alternatives for developing appropriate arterial route capacity and future road network performance in this region, either generally along the proposed stages two and three of the Palmers Road corridor or along an alternate north-south corridor.*
* *The preliminary assessment of alternatives is to consider variations to the current proposal (in terms of the alignment or part thereof and its design (e.g. in relation to its capacity, mitigation measures and so forth), as well as alternative alignments.*
	1. *The EES is to give particular attention to the investigation of potential environmental effects of the proposed arterial road development (i.e. the portion encompassed by stages two and three), and relevant alternatives (see above), including associated environmental mitigation and management measures, particularly regarding:*
* *Changes to the amenity and environmental quality of the adjacent residential areas from construction and operation, particularly due to increased noise levels;*
* *Social impacts (e.g. severance and dislocation) for residences and communities along the proposed arterial route;*
* *Effects on the landscape, visual and recreational values of areas in the vicinity of the proposed arterial road, in particular the Organ Pipes National Park;*
* *Residual impacts on biodiversity and associated native vegetation, in particular listed protected fauna and flora, and ecological communities; and*
* *Impacts on cultural heritage (Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal) within or adjacent to the proposed road.”*

These Scoping Requirements provide further detail on the specific matters to be in investigated in the EES in the context of *Ministerial guidelines for assessment of environmental effects under the EE Act 1978* (Ministerial Guidelines).

While the Scoping Requirements are intended to be complete in their coverage of issues and matters, the EES will need to address any pertinent issues that may emerge during the EES or that are otherwise relevant to the statutory decisions that will be informed by the assessment process under the EE Act.

# Assessment Process and Required Approvals

## The EES Process

VicRoads is responsible for preparing the EES, including preparing technical studies and undertaking stakeholder consultation, while the Department of Transport, Planning and Local Infrastructure (DTPLI) is responsible for managing the EES process. The EES process concludes with the Minister’s Assessment of the environmental effects of the project, which is issued to relevant statutory decision-makers to inform decisions on the project.

In determining to require an EES, the Minister specifies the procedures and requirements for the process, consistent with the Ministerial Guidelines. This EES process has the following steps:

* Preparation of a Draft Study Program and Schedule by the proponent (completed).
* Preparation and exhibition of the draft Scoping Requirements for public comment, by DTPLI on behalf of the Minister (completed).
* Finalisation and issuing of Scoping Requirements by the Minister (current step).
* Review of the proponent’s EES studies and draft documentation by DTPLI and a Technical Reference Group (TRG).
* Completion of the EES by the proponent.
* Review of the final EES by DTPLI to establish its adequacy for public exhibition.
* Exhibition of the proponent’s EES and invitation for public comment by DTPLI on behalf of the Minister.
* Appointment of an Inquiry by the Minister for Planning to:
	+ review the EES and any public submissions
	+ conduct public hearings
	+ provide a report to the Minister
* Following receipt of the Inquiry report, provision of an Assessment of the project by the Minister to decision-makers.

Further information on the EES process can be found on the Department’s website at [www.dpcd.vic.gov.au/planning/ees](http://www.dpcd.vic.gov.au/planning/ees).

**Technical Reference Group**

DTPLI will convene an agency-based TRG to advise it and the proponent, as appropriate, on:

* applicable policies, strategies and statutory provisions;
* the Scoping Requirements for the EES;
* the design and adequacy of technical studies for the EES;
* the proponent’s public information and stakeholder consultation program for the EES;
* the technical adequacy of the draft EES documentation; and
* coordination of statutory processes.

The TRG will comprise invited representatives of relevant state government agencies and departments, as well as the local Council(s).

**Public Consultation**

In addition to the formal opportunities for public comment on the draft Scoping Requirements and then the EES, informal consultation also plays an important role in the preparation of the EES. The proponent is responsible for both informing the public and engaging with stakeholders in order to identify and respond to their concerns in conjunction with the EES studies.

Relevant stakeholders include potentially affected parties, the community and interested organisations and individuals, as well as pertinent government bodies.

A stakeholder consultation plan is to be prepared and implemented by the proponent to ensure that the public is familiar with the EES investigations and that relevant stakeholders are consulted on pertinent issues. The proponent’s ‘EES Consultation Plan’ will be published on the DTPLI website and updated as necessary.

The plan should:

* Identify the relevant stakeholder groups
* Characterise the stakeholder groups in terms of their interests, concerns and consultation needs and potential to provide local knowledge
* Describe the consultation methods to be used and outline a schedule of consultation activities
* Outline how inputs from stakeholders will be recorded, considered and/or addressed in the preparation of the EES.

## Required Approvals and Coordination with the EES Process

The project will require a range of approvals under Victorian legislation including:

* Planning scheme amendments and permits (if required) under the *Planning and Environment Act 1987*;
* An approved Cultural Heritage Management Plan (CHMP) under the *Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006* (AH Act) for the project;
* Consents to undertake works near waterways under the *Water Act 1989*;and
* A permit for the removal of listed flora and flora from public land under the *Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act 1988* (FFG Act).

The EES documentation needs to identify a final development proposal with sufficient information on the potential effects and risks to inform the key statutory approvals.

The EES process is coordinated with other primary approvals and relevant assessment requirements, such as planning approval. Therefore, within the framework of the EES process, DTPLI will coordinate the preparation and exhibition of the EES with relevant information and public notice requirements under applicable legislation. It is anticipated that the planning scheme amendments (and any necessary planning permit applications) will be placed on public exhibition concurrently with the EES.

Figure 2 shows the coordinated statutory assessment and approval pathway for this project.



Figure 2. Coordinated Statutory Assessment and Approvals Pathway

# Matters to be addressed in the EES

## General Approach

The EES needs to assess relevant environmental effects arising from all components and stages of the project. Where relevant, assessments should address direct and indirect, combined, short and long-term, beneficial and adverse effects. The assessment of environmental effects in the EES, at least in the case of significant risks, should include:

* Potential effects on individual environmental assets, in terms of magnitude, extent and duration of change in the values of each asset, having regard to intended avoidance and mitigation measures.
* The likelihood of adverse effects and associated uncertainty of available predictions or estimates.
* Further management measures that are proposed where avoidance and mitigation measures do not adequately address effects on environmental assets, including specific details of how the measures address relevant policies.
* Likely residual effects assuming proposed measures are implemented.

Further advice on the approach to be adopted in preparing the EES is provided in section 4.

## General Content and Style of the EES

The content of the EES and related investigations is to be guided by this document (Scoping Requirements) and the Ministerial Guidelines. These Scoping Requirements focus largely on the information or investigations necessary to address matters set out in the Minister’s decision (see section 1.3). The EES should also address any other significant issues that may emerge during the investigations. Ultimately it is the proponent’s responsibility to ensure that adequate studies are undertaken and reported to support the assessment of environmental effects.

To facilitate timely decisions on required approvals, it will be in the proponent’s interest to address pertinent aspects of the guidelines and requirements for planning scheme amendments under the P&E Act, as part of the EES documentation “package” to be exhibited.

The EES should enable stakeholders and decision-makers to understand the likely environmental effects of the proposed development and to develop an informed view on relevant aspects of the project.

The EES should consist of a main report supported by technical appendices containing relevant data, technical reports and other sources of the EES analysis.

The main EES report should provide a clear, succinct and well-integrated analysis of the potential effects of the proposed works and relevant alternatives, including proposed mitigation and management measures. Overall, the main EES report should include:

* An executive summary of the potential environmental effects of the project;
* A description of the entire project, including its objectives, key elements, associated requirements for new infrastructure and use of existing infrastructure;
* A description of relevant alternatives capable of substantially meeting the project’s objectives that may also offer environmental or other benefits (as well as the basis for the choice where a preferred alternative is nominated);
* An outline of the approvals required for the project to proceed;
* Descriptions of the existing environment, where this is relevant to the assessment of potential effects;
* Appropriately detailed assessments of potential effects of the project (and relevant alternatives) on environmental assets and values, relative to the “no project” scenario;
* Intended measures for avoiding, minimising, managing and monitoring effects, including a statement of commitment to implement these measures;
* Any proposed offset measures where avoidance and mitigation measures will not adequately address effects on environmental values;
* Responses to issues raised through public and stakeholder consultation;
* Evaluation of the implications of the project and relevant alternatives for the implementation of applicable legislation and policy, including the principles and objectives of ecologically sustainable development and environmental protection; and
* A description of the environmental performance regime and track record of the proponent.

A concise summary document (hard copy A4) also needs to be prepared by the proponent for free distribution to interested parties. The EES summary document should include details of the EES exhibition and availability of the EES documentation.

Close consultation with DTPLI and the TRG during the investigations and preparation of the EES will be necessary to minimise the need for revisions prior to authorisation of the EES for public exhibition.

Detail on the required scope and content of the EES is covered in the following sections.

## Project Description

The EES should describe the project in sufficient detail both to allow an understanding of all components, processes and development stages, and to enable assessment of their likely potential environmental effects.

The EES should describe the following aspects of the project, to the extent relevant and practicable:

* An overview of the proponent, including relevant experience in developing and operating projects as well as its health, safety and environmental policies.
* Contextual information on the project, including its objectives and rationale, its relationship to relevant statutory policies, plans and strategies (if relevant), and implications of the project not proceeding.
* Details of all the project components including:
* location;
* footprint and layout;
* technical specifications and design (or alternatively concept design); and
* methods of construction (to the extent relevant and practicable).
* Land use activities within the vicinity of the project area, supported by plans and maps where applicable.
* Information on the project’s operational life, including expected construction timetabling and staging, and any decommissioning and rehabilitation arrangements (where relevant).
* Other necessary works directly associated with the project, such as road upgrades /connections, and infrastructure and services relocation.

## Relevant Alternatives

The EES should document the previous consideration of alternative routes and the explanation of selection process for the project presented and evaluated through the EES. The EES should investigate and document the likely environmental effects of relevant alternatives (e.g. design), particularly where these offer a distinct potential for superior environmental outcomes and are capable of meeting the objectives of the project. In the first instance, the discussion of relevant alternatives should include:

* an explanation of selection process for the proposed route;
* identification and evaluation of design alternatives;
* relevant environmental considerations; and
* documentation of the basis for the proposed project.

Where appropriate, the assessment of environmental effects of relevant alternatives is to address the matters set out in the subsequent sections of this document.

The depth of investigation of alternatives should be proportionate to their potential to minimise potential adverse effects.

## Applicable Legislation, Policies and Strategies

The EES will need to identify relevant legislation, policies and strategies, and assess their specific requirements or implications for the project – particularly in relation to required approvals.

The EES should outline the relevant State legislation, including:

* *Environment Effects Act 1978* (EE Act);
* *Environment Protection Act 1970* (EP Act)*,* including the principles of environment protection and relevant State Environment Protection Policies (SEPPs);
* *Planning and Environment Act 1987* (P&E Act)*,* and relevant provisions in the Melton and Brimbank Planning Schemes;
* *Catchment and Land Protection Act 1994* (C&LP Act)*;*
* *Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act 1988* (FFG Act);
* *Wildlife Act 1975;*
* *Water Act 1989;*
* *Road Management Act 2004* (RM Act)*;*
* *Heritage Act 1995;*
* *Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006* (AH Act);
* *Crown Land (Reserves) Act 1978;*
* *Land Act 1958.*

The proponent will also need to identify and address other relevant policies, strategies, subordinate legislation and related management or planning processes that may be relevant to the assessment of the project. These include: *Victoria’s Native Vegetation Management – A Framework for Action[[5]](#footnote-5)* and relevant roadside vegetation management strategies under the Melton and Brimbank Planning Schemes.

## Outcomes of Consultation

The proponent is responsible for informing the public and consulting with stakeholders throughout the assessment process in accordance with a suitable ‘EES Consultation Plan’ (refer to section 2.1 of this document).

Further to this, the EES should document the process and results of the EES consultation undertaken, including:

* Issues raised and suggestions of stakeholders or members of the public and the responses made by the proponent in the context of either the EES studies or any additional mitigation measures; and
* An outline of a program for community consultation, stakeholder engagement and communications during the construction and operation of the project, including opportunities for local stakeholders to engage with the proponent to seek responses to issues that might arise when the project is undertaken.

## Draft Evaluation Objectives

The following draft evaluation objectives identify desired outcomes in the context of potential project effects. They provide a framework to guide an integrated assessment of environmental effects, in accordance with the Ministerial Guidelines. The objectives, together with specific assessment criteria, may be refined by the proponent as the EES is prepared.

The framing of the draft objectives reflects the key matters to be investigated for the EES (refer to section 1.3), relevant legislation and policies (section 3.5), the objectives and principles of ecologically sustainable development and environmental protection, as well as environmental issues identified by the proponent in preliminary documentation.

**Table 1. Draft Evaluation Objectives**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Draft evaluation objective** | **Key statutes** |
| **Road Safety and Capacity -** To improve the road-based transport capacity and connectivity in western Melbourne, by developing a six-lane dual carriageway arterial road along the Palmers Road corridor between Western Freeway and Calder Freeway, while maintaining the connectivity of the existing local transport routes. | RM ActP&E Act |
| **Amenity and Environmental Quality -** To minimise adverse noise and other amenity effects on nearby residents and land uses, to the extent practicable. | EP ActP&E Act |
| **Social, Land Use and Infrastructure -** To minimise adverse social and land use effects, including impacts on existing infrastructure.  | P&E Act |
| **Visual and Landscape Values -** To avoid adverse effects on the landscape and recreational values of the Organ Pipes National Park and minimise visual effects on open space areas. | P&E Act |
| **Biodiversity and Habitat -** To avoid or minimise adverse effects on native vegetation and listed flora and fauna species and ecological communities, and address opportunities for offsetting potential losses consistent with relevant policy*.* | FFG ActWildlife Act |
| **Catchment Values -** To maintain the functions and values of surface water and floodplain environments. | Water ActP&E Act |
| **Cultural Heritage -** To avoid or minimise effects on Aboriginal and historic cultural heritage values. | AH Act |
| **Environmental Management Framework -** To provide a transparent framework with clear accountabilities for managing environmental effects and hazards associated with construction, operation, decommissioning and rehabilitation phases of the project, in order to achieve acceptable environmental outcomes. | P&E ActEP ActAH Act |
| **Integrated and Sustainable Transport -** Overall, to demonstrate that the project would achieve a balance of economic, social and environmental outcomes that contribute to ecologically sustainable development and provide a net community benefit over the short and long-term. | EE ActP&E ActEP Act |

# Assessment of Specific Environmental Effects

## Approach to Assessment

Preparation of the EES document and the necessary investigation of effects should be consistent with the principles of a systems approach and risk-based approach, as outlined in the Ministerial Guidelines[[6]](#footnote-6).

The following sections set out specific requirements for the assessment of effects, using the following structure for each draft evaluation objective:

* ***Key issues for objective****,* in terms of significant issues or risks that the project poses to the achievement of the draft evaluation objective. In addition to addressing the highlighted issues, the proponent might undertake an appropriate environmental risk assessment to identify other significant risks.
* ***Priorities for characterising the existing environment***, which are needed to underpin predictive impact assessments having regard to the level of risk. Any risk assessment by the proponent could guide the necessary data gathering.
* ***Design and mitigation measures****,* in terms of design or other available measures that could substantially reduce and/or mitigate the risk of significant effects.
* ***Assessment of likely effects****,* in terms of predictive studies or estimates of effects that are reasonably likely, as well as evaluation of their significance, having regard to their likelihood.
* ***Approach to manage performance****,*in terms of further measures that are proposed to manage risks of effects, assuming that identified design and mitigation measures are applied, to achieve appropriate outcomes. This should inform the assessment of likely residual effects (assuming proposed measures are implemented).

## Road Safety and Capacity

**Draft Evaluation Objective -** *To improve the road-based transport capacity and connectivity in western Melbourne, by developing a six-lane dual carriageway arterial road along the Palmers Road corridor between Western Freeway and Calder Freeway, while maintaining the connectivity of the existing local transport routes.*

**Key issues**

* Exacerbation of congestion on the existing road network in the absence of an arterial route.
* Inefficient linkages with the road network exacerbate congestion at key nodes.
* Disruption to pedestrian movements, bicycle connectivity, public transport, motor vehicle traffic during the project construction.

**Priorities for characterising the existing environment**

* Characterise current traffic conditions within the existing road network in the project area.
* Provide modelling projections of road network traffic flows in the absence of the project.

**Design and mitigation measures**

* Potential design solutions to optimise linkages with the existing road network and maintain or enhance pedestrian and bicycle access at junctions of the operating project.

**Assessment of likely effects**

* Assess the effects of the project on the transport network (including in terms of road traffic volumes and travel time outcomes) and accessibility and safety for users (vehicles, pedestrians and cyclists).

**Approach to manage performance**

* Briefly describe principles or approach to management of traffic conditions during the project’s construction, including as part of the Environmental Management Framework (EMF) (see section 4.9).

## Amenity and Environmental Quality

**Draft Evaluation Objective -** *To minimise adverse noise and other amenity effects on nearby residents and land uses, to the extent practicable.*

**Key issues**

* The potential for increases in noise levels from the project’s operation to significantly affect amenity in adjacent residential and parkland areas.
* The potential for increased vehicle traffic to adversely affect local air quality, relative to State Environmental Protection Policy.

**Priorities for characterising the existing environment**

* Characterise the existing noise setting in the adjacent established residential areas, and at other sensitive urban receptors.

**Design and mitigation measures**

* Identify potential and proposed design responses and/or other mitigation measures to avoid, reduce and/or manage any significant noise effects for sensitive receptors during project operation, in the context of applicable planning policy and VicRoads Noise Reduction Policy 2005.

**Assessment of likely effects**

* Assess likely noises increases at sensitive receptors along the road corridor during its operation, both with and in the absence of the proposed mitigation measures.

**Approach to manage performance**

* Measures to manage other potential effects on amenity and environmental quality, including dust from the project construction, should also be addressed in the EES, including as part of the EMF (see section 4.9).

## Social, Land Use and Infrastructure

**Draft Evaluation Objective -** *To minimise adverse social and land use effects, including impacts on existing infrastructure.*

**Key Issue**

* The potential for dislocation and diminished social wellbeing due to severance causing reduced access to social networks or community facilities.

**Priorities for characterising the existing environment**

* Describe the demographic and social character of residential communities in the vicinity of the project, as well as local movement patterns and any places with particular community, recreational or cultural significance.
* Identify any existing infrastructure, land use plans or related objectives for land within, adjacent to or affected by the project, including for the Organ Pipes National Park and Kororoit Creek environs.

**Design and mitigation measures**

* Identify potential and proposed design responses and measures to minimise adverse social and land use effects.

**Assessment of likely effects**

* Assess the potential effects on communities living near the project, in terms of potential dislocation, severance or reduction in access to social networks, community facilities and valued places.
* Evaluate the consistency of the project with the policies and provisions of the Melton and Brimbank Planning Schemes and other relevant land use planning strategies.

**Approach to manage performance**

* Describe any further measures that are proposed to enhance social outcomes for residents living in the vicinity of the project, including as part of the EMF (see section 4.9) in the context of the project’s expected long-term implementation timeframe.

## Visual and Landscape Values

**Draft Evaluation Objective -** *To avoid adverse effects on the landscape and recreational values of the Organ Pipes National Park and minimise visual effects on open space areas.*

**Key Issues**

* The potential for effects on the landscape and recreational values of the Organ Pipes National Park from the project, in particular the proposed raised interchange at Calder Freeway.

**Priorities for characterising the existing environment**

* Characterise the landscape, existing viewshed and recreational values of the Organ Pipes National Park and Kororoit Creek environs.

**Design and mitigation measures**

* Identify potential and proposed design options and measures to mitigate adverse effects on the landscape values and associated recreational values of the Organ Pipes National Park and Kororoit Creek environs.

**Assessment of likely effects**

* Assess the likely effects on the landscape and recreational values of the Organ Pipes National Park and Kororoit Creek environs.

**Approach to manage performance**

* Any further measures that are proposed to either manage risks to landscape and recreational values or enhance visual amenity outcomes for residents living in the vicinity of the project are to be included in the EES, including as part of the EMF (see section 4.9).

## Biodiversity and Habitat

**Draft Evaluation Objective -** *To avoid or minimise adverse effects on native vegetation and listed flora and fauna species and ecological communities, and address opportunities for offsetting potential losses consistent with relevant policy.*

**Key Issues**

* Loss of, or degradation to, significant habitat for listed protected flora and fauna species and communities, such as those associated with the remnant grasslands and Kororoit Creek environs.

**Priorities for characterising the existing environment**

* Characterise the distribution and quality of native vegetation, terrestrial and aquatic habitat and any wildlife movement in the area that could be impacted by the project.
* Identify the existence or likely existence of any species or communities listed under the FFG Act, as well as any declared weeds or pathogens.
* This characterisation is to be informed by relevant databases, literature and appropriate seasonal or targeted surveys.

**Design and mitigation measures**

* Identify potential and proposed design options and mitigation measures which could avoid or minimise significant effects on native vegetation and any listed ecological communities or flora and fauna species.

**Assessment of likely effects**

* Identify and assess likely direct and indirect effects on native vegetation, ecological communities and the habitat of any listed species of flora and fauna along the arterial corridor.

**Approach to manage performance**

* Identify proposed measures to further mitigate and manage residual effects of the project, including addressing the offset requirements of Victoria’s native vegetation permitted clearing regulations and relevant provisions of planning schemes.
* Identify in the EES any further methods proposed to manage risks of effects on other biodiversity values and native vegetation, including as part of the EMF (see section 4.9).

## Catchment Values

**Draft Evaluation Objective -** *To maintain the functions and values of surface water and floodplain environments.*

**Key issues**

* The potential for adverse effects on the functions and values of adjacent water environments (primarily Kororoit Creek and its floodplain).

**Priorities for characterising the existing environment**

* Identify and characterise relevant surface water and floodplain environments, including in terms of the existing drainage functions and behaviour.

**Design and mitigation measures**

* Identify potential and proposed design options and measures which could avoid or minimise significant effects, especially on the floodplain of Kororoit Creek.

**Assessment of likely effects**

* Identify potential effects on adjacent surface water and floodplain environments, particularly the hydrological function and values of Kororoit Creek.

**Approach to manage performance**

* Describe in the EES any further methods that are proposed to manage risks of effects on floodplain values and water quality, including as part of the EMF (see section 4.9).

## Cultural Heritage

**Draft Evaluation Objective -** *To avoid or minimise effects on Aboriginal and historic cultural heritage values*

**Key issues**

* The potential for adverse effects on Aboriginal cultural heritage.
* The potential for the loss of significant historic heritage values.

**Priorities for characterising the existing environment**

* Identify and characterise Aboriginal cultural heritage sites and areas of sensitivity within the project area, particularly in the vicinity of Kororoit Creek in accordance with the requirements for the CHMP under the AH Act.
* Identify and document known and previously unidentified historic heritage values within the project area, including any areas of significant archaeological interest, in accordance with the *Guidelines for Conducting Archaeological Surveys* (Heritage Victoria, 2008), as updated in 2013.

**Design and mitigation measures**

* Potential and proposed design and mitigation measures to address effects on any Aboriginal and historic cultural heritage, particularly in the vicinity of Kororoit Creek.

**Assessment of likely effects**

* Identify the potential effects on Aboriginal and historic cultural heritage resulting from the project.
* Archaeological investigations to evaluate the significance, location and extent of archaeological sites that may be affected by the project works, in accordance with the *Guidelines for Investigating Historical Archaeological Artefacts and Sites* (Heritage Victoria, 2012).

**Approach to manage performance**

* Identify in the EES any further methods proposed to manage risks of effects on cultural heritage values, including as part of the EMF (see section 4.9)
* Response to any relevant requirements under the AH Act, such as preparation of a draft CHMP.

## Environmental Management Framework

**Draft Evaluation Objective -** *To provide a transparent framework with clear accountabilities for managing environmental effects and hazards associated with construction, operation, decommissioning and rehabilitation phases of the project, in order to achieve acceptable environmental outcomes.*

**Key issues**

* Weak management of environmental effects during project construction and operation could result in failure to meet statutory requirements and sustain community confidence.

**Priorities for characterising the existing environment**

* Outline the means by which a register of environmental risks associated with the project will be developed and maintained (including matters identified in preceding sections in these Scoping Requirements as well as other pertinent risks).

**Design and mitigation measures**

* Provide a proposed framework for managing the risks of adverse environmental effects, including:
* the context of required approvals and consents;
* the environmental management system (EMS) to be adopted, including organisational responsibilities and accountabilities;
* a summary of environmental management measures proposed in the EES to address specific issues, including commitments to mitigate adverse effects and enhance environmental outcomes;
* proposed objectives, indicators and monitoring requirements, including for managing:

- social outcomes

- traffic

- waste including potentially contaminated materials

- environmental quality (including for dust)

- surface runoff, water quality and groundwater

- construction noise and vibration

- disruption of and hazards to existing infrastructure;

* outline of any relevant Environmental Management Plans (EMP) for construction and operational phases.

**Assessment of likely effects**

* Evaluate the likely effectiveness of the proposed EMF in controlling adverse effects.

**Approach to manage performance**

* Procedures for:
* monitoring environmental performance and verifying compliance with requirements; and
* review of the effectiveness of the EMF for continuous improvement.
* Arrangements for management of, and access to, baseline and monitoring data, to ensure the transparency and accountability of environmental management as well as to contribute to the improvement of environmental knowledge.

## Integrated and Sustainable Transport

**Draft Evaluation Objective -** *Overall, to demonstrate that the project would achieve a balance of economic, social and environmental outcomes that contribute to ecologically sustainable development and provide a net community benefit over the short and long-term.*

**Key issues**

* The balance of economic, social and environmental outcomes from the project needs to be beneficial over the short and long-term.

**Assessment of likely effects**

* Provide an integrated assessment of the economic, social and environmental performance of the project proceeding, drawing on the findings of the specific assessments set out above, including the proposed approaches to avoiding, mitigating, managing and offsetting potential adverse effects.
* Evaluate the overall implications of the project in the context of key aspects of legislation and statutory policy, as well as the principles and objectives of ecologically sustainable development and environment protection.
1. Please note: whilst the project name has changed since the referral from ‘Palmers Road Corridor (Stage 2 & 3)’ to ‘Palmers Road Corridor – Western Freeway to Calder Freeway’, the project description remains the same. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. The project is to be considered in terms of proposed works, which could have a significant effect on the environment, noting that the EE Act is concerned with the effects of works. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. For the purpose of environmental effects assessment under the *Environment Effects Act* *1978,* the meaning of ‘environment’ includes physical, biological, heritage, cultural, social, health, safety and economic aspects (Page 2 of the *Ministerial Guidelines*). [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. Works to connect Westwood Drive via a road and a bridge over Kororoit Creek form part of the works that were referred under the EE Act, and are the subject of the Minister for Planning’s decision to require an EES for the project. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. As part of implementation of reforms to the native vegetation permitted clearance regulations the *Permitted clearing of native vegetation – Biodiversity assessment guidelines* will replace *Victoria’s Native Vegetation Management – Framework for Action*, as an incorporated document in Victorian planning schemes from September 2013. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. Page 14 of the *Ministerial Guidelines*:

 “A *systems* approach involves the consideration of potentially affected environmental systems and interacting environmental elements and processes. This will enable potential interdependencies to be identified, helping to focus relevant investigations and identify opportunities to avoid, mitigate or manage adverse effects. An inter-disciplinary approach should be adopted where appropriate.

A *risk-based* approach should be adopted in the assessment of environmental effects so that suitable, intensive, best practice methods can be applied to accurately assess those matters that involve relatively high levels of risk of significant adverse effects and guide the design of strategies to manage these risks. Simpler or less comprehensive methods of investigation may be applied to matters that can be shown to involve lower levels of risk.

 Implementation of a risk-based approach means that a staged study design may be appropriate. The initial phase of investigation should characterise environmental assets that may be affected, potential threats arising from a project, and the potential environmental consequences. This phase should enable the design of any necessary further studies proportionate to the risk to analyse the consequences and likelihood of adverse effects.” [↑](#footnote-ref-6)