

Air Quality



Environment Effects Statement

An [Environment Effects Statement \(EES\)](#) is Victoria's most rigorous and transparent environmental impact assessment. It describes the project, its rationale, and potential environmental and social effects.

Scoping requirements

In February 2025, the Victorian Minister for Planning issued the final scoping requirements for the VNI West EES, setting out the proposed specific matters to be investigated and documented in the EES. While the scoping requirements are intended to cover all relevant matters, the EES can also address other significant matters that emerge during the EES investigations or through consultation.

Air quality (community amenity) scoping requirements

The EES scoping requirements state that air quality is well understood. Dust emission impacts from the project can be effectively managed through the implementation of standard industry practices for dust and air emission control.

Matters for investigation

Potential for adverse effects to local air quality on amenity and at sensitive receptors and on other sensitive land uses during construction of the project.

Assessment overview

The air quality assessment looks at the potential changes to local air quality at sensitive receptors that may be caused as a result of the construction, operation, and decommissioning of the project.

Study methodology

The assessment's methodology is summarised below:

- Identification of project components relevant to air quality.
- Desktop assessment of the existing air quality conditions in the study area, including the identification of sensitive receptors in line with the Environment Protection Authority (EPA) Publication 1961 and the Institute of Air Quality Management (IAQM) guidance.
- Identification and risk screening of potential air quality effects in each phase of the project.
- Identification of mitigation measures (where required) and assessment of the residual effect of each risk once the mitigation measure(s) have been applied.
- Assessment of cumulative effects with other proposed developments in the region.

PM10 and PM2.5 (measures of particles found in air) monitoring data collected at monitoring stations in Kyalite (NSW) and Wycheproof (VIC) have been analysed to understand the ambient (outdoor) air quality level in the project area. PM2.5 data collected at the Victoria standard monitoring station in Bendigo has also been analysed.

Survey works are not being undertaken.

Scan this QR code to view the complete list of [scoping requirements](#) for the VNI West project





Existing conditions

Existing land use in the study area is mostly a mix of farming land, scattered remnant vegetation, and rural residential land. Residential dwellings in the area are mainly farmhouses and are spaced well apart. From the south to the north of the project area, the landscape changes noticeably from rolling hills to fairly flat terrain.

Due to the distance covered by the easement, this assessment analysed climate and meteorological data collected from the Swan Hill Aerodrome, Charlton, and Stawell Aerodrome Bureau of Meteorology (BoM) stations, to represent conditions from the northern, middle, and southern parts of the project easement.

A National Pollution Inventory (NPI) database review was conducted to identify existing emission sources near the project. No facilities within a 5km radius of the project easement were required to report pollutants of interest for VNI West for the 2022/2023 reporting period.

As the main potential air quality impact is dust during construction activities, the study team identified all sensitive receptors (primarily residential dwellings) in the general vicinity of the construction sites, including the individual tower locations and the terminal station site in Tragowel. With a few exceptions, all dwellings along the easement are 300m or further from any construction site and their location and proximity to project infrastructure will be assessed in terms of likely dust impacts with and without mitigation measures.

The latest census from the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) website was reviewed to understand the population density and vulnerability of people living in the project area based on factors such as health and socio-economic conditions. The ABS data shows that:

- The project is situated in an area with low population density.
- Most of the project easement is situated in areas that are not vulnerable to air emissions, while the northern and southern sections are moderately vulnerable to air pollution.

Next steps

The air quality specialists will assess the locations of all dwellings and other sensitive receptors in relation to where project infrastructure, namely towers, the terminal station and local access roads, are located. They will assess potential impacts based on factors such as distance and prevailing winds. The construction industry has well-developed dust mitigation strategies (including watering disturbed surfaces) which will be identified as mitigation measures in the impact assessment. It is not anticipated that dust will be a major impact associated with the project.

Glossary

EPA (Environment Protection Authority Victoria)

The independent environmental regulator for Victoria.

EPA Publication 1961 (Air quality assessment guidance)

A guideline published by Environment Protection Authority Victoria to support the assessment of potential air quality impacts from emissions such as dust, odour, and smoke.

IAQM Guidance (Institute of Air Quality Management)

Guidance developed by the Institute of Air Quality Management in the UK. It is widely used to assess the potential impacts of construction dust on people and the environment. The guidance offers a structured method for evaluating air quality risks during construction and helps inform appropriate mitigation measures.