

# attachment III

## community and stakeholder consultation.



Environment Effects Statement | May 2021

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## **APA VTS (Operations) Pty Ltd**

# Western Outer Ring Main Environment Effects Statement Community and Stakeholder Consultation Report

May 2021

This EES Stakeholder Consultation Report (Report):

1. Has been prepared by GHD Pty Ltd (“GHD”) for APA VTS (Operations) Pty Ltd (APA)
2. May only be used for the purpose of informing the Environment Effects Statement and Pipeline Licence Application for the Western Outer Ring Main Project (and must not be used for any other purpose); and
3. May be provided to the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning for the purpose of public exhibition as part of the Environment Effects Statement and Pipeline Licence Application for the Western Outer Ring Main Project

The services undertaken by GHD in connection with preparing this Report were limited to those specifically detailed in section 1.3 of this Report. The opinions, conclusions and any recommendations in this Report are based on assumptions made by GHD when undertaking services and preparing the Report (Assumptions), as specified in section 1.3 and throughout this Report. GHD excludes liability for errors in, or omissions from, this Report arising from or in connection with any of the assumptions being incorrect. Subject to the paragraphs in this section of the Report, the opinions, conclusions and any recommendations in this Report are based on conditions encountered and information reviewed at the time of preparation. GHD has not, and accepts no responsibility or obligation to update this Report to account for events or changes occurring subsequent to the date that the Report was signed

# Executive summary

This technical report is an attachment to the Western Outer Ring Main Project (the Project) Environment Effects Statement (EES). It summarises the consultation undertaken during the EES process which informed the assessment of the Project for the EES and is informing the development of the Project.

## *The Project*

The Western Outer Ring Main Project is a new natural gas transmission pipeline that will improve gas network transmission and energy reliability for Victorians. It will respond to potential future gas shortages forecast by the Australian Energy Market Operator by providing improved transmission of gas into the gas storage basins used to supply Victorians in winter peak periods.

The Western Outer Ring Main will be a buried 600-millimetre nominal diameter high pressure pipeline between APA's existing Plumpton Regulating Station (approx. 38 kilometres north-west of Melbourne's CBD) and Wollert Compressor Station (approx. 26 kilometres north-east of Melbourne's CBD). It will provide a high-pressure connection between the eastern and western pipeline networks of the Victorian Transmission System (VTS).

The Project includes a new approximately 51-kilometre-long buried pipeline, three above ground mainline valves along the pipeline alignment, and an additional compressor unit and pressure regulating station at the existing APA Wollert Compressor Station.

APA is the proponent for the Project.

On 22 December 2019, the Minister for Planning determined that the Project requires an Environment Effects Statement (EES) under the *Environment Effects Act 1978 (EE Act)*.

The scoping requirements for the EES published by the Minister for Planning describe the specific environmental factors to be investigated and documented in the Project's EES. The EES allows for stakeholders to understand the likely environmental impacts of the Western Outer Ring Main Project and how they are proposed to be managed.

GHD was commissioned to prepare this Community and Stakeholder Consultation Report for the purpose of the EES.

## *Community and stakeholder consultation*

APA is required by EES Scoping Requirements to implement its EES Consultation Plan to inform stakeholders and community members about the EES and consider stakeholder and community knowledge and views in the EES and Project planning.

Prior to the EES process, engagement with key stakeholders informed the pipeline route selection in 2018 and 2019 (underpinned by requirements of the *Pipelines Act 2005*, which included the publication and approval of a separate Pipelines Act Consultation Plan).

This report provides an overview of all consultation, with a focus on stakeholder and community interactions between January 2020 and the formal exhibition of the EES in the second quarter of 2021.

Through these consultation activities, APA has sought to:

- Inform stakeholders and community members of the assessment and approval processes and timeline.
- Share the findings of technical studies with stakeholders and local communities
- Provide stakeholders and community members with sufficient opportunities to provide input into the EES process
- Obtain stakeholder input on Project issues, impacts and alignments
- Outline current and future opportunities for community involvement with the Project

The engagement approach and methodology is guided by principles based on the Victorian Auditor General's Office (VAGO) and the International Association of Public Participation (IAP2) guidelines, as outlined in Section 5 of this report, along with APA's own policy for community engagement.

A wide range of channels has supported the consultation process, including emails, telephone enquiries, meetings and virtual information sessions. The majority of consultation on the Project had to be undertaken while Victoria's coronavirus (COVID-19) physical distancing restrictions were in place. In keeping with State of Emergency requirements, consultation during 2020 was conducted almost exclusively online, with some opportunities for traditional channels such as mailshots and a Project hotline. The launch of an engagement hub has supported outward communications, and also the collation of feedback through the interactive map and community survey. Consultation on the Project will continue in early 2021 with more face-to-face opportunities for engagement (dependent on Government restrictions).

A broad range of stakeholder groups have been consulted throughout the engagement process, including extensive engagement with landholders based on requirements set out in the *Pipelines Act*. An overview of these stakeholders consulted is outlined in Section 7 of this report. The issues, concerns and opportunities raised are summarised in Section 8, along with the Project response.

# Abbreviation

Abbreviation	Definition
CALD	Culturally And Linguistically Diverse
CEMP	Construction Environmental Management Plan
CHMP	Cultural Heritage Management Plan
DELWP	Victorian Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning
<i>EE Act</i>	<i>Environment Effects Act 1978 (Vic)</i>
EES	Environment Effects Statement
<i>EPBC Act</i>	<i>Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999 (Cth)</i>
ESV	Energy Safe Victoria
IAP2	International Association of Public Participation
Iona UGS	Iona Underground Storage facility
MSA	Melbourne Strategic Assessment
<i>Pipelines Act</i>	<i>Pipelines Act 2005 (Vic)</i>
PPA	Preliminary Pipeline Alignment
TRG	Technical Reference Group
VAGO	Victorian Auditor-General's Office
VTS	Victorian Transmission System
WORM	Western Outer Ring Main
WWCHAC	Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung Cultural Heritage Aboriginal Corporation
CALD	Culturally And Linguistically Diverse

# Glossary

Term	Definition
APA	APA VTS (Operations) Pty Ltd, a subsidiary of APA Group, the proponent for the Project
Environmental management measure	Approaches, requirements or actions to avoid, mitigate or manage potential adverse impacts
Landholders	Encompassing landowners and occupiers
Scoping requirements	The EES Scoping requirements for the Project issued by the Minister for Planning in August 2020.
Technical Reference Group (TRG)	The TRG was established for the Project in May 2020 and it comprises representatives from councils, government agencies, key regulators, and the Registered Aboriginal Party (RAP), that have a statutory or policy interest in the Project. While its primary purpose is to provide advice on the regulatory process, TRG meetings also provide an opportunity for these stakeholders to provide feedback on the Project.
The Project	The Western Outer Ring Main Project
X-Info Connect	APA's stakeholder communications management database

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# 1. Introduction

## 1.1 Purpose of this report

On 22 December 2019, the Minister for Planning determined that Project would require an Environment Effects Statement (EES) under the *Environment Effects Act 1978* (EE Act).

The Ministerial guidelines for assessment of environmental effects under the *Environment Effects Act 1978* (Ministerial Guidelines) state that a specific objective of the EES assessment process is 'to provide public access to information about potential environmental effects as well as fair opportunities for participation in assessment processes by stakeholders and the public'.

The Minister for Planning's decision to require an EES for the Project included a requirement that:

*The proponent is to prepare and submit to the department its proposed EES consultation plan for engaging with the public and stakeholders during the preparation of the EES. Once completed to the satisfaction of the department, the consultation plan is to be implemented by the proponent, having regard to advice from the department and the TRG.*

An EES Consultation Plan was prepared for the Project and published on the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP) website in October 2020 with the final scoping requirements. It is available at: <https://www.planning.vic.gov.au/environment-assessment/browse-projects/projects/western-outer-ring-main-gas-pipeline>.

GHD was commissioned to undertake a Community and Stakeholder Consultation Report for the purpose of the EES.

The purpose of this report is to illustrate the steps taken, including those set out in the EES Consultation Plan, to inform all relevant stakeholders about the Project and record feedback from the stakeholder engagement process that has been undertaken during development of the EES. It summarises the communication and engagement activities to date and responses to issues and concerns raised. It also acknowledges previous feedback received from key stakeholders, landholders and general community during the selection of the pipeline route, which has led to refinements to the Project alignment.

## 1.2 Why community and stakeholder consultation is important

Public participation has been integral to the development of the Project. Having identified those most impacted and interested in the Project, the proponent has engaged with those key stakeholders throughout the selection of the pipeline route during 2018 and 2019. This stage of consultation was underpinned by the Pipelines Act Consultation Plan as required by the *Pipelines Act 2005*, which sets rigorous standards for engagement with impacted landholders and stakeholders. This report provides an overview of all consultation, with a focus on stakeholder and community consultation undertaken between January 2020 and the formal exhibition of the EES in the second quarter of 2021.

These activities have built community and stakeholder awareness and understanding of the Project, sought input from the communities and stakeholders into Project planning and development, and informed the Project alignment, EES process, risk assessment and decision-making in relation to the Project.

### **1.3 Limitations**

This report has been prepared by GHD for APA VTS (Operations) Pty Ltd and may only be used and relied on by APA VTS (Operations) Pty Ltd for the purpose agreed between GHD and APA VTS (Operations) Pty Ltd as set out in section 1 of this report.

GHD otherwise disclaims responsibility to any person other than APA VTS (Operations) Pty Ltd arising in connection with this report. GHD also excludes implied warranties and conditions, to the extent legally permissible.

The services undertaken by GHD in connection with preparing this report were limited to those specifically detailed in the report and are subject to the scope limitations set out in the report.

The opinions, conclusions and any recommendations in this report are based on conditions encountered and information reviewed at the date of preparation of the report. GHD has no responsibility or obligation to update this report to account for events or changes occurring subsequent to the date that the report was prepared.

The opinions, conclusions and any recommendations in this report are based on assumptions made by GHD described in this report. GHD disclaims liability arising from any of the assumptions being incorrect

### **1.4 Coronavirus (COVID-19) physical distancing requirements**

During the development of the EES for the Project, the Australian and Victorian governments (based on the advice from the Chief Health Officer) developed physical distancing restrictions as a way to manage the spread of coronavirus (COVID-19). Due to this, public gatherings were restricted and therefore consultation did not permit face-to-face engagement during the majority of 2020.

To follow State of Emergency requirements, consultation during the preparation of EES in 2020 was almost exclusively conducted online. Traditional forms of communication were maintained to ensure broad access, including hard copy communications such as letter box drops and a Project helpline. Engagement was expanded in 2021 to create more face-to-face opportunities in line with eased restrictions.

## 2. EES Scoping requirements

The following sections provide an outline of the EES scoping requirements as they are relevant to community and stakeholder consultation.

### 2.1 EES Consultation Plan

The proponent is responsible for informing and engaging the public and stakeholders to identify and respond to their issues and keep them informed of the EES studies. Stakeholders include potentially affected parties, interested community organisations and government bodies. Under its Consultation Plan, the proponent informs the public and stakeholders about the EES investigations and provides opportunities for input and engagement during the EES investigations. The consultation plan was reviewed and amended in consultation with DELWP and the Technical Reference Group (TRG) before it was published on the planning website.

The Consultation Plan:

- Identifies stakeholders
- Characterises public and stakeholders' interests, concerns and consultation needs, local knowledge and inputs
- Describes consultation methods and schedule; and
- Outlines how public and stakeholder inputs will be recorded, considered and/or addressed in the preparation of the EES

The EES Consultation Plan is limited to addressing the EES phase of the Project. A Pipelines Act Consultation Plan approved under the Pipelines Act addresses consultation through all phases of the Project.

### 2.2 Matters to be addressed in the EES

The scoping requirements also state that the EES report should include:

- Documentation of the process and results of the consultation undertaken by the proponent during the preparation of the EES, including the issues raised by stakeholders or the public and the proponent's responses to these issues, in the context of the EES studies and the associated consideration of mitigation measures.

### 2.3 EES evaluation objectives

The scoping requirements for the EES, released by the Minister for Planning, set out the specific environmental matters to be investigated and documented in the Project's EES, and informs the scope of the EES technical studies. The scoping requirements include a set of evaluation objectives. These objectives identify the desired outcomes to be achieved in managing the potential impacts of construction and operation of the Project.

## 2.4 Links to other reports

This report relies on or informs the technical assessments as indicated in Table 2-1. We have noted where feedback from the community and stakeholders was received, and also where none was forthcoming.

**Table 2-1 Links to other technical reports**

Specialist report	Relevance
Air quality	Feedback related to air quality was gathered from the community and identified stakeholders during the public consultation.
Biodiversity	Feedback related to biodiversity was gathered from the community and identified stakeholders during the public consultation.
Contamination	Feedback related to contamination was gathered from the community and identified stakeholders during the public consultation.
Cultural Heritage	Feedback related to cultural heritage was gathered from the Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung Cultural Heritage Aboriginal Corporation, Aboriginal Victoria and Traditional Owner groups and representatives during the preparation of the CHMP and during the public consultation.
Greenhouse gas	Feedback related to greenhouse gas was gathered from the community and identified stakeholders during the public consultation.
Groundwater	Feedback related to groundwater was gathered from the community and identified stakeholders during the public consultation.
Land stability and ground movement	Feedback related to land stability and ground movement was gathered from the community and identified stakeholders during the public consultation.
Land use	Feedback related to land use was gathered from the community, identified stakeholders and targeted landholder engagement during the public consultation.
Landscape and visual	Feedback related to landscape and visual was gathered from the community and identified stakeholders during the public consultation.
Noise and vibration	Feedback related to noise and vibration was gathered from the community and identified stakeholders during the public consultation.
Safety	Feedback related to safety was gathered from the community and identified stakeholders during the public consultation.
Social	The Social Impact Assessment research drew on feedback from a range of stakeholders. Local area demographic information informs the stakeholder overview.
Surface Water	Feedback related to water was gathered from the community and identified stakeholders during the public consultation.

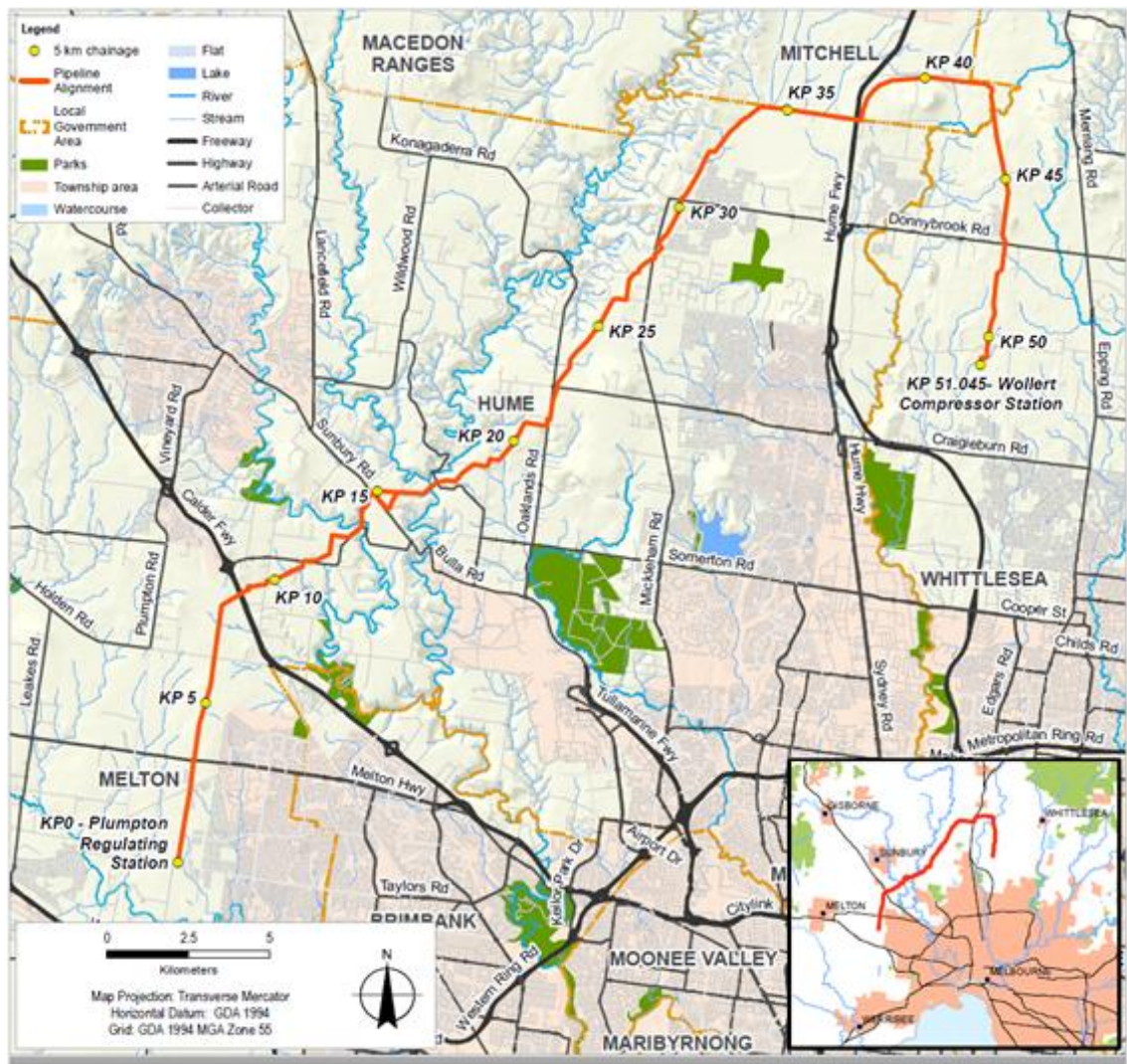
## 3. Project description

### 3.1 Project overview

The Project provides a new high-pressure gas pipeline link between APA's existing Plumpton Regulating Station (approx. 38 kilometres north-west of Melbourne's CBD) and Wollert Compressor Station (approx. 26 kilometres north-east of Melbourne's CBD). The Project includes the following key components:

- **A new pipeline:** The pipeline would be approximately 51 kilometres in length. The pipeline would be within a 15 metre wide permanent easement and be buried for its entire length to a minimum depth of cover of 750 millimetres
- **Mainline valves:** Three mainline valves would be located along the pipeline alignment. The area required for mainline valves would be subdivided and acquired by APA to provide ongoing access to APA for any maintenance or inspection activities from the existing roads. The mainline valves would be spaced at intervals of approximately 15 kilometres and located within the proposed easement area at approximately KP 6, KP 22 and KP 35.
- **The Wollert Compressor Station upgrade:** The installation of a new Solar Centaur 50 compressor, an end of line scraper station and a pressure regulating station within the existing APA facility at Wollert.

A schematic illustration of the Project context is shown in Figure 3-1.



**Figure 3-1 Western Outer Ring Main overview**

### 3.2 Construction

Subject to the staging of the works, construction for the entire Project is expected to take approximately 9 months. Key construction activities for the Project include:

- Establishing offsite construction sites, including laydown areas
- Constructing the pipeline
- Constructing three mainline valves
- Construction of upgrades associated with the Wollert compressor station
- Rehabilitation

#### Construction sites

Two temporary construction sites would be established for construction.

One offsite compound for pipeline works nominally 200 metres x 200 metres, including laydown and storage areas. This would be located on a site where the activity is permitted under the relevant Planning Scheme, most likely within an existing industrial area.



The second temporary laydown area and construction offices would be established for the Wollert Compressor Station construction works. The site laydown area and construction offices for the compressor station equipment would be located within the existing compressor site area at Wollert.

### ***Pipeline construction area***

The Project would require a construction area for the pipeline, which would typically comprise a 30 metre wide corridor along the pipeline alignment. Most construction activity would be located within this construction area. The activities and facilities within the construction corridor would include access tracks and additional work areas such as vehicle turn around points and additional workspaces for crossings, stockpiling materials and storage of pipe. Additional work areas up to 50 metre x 50 metre or 50 m x 100 metre (such as for vehicle turn-around points, areas to accommodate HDD) would be required in some locations.

### ***Pipeline construction methodology***

The techniques used to construct the underground pipeline would include various methods including, open trenching and alternative techniques at certain locations such as horizontal directional drilling (HDD) or horizontal boring.

Where crossing watercourses, major roads, rail line reserves or other constraints, the pipeline may be constructed using trenchless construction techniques such as HDD or shallow horizontal boring, to avoid construction disturbance within the sensitive area.

The pipeline construction sequence starts with survey works and continues with site establishment (including laydown area), clearing and grading, pipe stringing, pipe bending, welding and coating, trenching, lowering pipe into trench, hydrostatic testing, commissioning, and finally rehabilitation.

There would be dedicated access points into the construction corridor with vehicular movements along the Project alignment kept within the construction corridor.

### **3.2.1 Construction of other facilities**

The construction sequence for the Wollert Compressor Station works starts with survey works and continues with site establishment (including laydown area), bulk earthworks, civil works (concrete slab and footings), mechanical works, electrical and instrumentation works, hydrostatic testing, commissioning, and site completion.

Various components of the compressor are assembled offsite. When delivered to site the various components are assembled together in-situ. Cranes are used to lift the compressor into place with all connecting pipework fitted.

### **3.3 Operation**

Following the reinstatement of land as part of the pipeline construction, the land would be generally returned to its previous use. When commissioned, the pipeline would be owned and maintained by APA. The pipeline would be contained within a 15 metre wide permanent easement corridor (within the area that formed the 30 metre construction corridor). Routine corridor inspections would be undertaken following APA procedures and AS2885 to monitor the pipeline easement for any operational or maintenance issues.

Excavating or erecting permanent structures, buildings, large trees or shrubs over the underground pipeline would be prohibited pursuant to easement agreements with landholders.

Maintenance and inspections of the mainline valves and the Wollert compressor station would also be conducted periodically following APA procedures. The activities usually include vegetation management, valve and compressor operation and corrective maintenance.

The key operation and maintenance phase activities include:

- Easement maintenance (vegetation control, weed management, erosion and subsidence monitoring)
- The pipeline, mainline valves and compressor station maintenance
- Specialist pigging operations
- Cathodic protection surveys for mechanical and electrical preventative and corrective maintenance
- Monitoring and routine inspections and surveillance

## 4. Legislation, policy and guidelines

The EES is prepared under the *EE Act* and will provide an assessment which will inform decision-makers of the approvals required for the Project. The legislation relevant to the principal approvals required for the Project is:

- Commonwealth approval under the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (Cth) (*EPBC Act*). For the component of the Project that is located outside of the Melbourne Strategic Assessment (MSA), the Project requires assessment and approval under the *EPBC Act*, under the assessment bilateral agreement with Victoria made under section 45 of the *EPBC Act*.
- Pipeline Licence approval is required under the *Pipelines Act 2005* (Vic) (*Pipelines Act*). The Pipeline Licence Application is exhibited with the EES. Section 49 of the *Pipelines Act* requires that the following matters be considered before granting a licence:
  - (a) *the potential environmental, social, economic and safety impacts of the proposed pipeline*
  - (f) *the assessment of the Environment Effects Minister in relation to the proposed pipeline, if an assessment has been made*
  - (g) *any written comments received from the Planning Minister or the relevant responsible authority on the effect of the proposed pipeline on the planning of the area through which it is to pass*
  - (h) *any written comments received from the Water Minister and the relevant Crown Land Minister on the impact of the proposed pipeline*

Section 3 of the *Pipelines Act* sets out the objectives of the Act including:

- (a) *to facilitate the development of pipelines for the benefit of Victoria*
- (e) *to protect the public from environmental, health and safety risks resulting from the construction and operation of pipelines*
- (f) *to ensure that pipelines are constructed and operated in a way that minimises adverse environmental impacts and has regard for the need for sustainable development*
- Cultural Heritage Management Plan (CHMP) under the *Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006* (Vic) (*AH Act*). Two CHMPs are currently in progress for the Project

### 4.1 Key legislation and policy applicable

A number of legislative and policy documents were found to be relevant to the planning and enacting of community and stakeholder consultation for this Project, in addition to the *EE Act*. They are summarised in Table 4-1 below.

**Table 4-1 Key legislation and policy**

Legislation/policy document	Description	Relevance to this report
AS ISO 1002:2014 Guidelines for Complaint Management in Organisations	<p>AS ISO 10002:2014 addresses the following aspects of complaints handling:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Enhancing customer satisfaction by creating a customer-focused environment that is open to feedback (including complaints)</li> <li>Resolving any complaints received; and</li> <li>Enhancing the organisation's ability to improve its product and customer service.</li> </ul>	<p>APA's complaint handling process forms part of the Consultation Plan for EES. This process plays an essential role in gathering feedback, and escalating concerns where required through the appropriate channels.</p>
<i>Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014</i>	<p>The purposes of this Act are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To provide for responsible collection and handling of personal information in the Victorian public sector; and</li> <li>To provide remedies for interferences with the information privacy of an individual; and</li> <li>To establish a protective data security regime for the Victorian public sector; and</li> <li>To establish a regime for monitoring and assuring public sector data security.</li> </ul>	<p>Personal information gathered from the community and stakeholders through Project consultation is kept securely and anonymously.</p>
<i>Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006</i>	<p>The sponsor must make reasonable efforts to consult with the registered Aboriginal party before beginning the assessment and during the preparation of the Cultural Heritage Management (CHMP).</p>	<p>Information gathered for the Cultural Heritage report and development of CHMP has been included in this report.</p>
<i>Pipelines Act 2005</i>	<p>An approved Pipelines Act Consultation Plan is required prior to a proponent giving notice to each landholder and occupier of an intention to enter land or of a pipeline corridor. The plan guides consultation with owners, occupiers and the public through the development, construction and operation of the pipeline.</p>	<p>Consultation underpins the <i>Pipelines Act</i>. This is partially fulfilled by the consultation for development and exhibition of the EES and Pipeline Licence Application.</p>

## 4.2 Consultation and engagement standards and guidelines

APA is committed to applying high standards in its approach towards communications and engagement throughout the EES for the Project and indeed the Project's lifetime. APA's approach (as outlined in more detail in Section 5 and within the EES Consultation Plan) is derived from the following standards and guidelines.

**Table 4-2 Consultation and engagement standards and guidelines**

Guidelines	Description	Relevance to this report
<p>Better practice guide for public participation (Victorian Auditor-General's Office, 2015)</p>	<p>Public participation is a critical input to government activity and developing effective strategies, programs and Projects. Failing to adequately engage the public risks alienating the community and creating negative impacts through poorly informed and implemented decisions.</p> <p>This better practice guide provides:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A high-level framework for agencies across the public sector to use when deciding how best to involve the public in government decision-making and implementation</li> <li>• The principles and elements that used to audit the efficiency and effectiveness of public participation exercises.</li> </ul>	<p>The guide provides valuable guidance on best practice public engagement for this Project to follow.</p> <p>This guide has informed APA's engagement principles.</p>
<p>Core Values; Public Participation Spectrum (International Association for Public Participation)</p>	<p>The International Association for Public Participation (IAP2) has developed the "IAP2 Core Values for Public Participation" for use in the development and implementation of public participation processes. These core values were developed over two years with broad international input to identify those aspects of public participation which cross national, cultural, and religious boundaries. The purpose of these core values is to help make better decisions which reflect the interests and concerns of potentially affected people and entities.</p> <p>The IAP2 Public Participation Spectrum is designed to assist with the selection of the level of participation that defines the public's role in any community engagement program. The Spectrum shows that differing levels of participation are legitimate depending on the goals, time frames, resources and levels of concern in the decision to be made. However, and most importantly, the Spectrum sets out the promise being made to the public at each participation level. The Spectrum is widely used and is quoted in most community engagement manuals.</p>	<p>IAP2's core values have informed APA's engagement principles as outlined in this report and their Consultation Plan. The Public Participation Spectrum has influenced the categorisation of stakeholders and their level of involvement in the consultation.</p>

Guidelines	Description	Relevance to this report
APA Community Consultation Policy (POL-A-2010)	This policy explains APA's approach to community consultation. The policy applies to all staff and contractors of the entities that make up APA Group and/or represent APA in the community. As such, the Project is being developed per the Community Consultation Policy.	As this is the proponent's policy, this is integral to the way engagement is carried out.
APA Community Consultation Planning Guide (GD-A-1051)	This guide assists staff to adhere to the abovementioned policy when identifying the appropriate approach and level of consultation for the activity they are to undertake. In addition to external guidance documents, this guide has been relied upon in the preparation of this EES Consultation Plan.	As this is the proponent's guide, this is integral to forming the engagement approach.

## 5. Stakeholders

Identifying stakeholders is critical to ensuring individuals and groups who may be impacted or who are interested in the Project have the opportunity to be engaged with. This section of the report provides a snapshot of each stakeholder category as well as key engagement activities undertaken and key issues and concerns for each group. Sections 6, 7 and 8 cover the consultation approach, summary of activities and feedback overview respectively with reference to stakeholder groups.

APA has developed and maintained a list of Project stakeholders since discussions began around selection of the pipeline corridor in 2018 and a version of this list was included in the EES Consultation Plan. The stakeholder list was continually reviewed and updated to support effective and appropriate engagement activities and informed by data gathered via:

- Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) and other relevant secondary data sources (further demographic information is available within the EES Technical Report L – Social)
- Technical assessments, in particular for Cultural Heritage and Social
- Interviews with six directly affected landholders who expressed a desire to contribute to the EES Technical Report L - Social
- Meetings with a number of stakeholders throughout the EES stage

See Appendix B for the complete analysis to date.

Figure 5-1 presents a detailed overview of stakeholders, grouping them into the following categories:

- Landholders
- Asset and infrastructure owners
- Regulatory authorities (State & Federal)
- Registered Aboriginal Parties and Traditional Owner Groups
- Elected Representatives
- Local councils
- Community, Environment and Action Groups
- Media
- Local residents
- Local businesses
- Emergency services
- Property developers



**Figure 5-1 Overview of stakeholder categories**

## 5.1 Landholders

Landholders include the owners or occupiers of land that would be directly affected by the proposed Project. In addition to the EES Consultation Plan published in September 2020, a Pipelines Act Consultation Plan was developed in 2019 as part of APA’s regulatory requirements to gain a Pipeline Licence.

Through these plans, APA has committed to proactive engagement with landholders impacted by the pipeline construction and operation, as well as the communities surrounding the pipeline corridor. Engagement has provided affected landholders with background and reasoning for the pipeline, consultation on the pipeline alignment, and proposals to minimise impacts to properties during the Project’s construction.



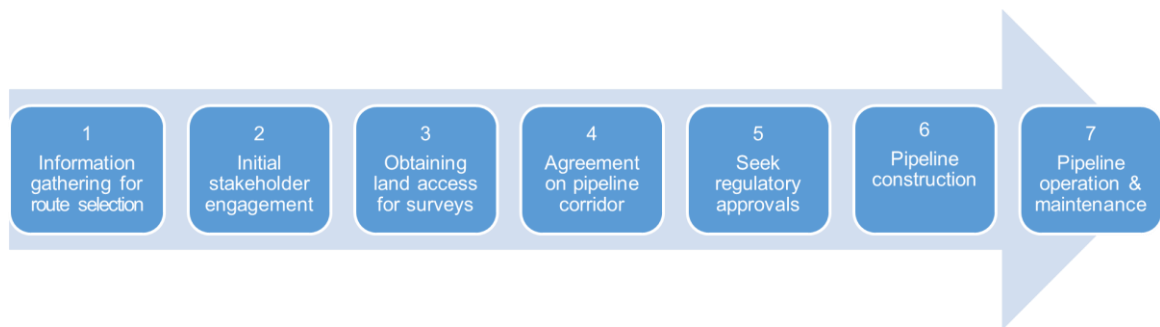
### 5.1.1 Landholder engagement objectives

The primary objectives of APA consultation activities with landholders are to:

- Ensure that landholders are sufficiently informed about the Pipeline Works, the aspects they can influence and their statutory rights
- Allow landholders to have input into aspects of the Pipeline Works that could affect them
- Enable APA to understand the views of landholders
- Ensure that consultation activities enable landholders to better understand the Pipeline Works through the timely distribution of Project information presented in an understandable format
- Ensure a consistent consultation approach is adopted during the Pipeline Works
- Outline the process of consultation with landholders and the complaints process to ensure consistency with regulatory requirements
- Outline the EES process and consultation opportunities for landholders
- Meet the statutory requirements and expectations of regulatory agencies.

### 5.1.2 Stages of landholder engagement

APA's consultation methods have been developed in line with stages of Project planning and delivery, as per the requirements of the Pipelines Act and EE Act. These stages form logical consultation stages, with distinct elements within in each phase relating to information provision, consultation methods and the level of engagement required with relevant landholders. Stages are summarised below in Figure 5-2 and described in more detail in Section 6 of this report.



**Figure 5-2 Stages of consultation**

### 5.1.3 Landholder engagement overview

Landholders within the Project Area include:

- Owners and occupiers impacted by the pipeline construction/operation
- DELWP - as the owner of creek Crown land parcels
- Neighbouring owners and occupiers of land (not directly impacted)

APA has had over 4,126 interactions with the owners of 127 privately owned parcels during development of the Project. A snapshot of key interactions with landholders is provided in Table 5-1.

**Table 5-1 Landholder engagement activities**

Engagement activity	Statistics/Results As of 28/2/201	Purpose/description
Visit property	124	A visit is when Land Access Officer attends a landholder's property without a scheduled meeting to discuss land negotiations.
Phone conversations	877	A phone conversation, incoming or outgoing, with a landholder about potential land impact queries or negotiations
Emails	2407	An email communication with landholders relating to potential land impact queries or negotiations.
Meetings	299	A meeting scheduled with the landholder, sometimes with other stakeholders, such as lawyers or valuers, to discuss impacts to land or land negotiations.
Letters	419	Letters sent to properties to reach landholders, including regulatory purposes, with Project notifications or information.

Key landowner issues and concerns included:

- Likely impact to residences during construction
- Loss of amenity due to noise and dust during construction
- The protection and security of cattle during construction
- Access to property during construction
- Removal of mature trees (loss of amenity and property wind protection)
- Disruption to business operations on their land (for example, agistments).

Six landholder meetings also took place as a part of the social impact assessment.

## 5.2 Asset and infrastructure owners

Utility services and industry groups relevant to the Project Area or impacted by the pipeline route include:

- Melbourne Water
- VicTrack
- Utility asset owners/authorities including Telstra, Optus, Opticomm, NBN, Jemena, AusNet (Gas), AusNet (Power), Vocus and water service providers (City West Water, Western Water, Yarra Valley Water)
- Road management authorities (councils and Department of Transport (DoT))

Councils, DoT, VicTrack and Melbourne Water are represented on the Project's Technical Reference Group. City West Water requested updates on the proposed pipeline construction dates.

## 5.3 Regulatory authorities (State and Commonwealth)

Government agencies and regulators within the Project Area are:

- Aboriginal Victoria

- Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment (Commonwealth)
- Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP)
- Department of Transport (previously VicRoads)
- Energy Safety Victoria
- Environment Protection Authority
- Heritage Victoria

These regulatory authorities are all represented on the Project's Technical Reference Group, and are given the opportunity to review and provide comment on the EES technical reports. A number of these authorities have discussed and reviewed alternatives for the alignment of the pipeline and construction technique during the EES process to ensure community and environmental concerns are addressed, as well accommodate wider infrastructure in the Project area.

## **5.4 Registered Aboriginal Parties and Traditional Owner Groups**

Traditional Owner groups located on or near the Project Area include:

- Boon Wurrung Foundation
- Bunurong Land Council Aboriginal Corporation
- Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung Cultural Heritage Aboriginal Corporation

The Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung Cultural Heritage Aboriginal Corporation (WWCHAC) is represented on the Project's Technical Reference Group and is a Registered Aboriginal Party (RAP) for a part of the Project Area (KP 8.29 - KP 51.04).

A number of stakeholder meetings were held at the WWCHAC offices to discuss the proposed works, assessment methodologies and fieldwork results. The WWCHAC will continue to be consulted as the relevant Cultural Heritage Management Plan (CHMP) is developed for the land on which they are the RAP. Consultation has also taken place to inform the Cultural Heritage technical report and an additional CHMP in relation to land where there is no allocated RAP, involving Aboriginal Victoria, WWCHAC, Bunurong Land Council Aboriginal Corporation and Boon Wurrung Foundation. All Traditional Owner Groups have participated in Project fieldwork.

## **5.5 Elected representatives**

Relevant local, state and federal members of Parliament State (MPs), include:

- Kororoit: The Hon. Marlene Kairouz MP
- Sunbury: Mr Josh Bull MP
- Sydenham: Hon. Natalie Hutchins MP
- Yan Yean: Ms Danielle Green MP
- Yuroke: Ms Ros Spence MP
- Federal MPs:
  - Gorton: Hon. Brendan O'Connor MP
  - McEwan: Mr Rob Mitchell MP

Elected representatives have been included in emailed communications about the Project.

## 5.6 Local councils

Local councils within the Project Area are:

- Hume City Council
- Melton City Council
- Mitchell Shire Council
- Whittlesea City Council

All local councils are represented on the Project's Technical Reference Group and have been updated on the engagement approach.

Melton, Hume and Whittlesea City Councils shared information about the Project, its engagement hub, information sessions and survey via their social media platforms and website.

Melton, Hume and Mitchell Shire Councils have also been engaged with as a part of the Social Impact Assessment on the following topics:

- Key community characteristics
- Sense of place and significance
- Use of open spaces and recreational areas
- Use of watercourses
- Community concerns and likely impacts on the community

## 5.7 Community, Environment and Action groups

Given the proposed pipeline traverses a number of waterways and has the potential for impact on local flora, fauna, land and local community activities, the proponent has shared updates with local community and environment and action groups. These are a variety of clubs, land care groups, resident groups and friends of parks groups in the area, including:

- Bulla Hill Railway
- Diggers Rest Residents Association
- Environment Victoria
- Environmental Justice Australia
- Friends of Edgars Creek
- Friends of Malcolm Creek & Grasslands
- Friends of Merri Creek
- Hume Climate Action Now
- Jacksons Creek EcoNetwork
- Melton Environment Group
- Merri Creek Management Committee
- Northern Alliance for Greenhouse Action
- Sunbury Residents Action Group
- Western Alliance for Greenhouse Action

APA's Project team has met with a representative from Jacksons Creek EcoNetwork to listen to their concerns. GHD's Social Impact Assessment team has also met with the Merri Creek Management Committee to discuss potential Project impacts on riverine health and rehabilitation measures.

Environmental groups have concerns regarding construction in areas that require removal of a large number of trees, as well as biodiversity hotspots that are home to threatened species, especially in conservation regions and sensitive habitats such as natural waterways.

Remediation of the land is important, as is the opportunity for funding of conservation projects. There have also been views expressed against the Project itself, involving questions around the need for new gas infrastructure and their preference for investment in renewable energy projects.

## **5.8 Media**

This category includes news organisations that publish in print, on television and online, including:

- Hume Leader
- Melton And Moorabool Star Weekly
- Melton Leader
- Mirage News
- Northern Leader
- Preston Press
- Sunbury & Macedon Rangers Star Weekly
- Sunbury & Macedon Ranges Star Weekly
- Sunbury Leader
- The North Central Review
- Whittlesea Leader
- Whittlesea Review

Interaction with local media has been in response to direct enquiries only. One publication enquired about the environmental impacts of constructing a pipeline over environmentally sensitive areas, such as creek beds, and whether investment in natural gas aligns with the State Government's renewable energy commitments.

## **5.9 Local residents**

- Residents of towns and suburbs close to works, include:
- Bulla
- Craigieburn
- Diggers Rest
- Donnybrook
- Kalkallo
- Mickleham
- Oaklands Junction

- Plumpton
- Wildwood
- Wollert

The Project team have sought to keep residents informed throughout the EES process, providing regular Project updates and opportunities to ask questions through a range of channels, including email, phone, mailshots and information sessions (both online and in person). Local councils have also been supportive in generating local awareness of the Project through their own channels, which has been especially important during the pandemic when face-to-face contact has not been allowed. Residents' concerns, questions and comments expressed have been recorded in Sections 7 and 8 of this report.

### **5.10 Local businesses**

Local businesses identified which are adjacent to the Project area include:

- Hi-Quality Quarry Products Pty Ltd
- Marnong Estate Winery and Homestead
- Mickleham Musallah Muslims Sunni Mosque

Engagement with businesses has taken place throughout and will be ongoing, including a wider business engagement event planned to take place in mid-2021 to discuss local investment and involvement opportunities.

### **5.11 Emergency services**

Emergency services operating in the Project area include:

- Ambulance Victoria
- Country Fire Authority / Metropolitan Fire Board (CFA/MFB)
- Victoria Police
- State Emergency Services (SES)

Consultation with Victoria Police was carried out as part of the Social Impact Assessment. They requested that they are consulted with regard to construction timelines and changes in road conditions to be undertaken during the Project's construction phase. Ambulance Victoria and CFA have also been approached about the Project but did not take up the opportunity of a meeting to date.

### **5.12 Property developers**

A number of significant developers and developments have been identified in the Project Area including:

- Dahua Group
- Dennis Family Corporation
- MAB
- Merristock
- Olivine Estate, Donnybrook (development by Mirvac)
- Peppercorn Hill, Donnybook (planned development)
- Potter George

- Santieri Developments
- Satterley
- Stockland
- Wolfdene

Developers have been receiving regular e-communications from the Project.

# 6. Consultation approach

## 6.1 Consultation timeline

Consultation has been planned around seven stages of the Project’s development and includes significant activities prior to EES. These stages form logical phases of consultation, with distinct aspects in relation to the provision of information, the method of consultation and level of engagement required with relevant landholders and other stakeholders for each stage. The relevant stages, along with a description of the consultation requirements for each stage, are illustrated in Figure 6.1. This report has been prepared as a part of Stage 5 in preparation for the public exhibition of the EES.



**Figure 6-1 Summary of Project stages and consultation**



The carefully planned and phased engagement approach has supported awareness among key stakeholders and the community of the Project's objectives, scope, benefits and proposed timeline, as well as the likely impacts and mitigations. The consultation has given relevant specialists the opportunity to consider and respond to comments, ideas, suggestions and issues raised. In turn, the Project has published these responses and shared information about the progress of the Project through EES.

## **6.2 Consultation objectives**

The purpose of consultation during the Project Stage 5, EES and approvals stage, as outlined in the EES Consultation Plan, is to:

- Inform stakeholders and community members of the EES process and timeline
- Share technical studies completed with stakeholders and community.
- Provide stakeholders and community members with sufficient opportunities to provide input into the EES process
- Obtain stakeholder input on Project issues, impacts and alignments

Outline current and future opportunities for community involvement with the Project.

## **6.3 Consultation and engagement principles**

The following principles are derived from Victorian Auditor-General's *Office Better Practice Guide for Public Participation* (2015) and informed by consultation standards and guidelines outlined in section 4.2.



**Figure 6-2 Consultation and engagement principles**

## 6.4 Engagement program

A range of resources and channels (see Section 6.6) have been used to communicate with and engage stakeholders. Feedback has been received in written and verbal form, via both digital channels such as email and virtual meeting, and traditional channels such as telephone.

Stakeholder communications have been strategically planned and combined to minimise the risk of consultation fatigue in the community and to maintain levels of awareness despite the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic. Communication and engagement activities have been targeted to the needs, interests and impact of community and stakeholder groups and the appropriate level of consultation (see Appendix B). This approach is broadly guided by the IAP2 Spectrum of Public Participation.

INCREASING IMPACT ON THE DECISION

	<b>INFORM</b>	<b>CONSULT</b>	<b>INVOLVE</b>	<b>COLLABORATE</b>	<b>EMPOWER</b>
<b>PUBLIC PARTICIPATION GOAL</b>	To provide the public with balanced and objective information to assist them in understanding the problem, alternatives, opportunities and/or solutions.	To obtain public feedback on analysis, alternatives and/or decisions.	To work directly with the public throughout the process to ensure that public concerns and aspirations are consistently understood and considered.	To partner with the public in each aspect of the decision including the development of alternatives and the identification of the preferred solution.	To place final decision making in the hands of the public.
<b>PROMISE TO THE PUBLIC</b>	We will keep you informed.	We will keep you informed, listen to and acknowledge concerns and aspirations, and provide feedback on how public input influenced the decision.	We will work with you to ensure that your concerns and aspirations are directly reflected in the alternatives developed and provide feedback on how public input influenced the decision.	We will look to you for advice and innovation in formulating solutions and incorporate your advice and recommendations into the decisions to the maximum extent possible.	We will implement what you decide.

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**Figure 6-3 IAP2 Spectrum of Public Participation**

Timing for communication and engagement activities has reflected the status of Project activities and the interests of particular stakeholders. For example, engagement with relevant stakeholders or community has been planned for when key information becomes available from technical study investigations and to feed into the development of relevant technical studies, but also considering the needs and availability of each stakeholder – for example by planning information sessions outside working hours.

The following table gives an overview of consultation activities by stage.

**Table 6-1 Consultation by Project stage**

Stage	Stages 1-4 2018 – Late 2019 (prior to EES)	Stage 5a: Regulatory approvals Quarter 1 2020 – Quarter 1 2021	Stage 5b: Regulatory approvals Quarter 2 2021 – Quarter 4 2021	Stages 6 & 7 Late 2021 – Mid-2022
<p><b>Project description and key milestones</b></p>	<p><b>Stage 1:</b> Route selection  <b>Stage 2:</b> Initial stakeholder engagement  <b>Stage 3:</b> Obtaining land access for surveys*  <b>Stage 4:</b> Agreement on pipeline corridor*                      *These activities continue during EES development</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Exhibition of scoping requirements</li> <li>• EES preparation</li> <li>• Technical studies</li> <li>• Respond to requirements of EPBC</li> <li>• Prepare Pipeline Licence Application</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Exhibition of EES and Pipeline Licence Application.</li> <li>• Panel hearings / submitters' conference</li> <li>• Ministerial assessment of the EES and Pipeline Licence Application.</li> <li>• Approval authority formal assessment of Cultural Heritage Management Plan</li> <li>• Approval authority formal assessment of the Pipeline Licence Application</li> </ul>	<p><b>Stage 6:</b> Construction  <b>Stage 7:</b> Project operation and maintenance</p>

Stage	Stages 1-4 2018 – Late 2019 (prior to EES)	Stage 5a: Regulatory approvals Quarter 1 2020 – Quarter 1 2021	Stage 5b: Regulatory approvals Quarter 2 2021 – Quarter 4 2021	Stages 6 & 7 Late 2021 – Mid-2022
<b>Key targeted community and stakeholders</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Landholders</li> <li>• Asset and infrastructure owners</li> <li>• Regulatory authorities</li> <li>• RAPs and Traditional Owner Groups</li> <li>• Local residents</li> <li>• Property developers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Landholders</li> <li>• Asset and infrastructure owners</li> <li>• Regulatory authorities</li> <li>• RAPs and Traditional Owner Groups</li> <li>• Elected Representatives</li> <li>• Local councils</li> <li>• Community, environment and action groups</li> <li>• Media</li> <li>• Local residents</li> <li>• Local businesses</li> <li>• Emergency services</li> <li>• Property developers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Landholders</li> <li>• Asset and infrastructure owners</li> <li>• Regulatory authorities</li> <li>• RAPs and Traditional Owner Groups</li> <li>• Elected Representatives</li> <li>• Local councils</li> <li>• Community, environment and action groups</li> <li>• Media</li> <li>• Local residents</li> <li>• Local businesses</li> <li>• Emergency services</li> <li>• Property developers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Landholders</li> <li>• Asset and infrastructure owners</li> <li>• Regulatory authorities</li> <li>• RAPs and Traditional Owner Groups</li> <li>• Elected Representatives</li> <li>• Local councils</li> <li>• Community, environment and action groups</li> <li>• Media</li> <li>• Local residents</li> <li>• Local businesses</li> <li>• Emergency services</li> <li>• Property developers</li> </ul>

Stage	Stages 1-4 2018 – Late 2019 (prior to EES)	Stage 5a: Regulatory approvals Quarter 1 2020 – Quarter 1 2021	Stage 5b: Regulatory approvals Quarter 2 2021 – Quarter 4 2021	Stages 6 & 7 Late 2021 – Mid-2022
<b>Key engagement activities and milestones</b>	<p>During this stage we engaged with communities, stakeholders and landholders on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Route selection and proposed route</li> <li>• Raising Project awareness</li> <li>• Potential Issues and concerns with the proposed area of interest</li> <li>• Sourcing of local information about conditions in the Project area</li> <li>• Provision of data and other information to inform route selection</li> </ul>	<p>During this stage, information about Project alignment, construction methods and the EES process as preparation for EES progressed over 2020.</p> <p>Community and stakeholders were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provided with an outline of the EES and planning process</li> <li>• Provided with the opportunity to provide feedback on the Project alignment</li> <li>• Investigated issues or concerns previously raised in more detail to be considered by specialists for the development of EES</li> </ul>	<p>During this stage, the EES and Pipeline Licence Application will be exhibited to the public for comment and feedback. This will include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• An overview of technical studies and impact of the Project, and how APA proposes to mitigate and manage the impacts</li> <li>• The Minister for Planning will appoint an independent inquiry into the effects of the Project to provide a report on this EES, the Pipeline Licence Application, public submissions, and APA's response to the submissions</li> <li>• The Minister for Planning will hand down an assessment</li> <li>• The Minister for Energy, Environment and Climate Change will make an assessment on the Pipeline Licence Application, taking into consideration the Minister for Planning's assessment</li> <li>• Ensure that the consultation requirements of the statutory approvals are met before commencing construction</li> </ul>	<p>This stage will support the construction works, Project operation and maintenance.</p> <p>Communication and engagement will continue with the community and stakeholders.</p> <p>Systems and processes will be established to respond to new and emerging issues following the environmental management framework for the Project. This includes implementation of the Pipelines Act Consultation Plan.</p>

Stage	Stages 1-4 2018 – Late 2019 (prior to EES)	Stage 5a: Regulatory approvals Quarter 1 2020 – Quarter 1 2021	Stage 5b: Regulatory approvals Quarter 2 2021 – Quarter 4 2021	Stages 6 & 7 Late 2021 – Mid-2022
<b>Feedback use</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Select a pipeline route</li> <li>• Inform regulatory agencies and other related stakeholders of the preferred route</li> <li>• Identify landholders and the local community impacted by the pipeline route</li> <li>• Understand how stakeholders would like to be engaged</li> <li>• Inform risk assessment</li> <li>• Identify key issues and concerns that would need to be considered in the EES (Minister for Planning determined an EES required for the Project)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understand key impacts and areas of concern related to the Project</li> <li>• Inform refinements to the alignment for public exhibition</li> <li>• Inform EES technical studies and investigate areas of significance to stakeholders and the community</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tailor engagement and communication based on surveys and feedback collected in 5a</li> <li>• Inform a hybrid method of engagement between physical and virtual in line with community interest and EES Amended Procedures and Requirements</li> <li>• Understand public response and sentiment on Project</li> <li>• Inform EES technical studies and investigate areas of significance to stakeholders and the community</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understand community and business impacts from construction</li> <li>• Understand public response and sentiment on Project</li> <li>• Tailor engagement activities based on community preference</li> </ul>

## 6.5 Engagement activities during EES Project stages

The following table shows detailed engagement activities conducted over Stage 5 of the Project, in preparation for and during and following the EES public exhibition.

**Table 6-2 Engagement activities by quarter**

Timing	Milestone	EES activities	Communication activities	Engagement activities
Q2 2020	<b>Preparation of EES Scoping Requirements and Consultation Plan</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Preparing scoping requirements</li> <li>Preparing Consultation Plan</li> <li>Technical Reference Group meetings (convened by DELWP)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>APA website updated</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Landholder engagement</li> <li>Response to email and phone enquiries</li> </ul>
Q3 2020	<b>Draft EES Scoping Requirements exhibition</b> Invitation to comment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Draft scoping requirements for EES published</li> <li>Technical Reference Group meetings (convened by DELWP)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>APA website updated</li> <li>Email Project update #2 to subscribers</li> <li>Advertise public exhibition period to provide comments on Draft EES scoping requirements</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Landholder engagement</li> <li>Response to email and phone enquiries</li> <li>Stakeholder meetings and briefings</li> </ul>
Q3 2020	<b>EES Scoping Requirements approved</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continue consultation with stakeholders and affected landholders about status of the Project</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>APA website information updates</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Landholder engagement</li> <li>Response to email and phone enquiries</li> </ul>



Timing	Milestone	EES activities	Communication activities	Engagement activities
Q3 2020 to Q1 2021	<p><b>Preparation of the EES</b></p> <p>Build awareness of Project and key values</p> <p>Community feedback</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Further detailed site investigations and technical studies</li> <li>• Progress design development</li> <li>• Applicable approvals assessment</li> <li>• Technical Reference Group meetings (convened by DELWP)</li> <li>• Prepare EES documentation for public exhibition in line with the Minister for Planning's scoping requirements</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Launch of online engagement hub (Social Pinpoint) including interactive map and survey</li> <li>• EES Consultation Plan available on the DELWP website</li> <li>• Project newsletters</li> <li>• Factsheets</li> <li>• APA website information</li> <li>• Emailed Project newsletters to subscribers (Project updates #3 and #4)</li> <li>• Emailed communications to publicise information sessions</li> <li>• Social communications via councils</li> <li>• Mailshots</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Landholder engagement</li> <li>• Response to email and phone enquiries</li> <li>• Online engagement via interactive map comments and survey responses</li> <li>• Council briefings</li> <li>• Introductory virtual information session (Q4)</li> <li>• Topic-focused virtual information session (Ecology and Cultural Heritage; Construction) (Q4)</li> <li>• Community impact and opportunities focused virtual information session (Q4)</li> <li>• Face to face public information sessions in relevant council areas (Q1)</li> <li>• TRG meetings and presentations</li> <li>• Meetings with businesses, residents and environment group representatives</li> </ul>

Timing	Milestone	EES activities	Communication activities	Engagement activities
Q2 2021	<b>EES and Pipeline Licence application public exhibition and formal submission period</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Exhibit EES and Pipeline Licence Application documents</li> <li>• Liaise with local councils to further raise awareness about the EES</li> </ul>	<p>Broad communication regarding the exhibition including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Email Project newsletters to subscribers (Project update #5)</li> <li>• Information displays / signage</li> <li>• Media through local newspapers and local government webpages (including advertising of EES exhibition and invitation to comment)</li> <li>• Website updates</li> <li>• Email updates</li> <li>• Mailshots</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Public Information sessions to promote EES and opportunity for submissions</li> <li>• Key stakeholder meetings and briefings</li> <li>• Council briefings</li> <li>• Response to email and phone queries</li> <li>• Meetings with businesses, residents and environment group representatives</li> </ul>
Q3 to Q4 2021	<b>Assessment and decision making</b>	Continue consultation with stakeholders and affected landholders about the status of the exhibited documents.	<p>Ongoing, broad communication about the Project, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Newsletters</li> <li>• Signage</li> <li>• Media through local newspapers and local government webpages</li> <li>• Website updates</li> <li>• Email updates</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Key regulator/ stakeholder meetings and briefings</li> <li>• Council briefings</li> <li>• Response to email and phone queries</li> </ul>

## 6.6 Resources and channels

The following resources and channels have been used to provide information to Project stakeholders and the wider community, and in turn to receive their questions and comments. More detail is provided in Section 7 on the timing of and traction from communication and engagement activities.

**Table 6-3 Print communications**



### Letter distribution

Letters have been delivered directly to local residents, impacted householders, landholders and businesses to inform them of Project information.



### Newsletters, fact sheet and brochures

A suite of collateral with content including a Project overview, field surveys, land use, design and EES process. These have been made available online and in hard copy for face to face events and distribution to community outlets (hard copy distribution will be subject to restrictions easing in Q1 2021).



### Posters and signage

Posters and signage to help increase awareness of the Project have been used at public events and can be provided to local councils, MPs offices, libraries and community notice boards.



### Media

Local media through newspapers and local government media networks have informed people about the Project and feedback opportunities.



### Maps and other visual aids

Clear maps (including interactive versions) displaying Project options and other aspects, have been made available online and during information sessions.

**Table 6-4 Digital communications**



### Website

APA WORM website pages have been updated promptly as new information becomes available. Content has been prepared in line with Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG).



### Email updates

These have been sent at regular intervals (milestone triggers e.g. prior to information sessions or exhibition) to keep people informed and highlight opportunities to get involved.



### Promotion through partners' online presence

Project updates and discussion have been promoted through use of local council and community pages and social media.



### Videos

Videos of information sessions and key aspects of the Project such as construction technique have been uploaded onto the Project website to provide information and Project updates in a simple, visual way.

## Table 6-5 Engagement



### Landholders

APA has worked with residents and landholders closest to the Project area, including landholders along the proposed pipeline route. The proponent is working with residents and landholders closest to the Project area, including landholders along the proposed pipeline route



### Virtual information sessions

This format, comprising a Project and topic-focused presentation followed by Q&A hosted as an MS Teams Live Event, has been used to engage the community and stakeholders in 2020 owing to the lack of opportunity to engage face-to-face due to COVID-19.



### Online engagement hub (Social Pinpoint)

This hub which is linked from the APA website has been used to provide Project information, an interactive map, collate public comments and survey responses.



### Stakeholder meetings

The proponent has connected with key stakeholders through meetings and briefings, both targeted and on request.



### Face-to-face information sessions and displays

These have been held at key milestones in 2021, prior to and during the exhibition of the EES, in accessible venues, allowing a wide cross section of the community to attend (subject to any COVID-19 restrictions).



### Community presentations

APA has offered to present to groups potentially interested in the Project including local Rotary and RSL clubs, highly interested stakeholders, culturally and linguistically diverse groups (with the support of cultural leaders), youth and industry groups.



### Email and telephone

Enquiries from the community have been received and responded to via the 1800 phone number and Project email address, which were included on all public collateral. All calls, responses and actions required are recorded in an accredited stakeholder database.



### Research and/or surveys

The Project has carried out targeted community research activities such as surveys to support technical studies such as social impact assessment.

### **Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) communities Vulnerable and hard to reach communities**

The Project team has worked with local government, community group leaders and other relevant agencies to:

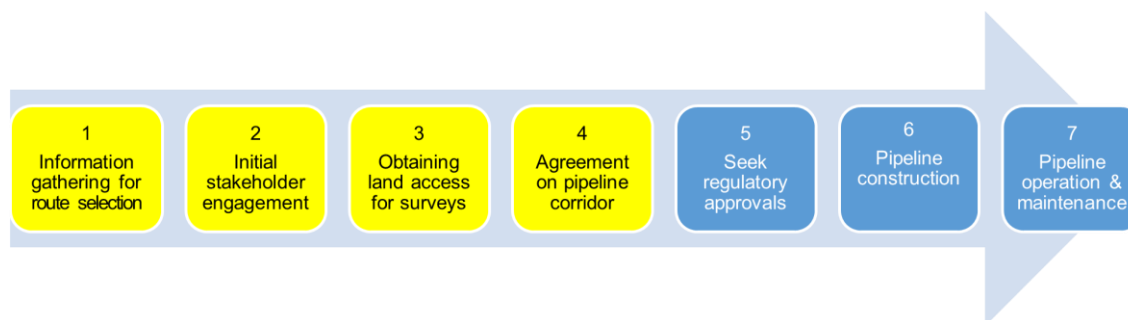


- Identify vulnerable and hard to reach communities and to provide culturally sensitive ways to approach and involve them
- Identify relevant individuals, groups and those who support them
- Determine engagement approaches on a case by case basis
- Collaborate with local government to use known contacts.
- Ensure information is made available in formats and at times to suit different communities
- CALD communications have been used where appropriate including:
  - Providing translations of printed materials
  - Advertising in specific language publications

## 7. Communications and engagement activity summary

The section below provides an overview of the communications and engagement activities conducted at each stage of the Project for all communities and stakeholders. A more detailed review of progress by stakeholder group is provided in Section 5. Feedback and Project response are summarised in Section 8.

### 7.1 Prior to EES (November 2018 – December 2019)



**Figure 7-1 Stages of consultation prior to EES**

Prior to the EES process, consultation was an essential part of the pipeline planning process, comprising stages 1-4 as outlined in Figure 7-1 and in the overall timeline (see section 6).

#### 7.1.1 Pipelines Act 2005 and consultation

The *Pipelines Act 2005* is the primary act governing the construction and operation of pipelines in Victoria. The Minister for Energy, Environment and Climate Change and Energy Safe Victoria (ESV) are statutory decisions makers under the relevant Acts and the Regulations.

As per the *Pipelines Act 2005*, the Project requires an approval for constructing and operating a high pressure gas transmission pipeline between Plumpton and Wollert. A key objective of the *Pipelines Act* is to minimise adverse environmental impacts.

In accordance with Section 16 of the *Pipelines Act*, a Pipelines Act Consultation Plan to engage with landholders and directly impacted residents was developed, which provided for APA planning for the most efficient and suitable route for the pipeline while protecting the public from environmental, health, and safety risks resulting from the construction and operation of the pipelines.

This Pipelines Act Consultation Plan (separate to the EES Consultation Plan) was approved by the Minister for Energy, Environment and Climate Change and published in March 2019 and provides guidance for landholder engagement and the standards of engagement required to obtain the pipeline licence from Project planning through to delivery.

Following initial stakeholder consultation in 2018, engagement with landholders, and a comprehensive route selection process, a Route Options Report was also published in March 2019 (comprising stages 1 to 4 as illustrated in section 6.1) The Preliminary Pipeline Alignment (PPA) resulting from the route selection process was then taken into the EES process.

Ongoing alignment refinement continues to be undertaken which will be informed by consultation with stakeholders and landholders affected by the alignment as described in this section, as well as findings of ongoing field investigations (engineering and environment) and the EES for the Project.

## 7.1.2 Communications and engagement snapshot

A brief snapshot of the communications and engagement activities prior to EES is outlined in the section below.

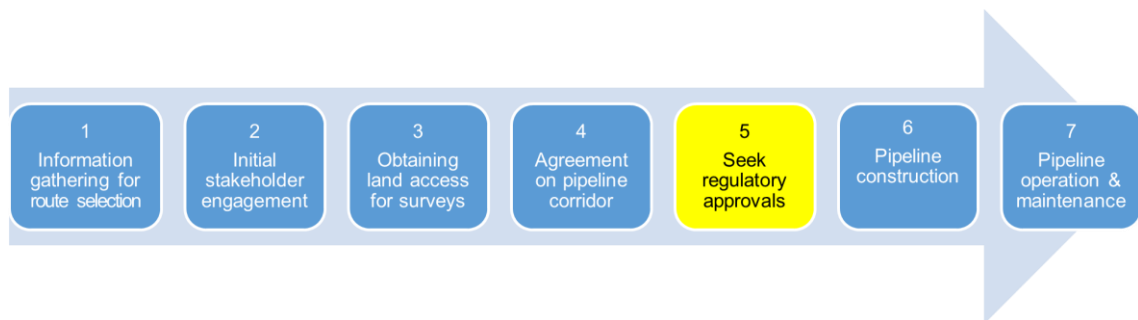
Information gathering for Route Selection took place from November 2018 and included engagement and briefing of key stakeholders of relevance to the route selection process, including relevant federal, state, local government authorities and utilities.

Methods of communications and engagement have included meetings, mailshots, newsletter publication, email distribution, launch of a Project website with a map of the Project alignment. Key activities included:

- **Throughout:** engagement with affected landholders
- **March 2019:** publication of an [online presence for the Western Outer Ring Main Project](#) on the APA website
- **March 2019:** Project fact sheet published on the APA website
- **March 2019:** APA Worm Pipelines Act Consultation Plan published on the APA website
- **March 2019 – ongoing:** council briefings and meetings
- **October 2019:** distribution of Project newsletter by post to approximately 1,750 residents local to the alignment
- **November 2019:** Land Use factsheet published on the APA website

## 7.2 EES preparation (January 2020 – March 2021)

The following communications and engagement activities support the consultation objectives as outlined in Section 6.2 as a part of Stage 5 of the Project and have been carried out in accordance with the consultation and engagement principles outlined in Section 6.3.



**Figure 7-2 EES consultation within the overall timeline**

### 7.2.1 Communications and engagement overview

An overview of the communications and engagement activities during the preparation of the EES is provided in the following section. Further detail is provided by channel in Section 6.6.

January 2020 to February 2021 (completed)

- **Throughout:** engagement with affected landholders
- **March 2020:** distribution of Project newsletter by post to local residents
- **14 July 2020:** Publication of draft Scoping Requirements and launch of Scoping Requirements exhibition
- **14 July 2020:** Notification of draft Scoping Requirements exhibition

- **30 August 2020:** Launch of [Engagement Hub](#) incorporating an interactive map, opportunity to pin comments, discussion forum and Project survey
- **8 September 2020:** Notice of Pipeline Corridor Letter Clarification (physical and digital)
- **5 October 2020:** Distribution of Project newsletter (physical and digital)
- **October 2020:** Advertising for Online Community Session (physical and digital)
- **28 October 2020:** Online Community Session (Project introduction)
- **October/November 2020:** Council meetings and correspondence
- **November/December 2020:** Advertising for topic focused community session (physical and digital)
- **9 December 2020:** Topic focused community session (Ecology and Cultural Heritage)
- **14 December 2020:** Topic focused community session (Community impacts and opportunities)
- **22 December 2020:** Community Update (digital)
- **11 January 2021:** Community survey mail-out to ~2500 local businesses and residents
- **Throughout January 2021:** Council communications (for upcoming local sessions)
- **28 January 2021:** Community Update (physical)
- **30 January 2021:** Melton Community Information Session
- **3 February 2021:** Mitchell Community Information Session
- **11 February 2021:** Whittlesea Drop-In Community Session

#### **March 2021 onwards (planned)**

- **2 March 2021:** Rescheduled Hume Community Information Session
- **Mid-2021 (tentative):** Organisation Engagement Forum (local investment and involvement opportunities) Stakeholder meetings

Meetings enable the proponent to provide tailored information and receive focused feedback from stakeholders. 61 meetings have been held by the Project team with all stakeholders since consultation began in November 2018 and through till the end of February 2021. In addition, 11 meetings have been held with stakeholders as part of the social impact assessment. Further meetings have also taken place with landholders (see Table 5-1).

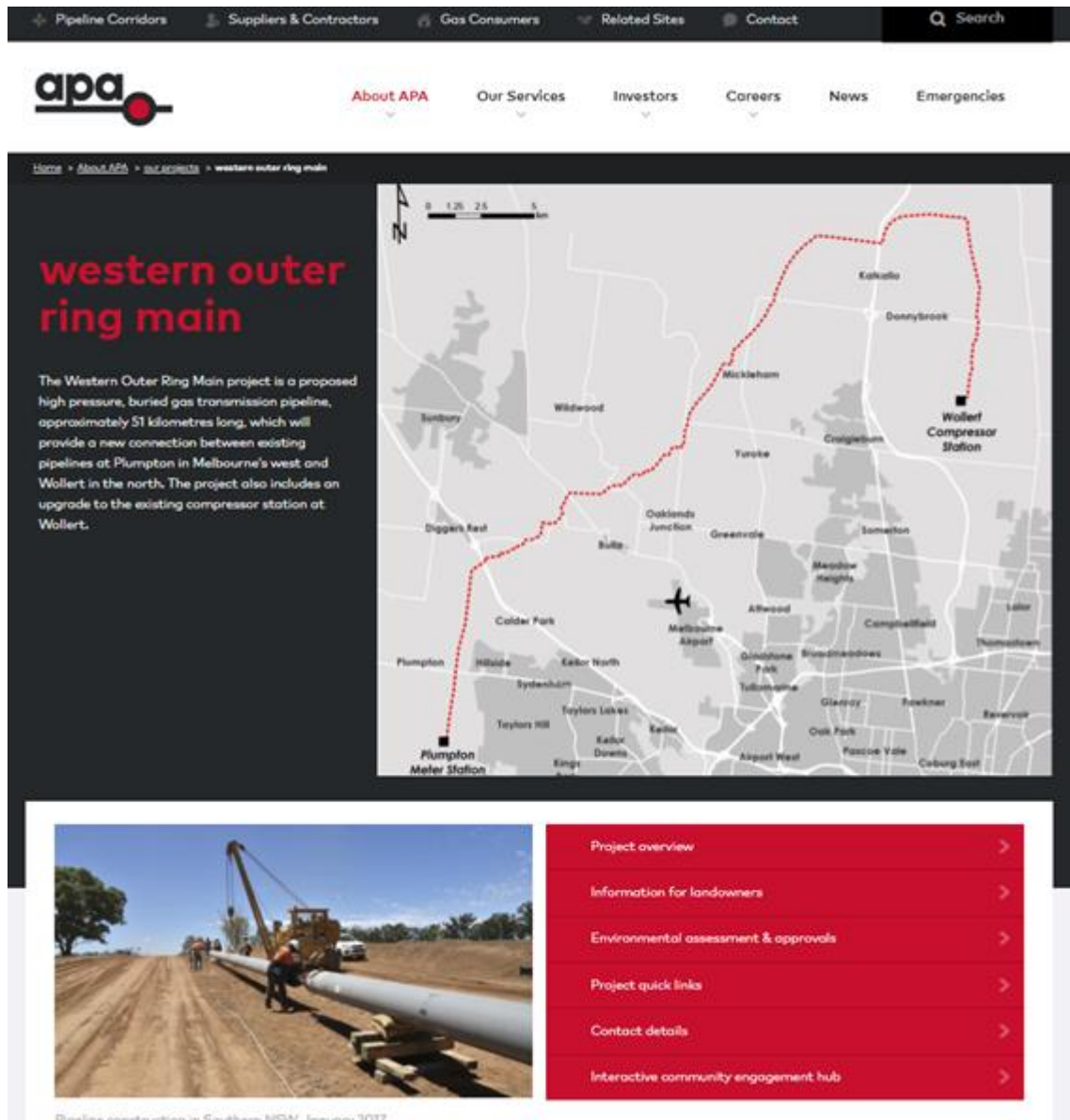
#### **7.2.2 Dedicated 1800 hotline and email address**

Enquiries from the community are received and responded to via the 1800 phone number and Project email address, which are included on all public collateral. All calls, responses and actions required are recorded in an accredited stakeholder database.

Since consultation began in late 2018 and through till the end of February 2021, there have been fourteen calls to the 1800 number and one email to the dedicated Project email address.



### 7.2.3 APA website



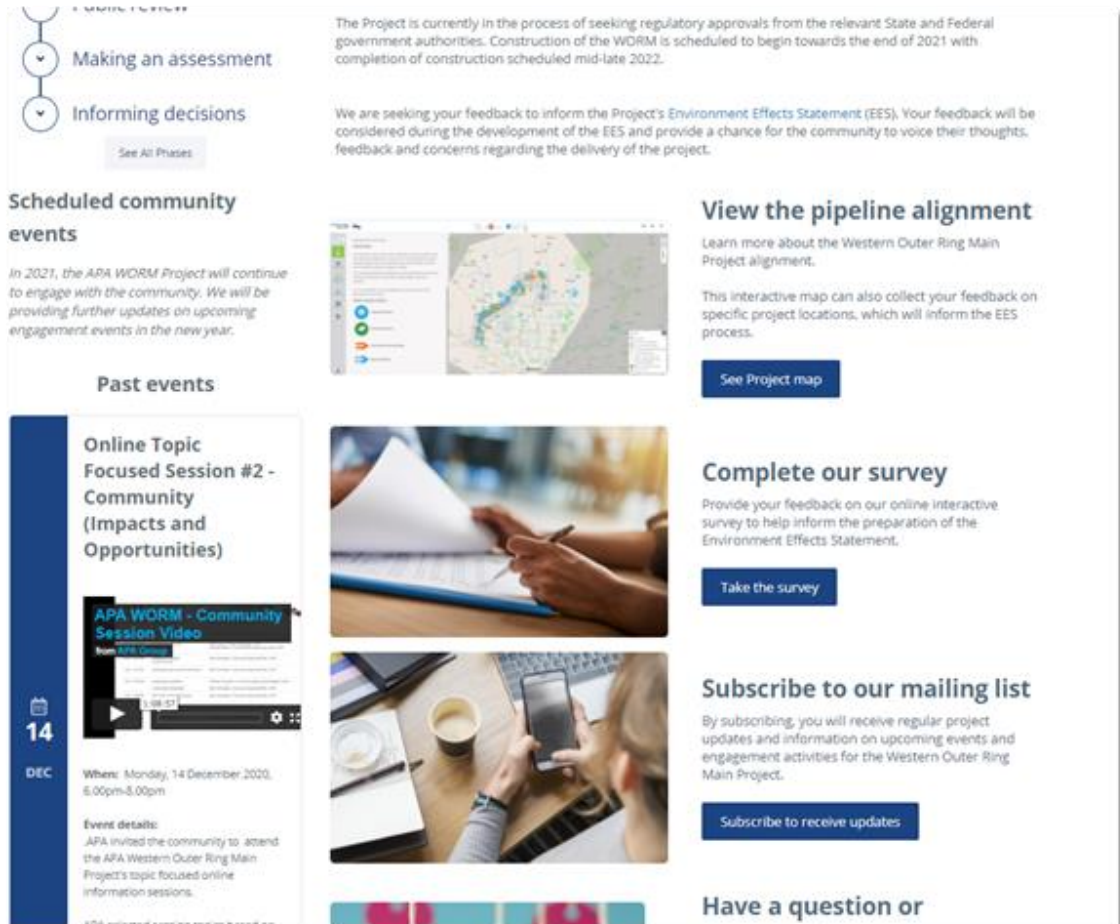
**Figure 7-3 WORM online presence on APA website**

WORM's [online presence](#) was launched in March 2019 to align with the publication of the approved Pipelines Act Consultation Plan, and the Route Options Report. It currently comprises six pages which include:

- **Home page and Project overview** (covering Project benefits, the pipeline route, design parameters and safety)
- **Information for landholders**
- **Environmental assessment & approvals** (including the Project timeline and community consultation, linking to the engagement hub)
- **Project quick links** (including downloads of key collateral, past community updates, resource guides, recordings of past community sessions, link to the engagement hub)
- **Contact details** (including a contact form, option to subscribe and the Project hotline number).

Traffic to the website has been consistent over time with an average of 323 page views per month up to 28 February 2021, totalling 7,757 page views. A spike in interest can be identified with the launch of draft Scoping Requirements on 14 July 2020 (956 views during that month).

#### 7.2.4 Western Outer Ring Main engagement hub

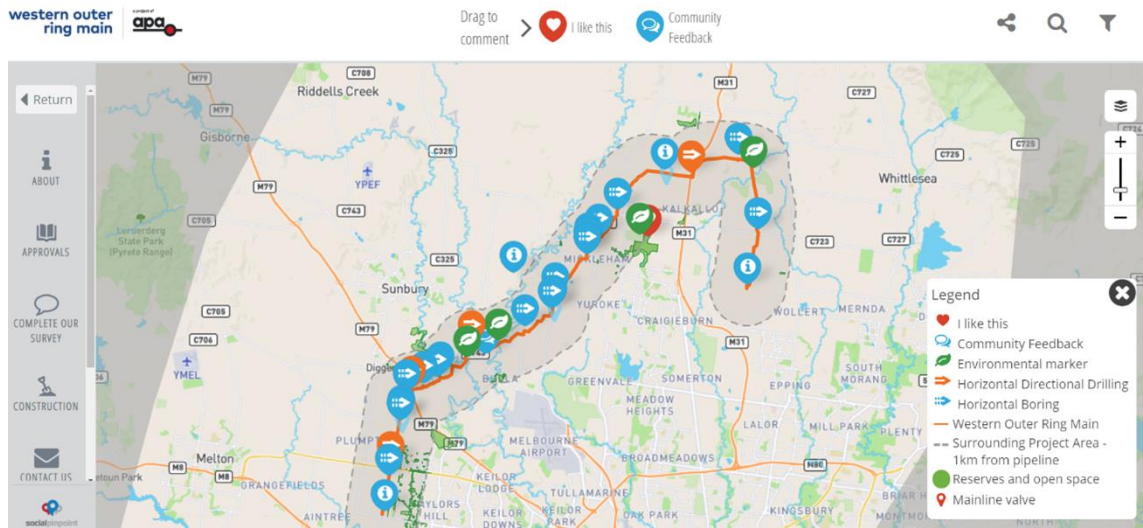


**Figure 7-4 Homepage for WORM engagement hub**

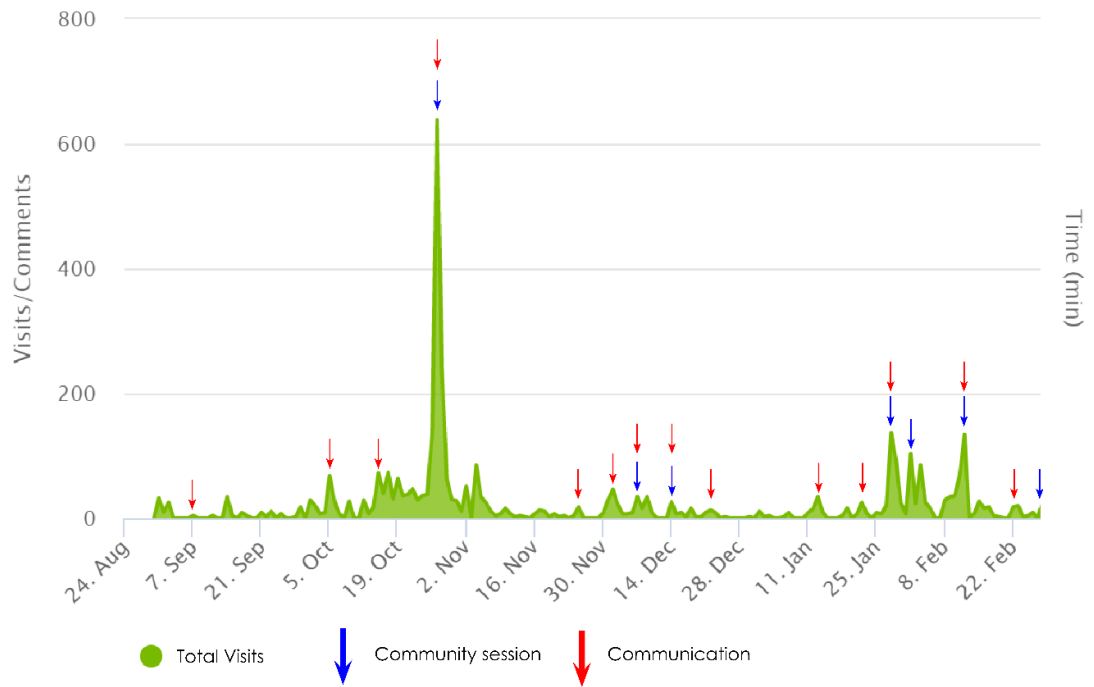
The Western Outer Ring Main engagement hub was launched on 30 August 2020. It was set up using the Social Pinpoint platform to share the latest information about the Project and enable stakeholder and community feedback. It includes:

- **An interactive map** showing the pipeline alignment, which enables the visitor to post comments
- **A survey** which aims to collate feedback on the Project
- **A link to subscribe for updates**
- **A discussion forum**
- **A link to the EES Consultation Plan** and other documents on the DELWP website
- **Contact details for APA** including the Project email address and hotline number
- **News on the latest information sessions**

Traffic to the hub has been strong with a total of 3,817 visits up to 28 February 2021, averaging 545 visits per month. Spikes in interest can be identified connected with the mailshots and publicity connected with information sessions.



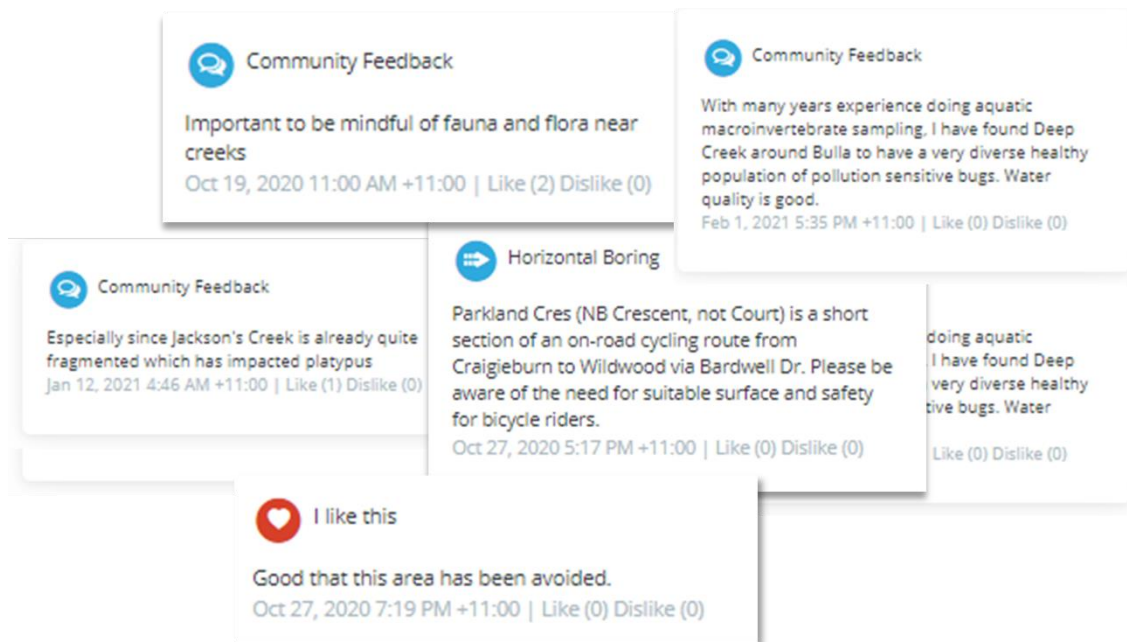
**Figure 7-5 Interactive map on the engagement hub**



**Figure 7-6 Engagement hub visits August 2020 – February 2021**

### Interactive map comments

Five visitors to the hub have left comments on the interactive map:



**Figure 7-7 Interactive map comments**

These comments have been incorporated into the feedback summary in Section 8 of this report.

### Community survey

The hub also hosts a survey which aims to gather community feedback on the Project. See Appendix D. The survey questionnaire was available online from the launch of the hub. The Project team also sent out a physical version of the survey to local residents during January 2021 to supplement the survey response.

Questions were framed around:

- Profiling by relevant stakeholder group (Landholder / Resident / Business / Government etc.)
- Areas of concern or interest along the Project alignment
- Key areas/topics for consideration in EES process
- Potential benefits
- Identifying opportunities
- Preference for future Project communications

The Project survey has received 11 survey submissions, six responses as of 28 February 2021 via the engagement hub, with an additional 4 from mail-in submissions and 1 from community sessions. The response can be summarised as follows:

- Respondents are either local residents (6) or landholders (5)
- The most stated reasons to provide feedback include wanting to learn more about the Project, concerns regarding land use and planning impacts during construction
- The most important areas to address during EES are flora and fauna, waste, and transport.
- Preferred communication methods are email updates (9), followed by promotion via social media (5) and interactive maps (3).

## 7.2.5 Emailed communications (Campaign Monitor)

During 2020 APA used Campaign Monitor, an online e-notification platform to provide regular community updates and news to the local community, industry, government, and other stakeholder groups.

Notifications are sent to subscriber lists based on stakeholder category and interest. As of 28 February 2021, the following e-subscriber and lists exist for the WORM Project:

- **WORM Signup List** [14 subscribers] [Comprised of opt-in community members]
- **WORM Registered Aboriginal Parties and Traditional Owner Groups** [7 subscribers]
- **WORM Commonwealth & State Authorities** [51 subscribers]
- **WORM Community Groups** [6 groups]
- **WORM Landholders** [69 subscribers]
- **WORM MPs** [2 MPs]
- **WORM Transport Infrastructure Owners** [33 authorities]
- **WORM Technical Reference Group** [22 subscribers]

The following communications have been emailed to subscribers since April 2020 through Campaign Monitor. Traction has been strong, with click rates of between 10% and 52% for all communications since draft Scoping Requirements exhibition.

**Table 7-1 Communications sent via Campaign Monitor**

Communication	Opened	Clicked	Recipients	Date sent
COVID-19 Notification	43%	5.4%	87	21/4/2020
Draft Scoping Requirements Exhibition Notification	54.8%	51.5%	197	14/07/2020
Section 27 – Notice of Pipeline Corridor Letter Clarification	65.3%	27.7%	72	8/9/2020
Community Update – October 2020	46.5%	17	102	5/10/2020
Upcoming Community Session Advert (28 October 2020 event)	52.1%	22%	100	16/10/2020
Reminder – Community Session Advert (28 October 2020 event)	45%	244.4%	103	28/10/2020
Topic Focus Community Sessions Advert (9 & 14 October 2020 events)	48.8%	16.1%	130	22/11/2020
Topic Focused Community Session Advert (2) (9 & 14 December 2020 events)	37.1%	10.2%	135	1/12/2020

Communication	Opened	Clicked	Recipients	Date sent
Reminder – Community Session Advert (Ecology and Cultural Heritage) (9 December 2020 event)	29.8%	12.8%	135	9/12/2020
Reminder – Community Session Advert (Community Impacts and Opportunities) (14 December 2020 event)	31.5%	7.3%	134	14/12/2020
Community Update – December 2020	34.8%	13%	133	22/12/2020
Local Drop-In Community Sessions Advert	35.3%	6.4%	135	22/01/2021
Reminder – Local Drop-In Sessions Advert	36.2%	9.3%	149	5/02/2021
Hume Community Drop-In Session COVID-19 Update	31.8%	6.1%	154	12/02/2021
Rescheduled – Hume Community Session	26.5%	5%	154	25/02/2021

## 7.2.6 Physical mailshots

Alongside digital distribution, the WORM Project has used a mailing services provider ABBA Mailing Services to ensure local distribution of collateral.

Each delivery was made to local residences, businesses and other organisations including schools, local councils, and other authorities. As the areas are developing, more properties were added to the distribution list as the Project progressed.

The following physical mailshots were delivered during 2020 and 2021:

**Table 7-2 Communications sent by mail**

Communication	Date sent	Distribution quality
Community Update – October 2019	24/10/2019	Approx. 2000
Community Update – March 2020	11/03/2020	Approx. 2500
Draft Scoping Requirements Exhibition Notification	14/07/2020	Approx. 2500
Community Update – October 2020	October 2020	Approx. 2500
Upcoming Community Session Advert	October 2020	Approx. 2500
Topic Focused Community Sessions Advert	November 2020	Approx. 2500
Community Update – January 2021 (including community session advert)	28/01/2021	Approx. 2500
Community Survey (inc. reply paid mail slip)	11/02/2021	Approx. 2500

## 7.2.7 Collateral publication

All Project collateral developed for communicating with communities and stakeholders during the EES process has been uploaded to the APA website, this is summarised in Table 7-3. Collateral examples are provided in Appendix A.

**Table 7-3 Western Outer Ring Main Project collateral**

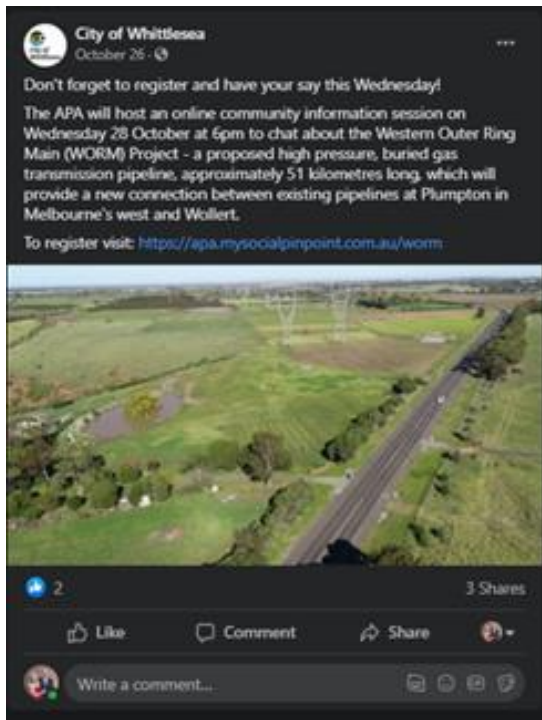
Collateral item	Description	Digital link
<a href="#">Land Use factsheet (November 2019)</a>	Factsheet providing information about use of land during pipeline construction, as well as regulatory processes and pipeline design.	<a href="#">Click here</a>
<a href="#">Introducing APA and Field Survey factsheet (undated)</a>	Provides information about the field surveys undertaken and the associated regulatory processes.	<a href="#">Click here</a>
<a href="#">Newsletter (March 2020)</a>	Community newsletter. Provides a Project update and proposed EES timeline.	<a href="#">Click here</a>
<a href="#">Factsheet (August 2020)</a>	Generic factsheet providing a Project update and proposed EES timeline.	<a href="#">Click here</a>
<a href="#">Newsletter (October 2020)</a>	Community newsletter #3. Provides a Project update and proposed EES timeline.	<a href="#">Click here</a>
<a href="#">December 2020 Community Session Flyer</a>	Used to advertise December 2020 information sessions.	<a href="#">Click here</a>
<a href="#">Overview map</a>	Updated to show regular updates to the Project alignment.	<a href="#">Click here</a>
<a href="#">Community resource guide</a>	Used at community information sessions to refer stakeholders to engagement hub and other ways to get in touch.	<a href="#">Click here</a>

## 7.2.8 Community information sessions

### Overview

The WORM Project team hosted three online community sessions during 2020 and four drop-in community information sessions based in key local government areas during early 2021. A summary of session purpose and attendance is outlined in Table 7-4.

Communications through web channels, mailshots and council social media (Figure 7-6 as an example) promoted awareness of the sessions to mail subscribers, key stakeholder groups and local residents. Key channels for promotion are outlined in Section 6.6.



**Figure 7-8 City of Whittlesea social share of the 28 October 2020 session**

**Table 7-4 Summary of information sessions**

Date	Session location	Purpose	Number of attendees or views
28/10/2020	Online (Teams)	Project introduction aimed at raising awareness and gathering feedback for future topic-focused sessions (refer Figure 7-7)	40 live attendees 27 recording views
09/12/2020	Online (Teams)	Session focused on landscape, flora and fauna, ecology and cultural heritage with an overview of the Project and EES process.  This session was provided based on feedback provided in the first session.	26 live attendees 32 recording views
14/12/2020	Online (Teams)	Session focused on community impacts and opportunities. Topics included pipeline construction, landholder impacts and local sourcing, landscape and visual impacts, APA landscape guidelines and community investment.	15 live attendees 21 recording views
30/01/2021	Melton Mercure Caroline Springs	Session catered to the local community to provide information on the EES and public submission process.	0 attendees
3/02/2021	Mitchell Greater Beveridge Community Centre	Session catered to the local community to provide information on the EES and public submission process.	2 attendees



Date	Session location	Purpose	Number of attendees or views
11/02/2021	Whittlesea Quest Epping Hotel, Epping	Session catered to the local community to provide information on the EES and public submission process.	2 attendees
13/02/2021	Hume Newbury Child and Community Centre	<i>Cancelled due to COVID snap lockdown. 8 registrations for event.</i>	N/A
2/03/2021	Hume Hume Tennis Centre	Session catered to the local community to provide information on the EES and public submission process.	5 attendees



**Figure 7-9 Screenshot from 28 October 2020 Online Community Information Session**

#### *In-person community information sessions during 2021*

Following the easing of COVID-19 restrictions, between January and March 2021 four drop-in community information sessions were hosted in key council areas to:

- Provide general WORM Project information
- Provide information on the EES process
- Provide information on EES public submissions
- Gather community feedback via surveys

Between seven and 11 specialist staff members from areas of community interest were present at each session, both in person and on-call during the session window to assist via phone or MS Teams in case of technical questions. Experts were from the following specialist areas:

- Fauna
- Flora
- Cultural heritage

- Air quality
- Noise and vibration
- Surface water
- Construction
- Safety

Printed and interactive information was available at the in-person sessions and on the APA website. Collateral examples are also provided in Appendix A. These include:

- Take-home EES Project collateral and factsheets as summarised in Table 7-3.
- Recently revised Project alignment maps produced through ArcGIS showed data on where the alignment would cross into properties. This was to be used at request of relevant attendees.
- Specific property easement information, to be used at request of relevant attendees.



**Figure 7-10** Left to right: Surveys and on-call staff station, staff on site

The following methods of gathering feedback were used at the in-person drop in events:

- The Project team completed stakeholder interaction forms after conversations with community members
- Community members were able to provide written feedback by completing a community survey (see section 7.2.5)
- A feedback board allowed attendees to leave written comments in case they were not able to speak to a Project team member. No comments were left on the board at any of the sessions.



**Figure 7-11 Clockwise from left: Project map display, take home collateral, feedback board**

#### *COVID-19 management and safety measures*

The following measures were put in place to manage the ongoing risks and restrictions to public gathering due to COVID-19 during the in-person community engagement sessions:

- Risk assessment and COVID-19 safety plan
- Eventbrite event registration for attendees, allowing the Project team to gather contact details for emergency tracing, control attendee numbers and communicate updates or event changes
- Sign-in station at the entry of each venue should emergency contact tracing be required
- Social distancing practices and masks were on offer to community members who preferred full coverage during interactions.
- Guided movement arrows in each venue to encourage attendees to move around the event space in a single direction
- Cancellation policy and rescheduling notices put in key messaging and advertising for sessions in case of adjustments required
- Regular updates via Campaign Monitor
- Collaboration with councils and local community groups to raise awareness or announce changes
- Room capacity limits (in line with APA and venue requirements)
- Use of on-call specialist staff to minimise staff presence at sessions

### 7.3 EES exhibition, assessment and decisions (quarter 2 2021 – quarter 4 2021)

Communications and engagement, as summarised in Table 7-5 are planned to ensure continued awareness and involvement in the EES, to encourage submissions and to continue landholder and stakeholder engagement as required.

**Table 7-5 Communications and engagement during exhibition, assessment and decision-making**

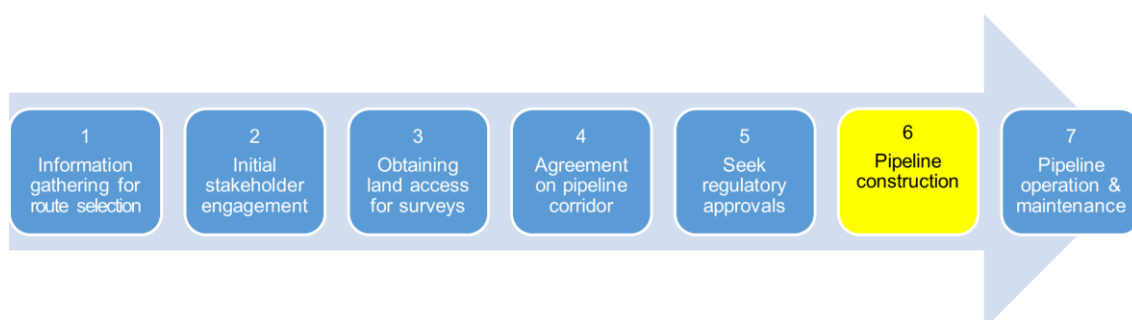
Indicative timing	Milestone	Project and planning activity	Proposed engagement activities	Proposed communication activities
Q2 2021	<b>Exhibition of EES and Pipeline Licence Application; and formal submission period</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Exhibit EES and Pipeline Licence Application documents</li> <li>Liaise with local councils to further raise awareness about the EES</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Face-to-face and online public Information sessions</li> <li>Key stakeholder meetings and briefings</li> <li>Council briefings</li> <li>Response to email and phone queries</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Broad communication regarding the exhibition including:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Newsletters</li> <li>Signage</li> <li>Media through local newspapers and local government webpages (including advertising of EES exhibition and invitation to comment)</li> <li>Website updates</li> <li>Email updates</li> <li>Mailshots</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
Q3 to Q4 2021	<b>Assessment and decision making</b>	Continue consultation with stakeholders and affected landholders about the status of the EES and approvals.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Key regulator/ stakeholder meetings and briefings</li> <li>Council briefings</li> <li>Response to email and phone queries</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ongoing, broad communication about the Project, including:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Newsletters</li> <li>Website updates</li> <li>Email updates</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

Indicative timing	Milestone	Project and planning activity	Proposed engagement activities	Proposed communication activities
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Indicative timing	Milestone	Project and planning activity	Proposed engagement activities	Proposed communication activities
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Indicative timing	Milestone	Project and planning activity	Proposed engagement activities	Proposed communication activities
Q2 2021	<b>Exhibition of EES and Pipeline Licence Application; and formal submission period</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Exhibit EES and Pipeline Licence Application documents</li> <li>Liaise with local councils to further raise awareness about the EES</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Face-to-face and online public Information sessions</li> <li>Key stakeholder meetings and briefings</li> <li>Council briefings</li> <li>Response to email and phone queries</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Broad communication regarding the exhibition including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Newsletters</li> <li>Signage</li> <li>Media through local newspapers and local government webpages (including advertising of EES exhibition and invitation to comment)</li> <li>Website updates</li> <li>Email updates</li> <li>Mailshots</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
Q3 to Q4 2021	<b>Assessment and decision making</b>	Continue consultation with stakeholders and affected landholders about the status of the EES and approvals.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Key regulator/ stakeholder meetings and briefings</li> <li>Council briefings</li> <li>Response to email and phone queries</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ongoing, broad communication about the Project, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Newsletters</li> <li>Website updates</li> <li>Email updates</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

## 7.4 Project construction (late 2021 to late 2022)



**Figure 7-12 Pipeline construction within the overall timeline**

Construction phase would present different considerations for engagement if the Project receives statutory approvals following the EES process. Stakeholder engagement would be reviewed to consider how to continue to effectively engage with the community during construction, including construction-related activities and mitigation measures relevant for landholders and nearby neighbours. As the Project design may evolve in the lead up to construction and engagement would need to be reviewed to reflect changes.

The Pipelines Act Consultation Plan would be reviewed against approved Project requirements, including specifications of APA's consultation commitments during construction as well as responsibilities of APA and the construction contractor. An updated version of the Pipelines Act Consultation Plan would be part of the assessment of the Pipeline Licence Application.

Consultation associated with this phase would be focused on landholders and nearby residents being fully aware of the likely activities prior to the commencement of construction. During construction it is important that landholders and residents are aware of communication paths to notify and communicate with construction personnel.

This phase of consultation will commence prior to construction and continue through to completion of rehabilitation activities. There may be some overlap with the operation phase.

The objectives of this engagement period are to:

- Advise landholders and nearby residents of the construction commencement and details of the proposed construction programme
- Introduce the construction contractor's representative
- Advise of the appropriate communication protocols with both APA and the construction contractor during the construction period
- Confirm with the landholder and the construction contractor property specific requirements that are to be followed with respect to individual landholder requirements
- Provide additional details on specific construction activities (where required)
- Address enquiries, issues and complaints that may arise during the construction programme
- Work with landholders on reinstatement and rehabilitation completion, including preparation of Property Management Plans with each landholder to accurately document existing conditions and monitoring of agreed rehabilitation measures.

APA would continue to maintain the 1800 hotline number and dedicated email address, ensuring access to a complaint's procedure, and making dedicated personnel available to communicate with impacted landholders.

Face-to-face consultation would be the primary form of communication with directly impacted landholders, subject to circumstances relating to COVID, along with the provision of additional information resources (e.g. handouts, brochures) undertaken as necessary. APA would send all landholders a letter confirming that the Project is planned to proceed and the likely dates for construction of the Project. This notice would also include reference to the engaged construction contractor.

APA would introduce the landholder to the construction contractor's representative for the works. In addition to introducing the parties, the construction contractor will complete a property inspection report that details the contact information for the landholder, any above or below ground assets potentially impacted, and any operational requirements that need to be addressed by the construction contractor.

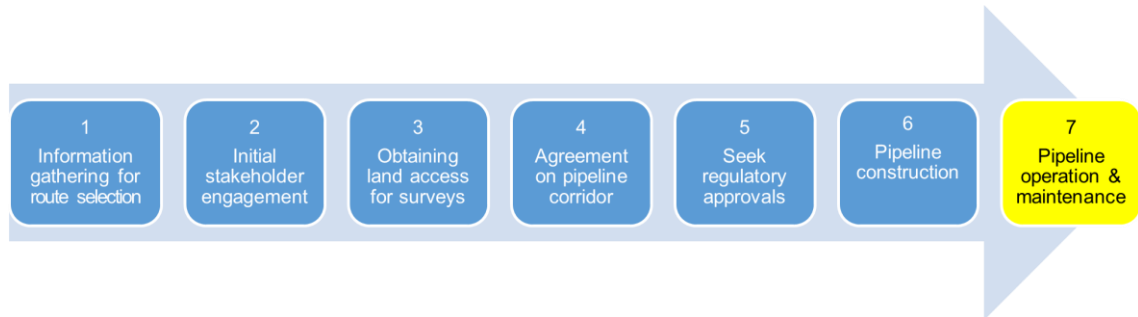
APA and the construction contractor would also formalise and document the appropriate communication paths for landholders to follow during construction. The construction contractor is likely to be responsible for general communication or enquiries with landholders regarding scheduling of activities and other day to day issues, though APA representatives will also be involved where necessary.



Complaints would be investigated and responded to by APA, in accordance with the APA complaints procedure. All enquiries, feedback, complaints and incidents will be recorded and addressed. APA will have overall responsibility of the complaint's procedure, which will incorporate the responsibilities and actions of the contractor. APA and the construction contractor will also liaise with landholders to ensure that they are satisfied with the reinstatement of any disturbed areas. This process may also involve formal correspondence.

APA would maintain the Project website during the construction phase with Project updates available for the broader community.

## 7.5 Project operation (2023 onwards)



**Figure 7-13 Pipeline operation within the overall timeline**

Given that a pipeline is a long-term infrastructure investment, it would be APA's objective to develop a sound relationship with all landholders. The operation and maintenance of the pipeline will be undertaken in accordance with APA's Landholder Engagement Procedure and Authorised Third Party Works Management Procedure. The Landholder Engagement Procedure identifies awareness objectives that are to be met and provides confidence that key messages are being communicated to external stakeholders, including landholders.

The objectives of this engagement period are to:

- Raise awareness of how APA operates its gas pipelines and associated infrastructure and the process for undertaking work in the pipeline easement
- Provide information of pipeline infrastructure
- Provide information and support to mitigate land-use changes impacting the pipeline classifications
- Ensure third parties are informed of APA's planned activities with regards to their interests
- Provide knowledge to identify an emergency situation and what to do in such an event.

Landholders would be mailed an information pack on an annual basis. All landholders will have a face-to-face visit, at a minimum of every three years, by an APA representative. Landholders would also be notified regarding non-routine maintenance activities (e.g. chemical vegetation and weed control, excavations, etc.). Where there are landholders undertaking higher risk activities, the frequency of communications would be increased.

The information booklet mailed annually as part of the information pack will contain details such as when to contact APA, APA contact details, emergency contact details, explanation of pipeline markers, guidelines for appropriate activities near pipelines, activities that may result in damage to the pipelines and methods of recognising threats to the pipeline and what to do in an emergency.

APA's operational stakeholder management system includes a database where all landholder visits are recorded.

APA would also facilitate regular meetings with regulatory authorities with jurisdiction and with local councils in the Project area.

## 8. Feedback summary and response

Engagement has involved a broad range of stakeholders, community groups and individuals since 2018 and before preparation of the EES began. These conversations established Project awareness in the local community and helped APA identify key areas of community concern.

The following sections provide a summary of the responses collected up to 2 March 2021 (to include the Hume community information session), including feedback channels and thematic analysis of key concerns raised.

### 8.1 How feedback is being used

Community and stakeholder feedback has been collected, recorded and considered as part of the ongoing development and refinement of Project design.

The following table outlines how feedback has been used to inform design decisions since initial stakeholder engagement in 2018, and how it will be used to further inform the Project during and following the EES process. For Project stage numbers and more detail on corresponding activities and stakeholders, see Table 6-1.

**Table 8-1 How feedback is informing the Project**

Project Stage Number	Project and engagement milestones	Timing	How feedback is informing the Project
1-4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Information gathered for route selection.</li> <li>Initial stakeholder engagement.</li> </ul>	Q3 2018 to Q1 2019	Feedback from landholders, local councils, third party utility providers and stakeholders has been considered as part of the pipeline route options analysis.
1-4	Refinement of proposed alignment.	2019 to 2020	Feedback from landholders, third party utility providers, stakeholders and community is progressing to support alignment refinement.
1-4, 5a	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Obtaining land access for surveys.</li> <li>Engagement with affected parties on investigation outcomes</li> </ul>	2019 to Q2 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Feedback on draft reports was published in referral documentation.</li> <li>Engagement with affected parties will help refine the pipeline route to minimise adverse effects.</li> </ul>

Project Stage Number	Project and engagement milestones	Timing	How feedback is informing the Project
5a	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Planning and preparation of the EES and Pipeline Licence Application documents.</li> <li>• Notice of pipeline corridor issued.</li> <li>• Consultation with residents and landholders on Project detail including potential environmental impact, opportunities for mitigation and ways to manage construction impacts.</li> <li>• Report issued to TRG and Project specialist groups on consultation so far.</li> </ul>	Q3 2020 to Q1 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Feedback from TRG and stakeholders to inform existing conditions studies and impact assessment</li> <li>• Feedback from Landholders, community and stakeholders helped to develop the technical assessments in the Consultation Report attached to the EES</li> <li>• Feedback from landholders, community and stakeholders has informed Project risk assessment, Pipeline Licence Application, the Environment Management Plan and Safety Management Plan.</li> </ul>
5b	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Formal EES exhibition and panel inquiry</li> <li>• Pipeline Licence Application</li> <li>• Public submissions in response EES.</li> <li>• Public appearances at EES panel.</li> </ul>	Q2 to Q3 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stakeholders and public will have the opportunity to make submissions in response to the EES and present during the assessment process.</li> <li>• Recommendations will be considered by the Minister for Planning to inform approvals decision.</li> </ul>

## 8.2 Summary of feedback channels

Mechanisms and opportunities made available for communities and stakeholders to provide feedback during preparation of the EES include:

- Meetings (formal and informal) carried out during community and stakeholder consultation, and also during the Social Impact Assessment and Cultural Heritage technical studies
- Emails and letters
- Online information sessions (Q&A)
- Face-to-face information sessions (Feedback forms)
- Online interactive map
- Dedicated 1800 hotline and email address
- Online survey
- Physical survey

A more comprehensive overview of these channels is provided in Section 6.6. Feedback collected through these channels continues to inform the planning, design and delivery of Project communication and engagement activities.

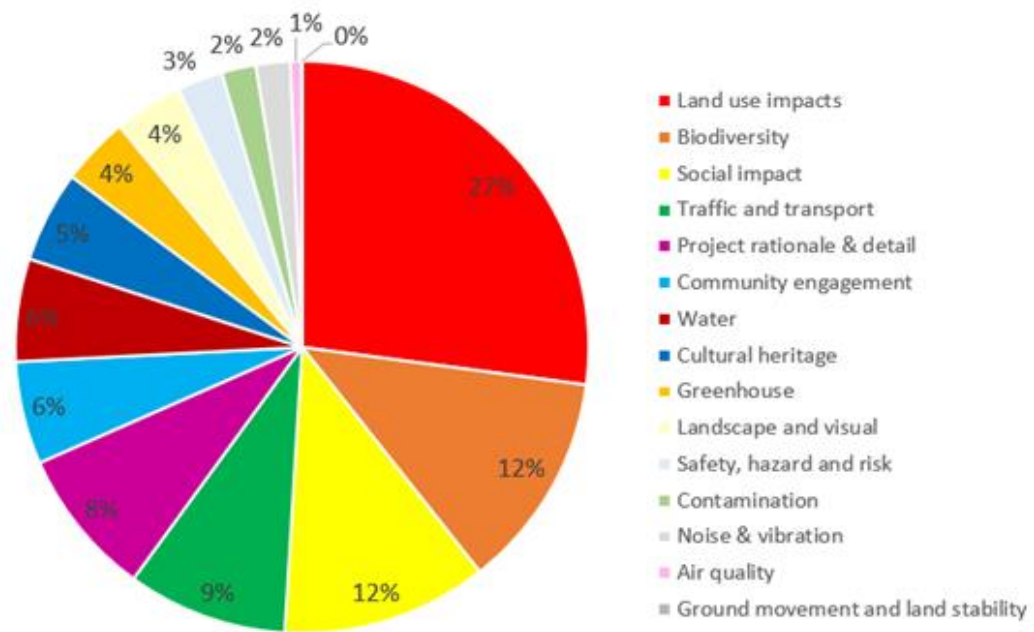
Engagement information collected during the EES preparation was also provided to technical specialists for their consideration in the design of the Project and to be addressed in their technical studies. Consultation with the technical specialists contributed to the creation of thematic definitions for the issues analysis.

### **8.3 Summary of community and stakeholder feedback interactions**

A total of 89 items of feedback were collected between 6 December 2018 and 28 February 2021. The feedback, including queries from community and comments from stakeholders, was categorised into 15 themes for consistent analysis. Where feedback contained multiple themes, each theme was counted.

Figure 8-1 illustrates the proportion of mentions for each theme. The 15 themes are ordered below according to the frequency of mentions during the engagement.

4. Land use impacts (27 per cent)
5. Biodiversity (12 per cent)
6. Social impact (12 per cent)
7. Traffic and transport (9 per cent)
8. Project rationale and detail (8 per cent)
9. Community engagement (6 per cent)
10. Water (6 per cent)
11. Cultural heritage (5 per cent)
12. Greenhouse (4 per cent)
13. Landscape and visual (4 per cent)
14. Safety, hazard and risk (3 per cent)
15. Contamination (2 per cent)
16. Noise and vibration (2 per cent)
17. Air quality (1 per cent)
18. Ground movement and land stability (no mentions)



**Figure 8-1 Key themes raised**

## 8.4 Analysis of themes from consultation feedback

### *Land use impacts*

Land use impacts was the most common theme raised among community and stakeholders, more than twice as frequent as the next two themes, biodiversity and social impact.

The Project team received a total of 42 queries related to this topic. Many questions were in relation to the pipeline alignment and impacts on existing and future land use adjacent to the proposed pipeline. Land use feedback came from asset owners, local councils, property owners and concerned residents. Feedback examples include:

- Property owners inquired about whether agricultural activities, such as cropping, could continue over the pipe easement once construction had finished.
- Asset owners were concerned about whether the pipeline would impact existing infrastructure, such as roads and other pipelines
- Local councils queried the impact of pipeline construction on sites marked for future development.

### *Biodiversity*

Following land use planning, biodiversity was the next most popular topic. Groups who raised this topic included local councils, asset owners, regulatory authorities, community action groups and residents. Primary concerns and suggestions included:

- Impact of pipeline construction on waterways
- Habitat disruptions in biodiversity hotspots and conservation areas
- Protecting the habitats of native species, such as the Growling Grass Frog and wombats
- The need to avoid the spread of weeds
- Minimising the removal of trees
- Adjusting pipeline alignment where possible to minimise impact on sensitive areas

### ***Social impact***

Responses were in relation to the effect of pipeline construction on local amenity such as roads and parklands, potential disruption to farm activities resulting economic impacts to local farming communities. Some community members also questioned the need for new gas Projects and queried why investment is in gas and not in renewable energy Projects, while one member expressed their support and the hope for a 'gas service' sooner as a result. Community members also expressed interest in opportunities for community investment as a result of the Project.

### ***Traffic and transport***

Community members and asset owners have concerns about disruptions and hazards to traffic during the pipeline construction. Some stakeholders queried whether the easement will allow for foot and bike paths to encourage future active transport access. Some respondents requested to see traffic management plans for local roads that the pipeline alignment crosses.

### ***Community engagement***

Local councils, asset owners and community information session attendees raised questions about the consultation process and the consideration of community concerns. Safety during construction and notifications of work were raised as key considerations for the Project.

### ***Cultural heritage***

Feedback for this theme is primarily focused on measures to mitigate or avoid impacts on areas and landforms of cultural significance, as well as sensitive ecological regions such as creek beds. Key considerations included avoiding disruption in areas where evidence of scar trees, Aboriginal stone artefacts and rocky knoll shrubland has been found. Concerns were raised during the community information sessions, and in direct consultation with Registered Aboriginal Parties and Traditional Owner Groups.

### ***Water***

Most concerns about water were centred around impacts to water infrastructure and natural waterways during construction, in particular Jacksons Creek, Merri Creek and Deep Creek. Landholders and prospective landholders were also interested in the impact on groundwater. Asset owners including Melbourne Water highlighted the importance of aligning construction schedules to avoid overlapping works. Participants from community information sessions and Traditional Owner Groups raised concerns about minimising construction impacts on natural waterways and associated native flora and fauna.

### ***Greenhouse gases***

Many community groups, residents and landholders expressed concern about the investment in natural gas, rather than renewable energy, due to the environmental impact of burning fossil fuels. Managing potential leakage during extraction was mentioned as a key concern, as natural gas is recognised as a potent greenhouse gas— however this Project does not involve extraction.

### ***Project rationale and detail***

Residents and participants at the community information session sought more information about details of the Project including construction schedules, easement and pipeline dimensions and pipeline alignment.

### ***Landscape and visual***

Queries about post-construction landscape remediation and rehabilitation were raised at the community information sessions by participants who wanted to understand what the easement would look like and how it would be maintained. Councils expressed similar concerns about the post-construction visual amenity, while local residents expressed concerns about rehabilitation of land based on previous experience of pipeline construction, and the potential for discarded rubbish.

### ***Contamination***

Community and stakeholders at the community information sessions asked about how the Project will manage topsoil contamination and weed spreading during construction.

### ***Safety, hazard and risk***

Councils and community members had queries about the safety measures in place to protect communities during pipeline construction and operation of the high-pressure gas main.

### ***Noise and vibration***

Many noise and vibration concerns were made in relation to impact on farming activities and livestock. Community members were concerned as cattle and horses, are sensitive to noise and would need to be moved during construction.

### ***Air quality***

Some Councils put forward a request to mitigate risk for dust control, on behalf of community members who suffer from asthma and respiratory problems.

### ***Ground movement and land stability***

Land stability and ground movement has not been mentioned by the community in engagement forums thus far.

## **8.5 Project response to issues and concerns**

Technical studies are addressing specific issues relevant to stakeholders, landholders and the local community. Risk and impact assessments have been undertaken as part of the EES process to identify and implement appropriate measures to avoid, minimise or mitigate risks and impacts from the Project.

Feedback from landholders, community and stakeholders is summarised below with the corresponding Project response. Responses to issues raised have contributed to the focus of EES assessment, refinements to the Project and measures to mitigate impacts incorporated into the EES. APA has also developed an FAQs document to respond to community and stakeholder concerns in Appendix C, of this Report.



**Table 8-2 Project response to issues and concerns**

Issue/concern	APA response and mitigation measures	Location in EES
<p><b>Land use impacts:</b> Potential impacts on current or planned land use and character of those land uses including residential, rural, commercial, industrial and recreational values</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Questions have been raised about ongoing use of land. APA nationally has 15,000 km of pipeline over all kinds of land use. APA encourage rehabilitation of the land and using it for farming purposes is one way to support this. Land within the construction corridor currently used for cropping would be able to continue following rehabilitation of the land.</li> <li>• During information sessions and other interactions, local residents have asked about the process for land use agreement. APA seeks to obtain a 15 m easement over the pipeline where the pipeline is constructed on private land. APA is committed to reaching an agreement with landholders within commercial terms wherever possible. The easement would solely be for the purpose of this pipeline (and associated facilities) and would be owned and operated by APA, to protect and maintain the pipeline. Under the Pipelines Act, APA is required to provide various levels of protection – including, for example, warning signs above ground. Easement is a form of protection to maintain land use and protect the asset.</li> <li>• APA has responded to location specific feedback from landholders and asset owners by making alignment revisions and refinement throughout the proposed pipeline. An example of this is the alignment option of the Gunns Gully Road Extension being avoided due to sensitive land uses (including several schools, a civic centre and an aged care facility, etc.) proposed on or in proximity to the extension.</li> <li>• APA would seek to minimise land use impacts from pipeline reinstatement as far as practicable by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Co-locating the alignment with other utility and transport infrastructure projects to avoid impacts on net developable land where practicable</li> <li>- Locating the pipeline at a distance from residential land uses that generally replicates the standards prescribed in Precinct Structure Plans (PSPs) where the alignment is accommodated</li> <li>- Facilitating for future uses along the pipeline (e.g. shared use paths) in accordance with the APA Site Planning and Landscape National Guidelines (APA 2020)</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p>Chapter 15 – Land Use</p> <p>Technical report K Land use</p>
<p><b>Biodiversity:</b> Concern over removal of vegetation, potential impacts on flora and fauna</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Protection of biodiversity has been frequently mentioned as a concern by communities and stakeholders. The pipeline alignment has been chosen to avoid where possible conservation areas, such as Mount Ridley Nature Conservation Reserve.</li> <li>• The construction corridor has been reduced in some relevant locations to avoid vegetation and threatened communities.</li> <li>• APA will work with landholders to retain trees where practicable and to replace trees were this is appropriate.</li> </ul>	<p>Chapter 7 – Biodiversity</p> <p>Technical report A – Biodiversity and habitats</p>

Issue/concern	APA response and mitigation measures	Location in EES
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• APA will have an environmental management plan in place during construction to manage construction impacts. For example, if there are weeds on a particular property, protocols would be in place for checking that machinery is clean before entry and exit from site to prevent the spread of weeds.</li> <li>• Offsets will be sought where native vegetation removal and/or impacts to <i>EPBC Act</i> listed species or habitat, is unavoidable.</li> <li>• Aligning with feedback received from the community about environmental values, measures would be undertaken to avoid construction in areas of habitat for the Growling Grass Frog and the Striped Legless Lizard. Construction would be undertaken outside peak breeding season of the Growling Grass Frog to minimise impacts.</li> <li>• Golden Sun Moth and Striped Legless Lizard habitat would be reinstated as far as practicable including topsoil management and revegetated with appropriate native grasses that provide habitat and food sources for the Golden Sun Moth.</li> <li>• Underboring in some relevant locations will avoid important vegetation. As an example, the one identified Matted Flax Lily plant will be protected by avoiding surface level disturbance in that location.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Social impact:</b> Potential impacts to access, amenity and/or community infrastructure/services</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Concerns have been expressed by the community about the short to medium term impact on local amenities and services. Through consultation with local communities and stakeholders, APA has taken care to minimise social impact through changes to the pipeline alignment, and by putting detailed plans and mitigation measures in place.</li> <li>• APA plan to work with local communities to improve open spaces and facilities where the opportunities arise.</li> <li>• APA will provide reasonable opportunity for subcontractors and labour from regions local to the site to be engaged on the construction works.</li> <li>• APA will seek opportunities for community support beyond pipeline construction in the Project area.</li> <li>• Opportunities will be explored and further developed as the Project progresses. The team is currently taking proposals from the community.</li> </ul>	<p>Chapter 16 – Social</p> <p>Technical report L Social</p>
<p><b>Traffic and transport:</b> Impacts on existing and planned transport infrastructure and traffic impacts during construction</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Communities mentioned traffic impacts during construction of the proposed pipeline as a concern. While there are a large number of road crossings that will cross the pipeline, many of these roads will be unaffected. APA will develop a traffic management plan and the local community will be advised of any temporary disruptions associated with the construction works where there is a need to redirect traffic for limited periods</li> </ul>	<p>Chapter 15 – Land Use</p> <p>Chapter 16 - Social</p>

Issue/concern	APA response and mitigation measures	Location in EES
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>APA are working closely with organisations leading other projects within or close to the Project area, to avoid or minimise impact on their works. This will include, for example, the planned Outer Metropolitan Ring Transport Corridor,</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Project rationale:</b> Concerns over investment in fossil fuels as a source of energy</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>APA has received and acknowledged concerns about the rationale for the Project in the context of the broader picture for energy supply in Victoria.</li> <li>APA consider climate change a critical issue facing the global community. APA is committed to helping shape a sustainable energy future for Australia.</li> <li>APA understand concerns around continued use of fossil fuels. As the energy sector progressively transitions from thermal power (including from coal-fired plants) to more renewable energy (including wind and solar) – gas, which generally has lower emissions than coal, will play a role in enabling firming capacity to complement renewables at peak times or when renewables are not available.</li> <li>Locally, the Project presents a number of benefits, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increasing the amount of natural gas that can be stored for times of peak demand</li> <li>Improved network performance and reliability</li> <li>Improved compression facilities with reduced emissions</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p>Gas supply is evened out with more efficient gas flow into gas storage basins addressing potential gas shortages as forecast by the Australian Energy Market Operator.</p>	Chapter 2 – Project Rationale
<p><b>Community engagement:</b> Ensuring sufficient consultation with impacted stakeholders and communities</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>APA has been engaging with potentially impacted landholders, communities and stakeholders since 2018. Consultation has been carefully planned, in line with a Pipelines Act Consultation Plan (published in March 2019), and an approved EES Consultation Plan (published in October 2020). Feedback from these stakeholders has helped to inform the project design, construction methodologies proposed and an engagement approach.</li> <li>Consultation has been offered through a range of channels including face-to-face meetings, online meetings, virtual information sessions, an online engagement hub, a community survey and a Project hotline.</li> <li>APA have created a range of collateral which aims to provide clear, regularly updated information about the Project, its progress through approvals, and opportunities to provide feedback.</li> <li>APA has not been able to engage face to face throughout the COVID-19 pandemic. Instead during this time APA were able to increase online communications and retain traditional channels which are safe to use, such as the hotline.</li> </ul>	Chapter 6 – Project Communications and Community Engagement  EES Consultation Plan

Issue/concern	APA response and mitigation measures	Location in EES
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In 2021, APA plan to offer more opportunities for local communities and stakeholders to engage face-to-face with the Project team, with government restrictions permitting</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Water:</b> Potential impacts to waterways (Jacksons Creek, Merri Creek and Deep Creek) and groundwater (water quality and water movement)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Technical Report C, Groundwater assessed impacts on groundwater levels, flow paths and quality during construction and operation of the Project. Six areas were identified where the pipeline may interact directly with the water table aquifer (approximately five percent of the alignment) which can impact water quality and availability. Management measures including pipeline design requirements to prevent preferential flow paths, and construction management requirements to minimise potential impacts to groundwater quality would be implemented to minimise impacts associated with Project construction and operation.</li> <li>In alignment with the feedback received from communities and stakeholders, potential impacts on the three main waterways intersected by the Project would be minimised where possible, including minimising impact on riparian vegetation through pipeline alignment selection.</li> <li><i>Jacksons Creek:</i> The proposed pipeline crossing at this creek is to be constructed using open cut trenching methods. The construction method proposed considered a number of factors including existing ground conditions, constructability constraints and environmental aspects in this area. Fish surveys have taken place, but these didn't identify any of the threatened species expected to be in the area. While the presence of Growling Grass Frogs has been established at that creek, the proposed pipeline crossing falls in the most degraded part of the creek, where frogs are least likely to occur. Additional management measures proposed to mitigate potential impacts to the creek during construction and operation include site-specific design and construction specifications, site rehabilitation measures including restoration of waterway bed and banks in accordance with stringent requirements, and surface water and biological monitoring. Remedial action would be carried out if monitoring and inspection results indicate a potential impact from the works to the environment.</li> <li><i>Merri Creek:</i> The proposed pipeline crossing at this creek is to be constructed using open cut trenching methods. It will be located within an existing APA easement, which has an existing gas pipeline that was constructed via an open cut methodology in 2014. The proposed pipeline will be co-located with the existing gas pipeline infrastructure to minimise environmental disturbance in this area. Surface water and biological monitoring would be undertaken during construction to manage potential impacts to the creek, such as erosion, and periodic visual monitoring would be undertaken to monitor the waterway after rehabilitation.</li> </ul>	<p>Chapter 8 – Water</p> <p>Technical report B – Surface water</p> <p>Technical report C – Groundwater</p>

Issue/concern	APA response and mitigation measures	Location in EES
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>Deep Creek</i>: The proposed pipeline crossing at this creek is to be constructed using Horizontal Direct Drilling (HDD) methodology. There will be no above ground disturbance within the creek corridor at this location. Specific HDD mitigation measures would be applied as standard controls to minimise potential residual impacts associated with erosion.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Cultural heritage:</b> Potential impacts to registered Aboriginal Heritage sites or identified European heritage values</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>APA are engaging closely with the Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung Cultural Heritage Aboriginal Corporation, Aboriginal Victoria and other relevant Traditional Owner groups in the development of two Cultural Heritage Management Plans (CHMP) connected to the Project.</li> <li>A CHMP is a written report prepared by a Heritage Advisor. It includes results of an assessment of the potential impact of a proposed activity on Aboriginal cultural heritage. It outlines measures to be taken before, during and after an activity in order to manage and protect Aboriginal cultural heritage in the activity area. APA's Heritage Advisors have been guided by Traditional Owners in identifying and testing key sites, and in developing an understanding of the associated cultural values.</li> </ul>	<p>Chapter 13 – Cultural Heritage</p> <p>Technical report I Cultural heritage</p>
<p><b>Greenhouse gas:</b> Identify potential impacts from greenhouse gas emissions from the Project during construction and operation activities</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Communities expressed some concern about the nature of the project and impacts of greenhouse gases in operation.</li> <li>Technical Report H, Greenhouse Gas, identified the estimated construction and operation emissions of the Project, which are largely attributed to the removal of vegetation and fuel use emissions during construction, and fuel use at the Wollert Compressor Station during operation. In relation to these concerns, the new equipment to be installed at the Wollert Compressor Station would represent the latest technology.</li> <li>Application of management measures including consideration of low embodied energy materials fuel efficient plant and equipment and locally sourced materials, would further reduce potential emissions.</li> <li>The Project is predicted by AEMO to lead to efficiency gains in the overall Victorian gas supply network by improving efficiency of the existing gas network and improving the compression facilities. This will lead to a net reduction in total greenhouse gas emissions across the VTS.</li> </ul>	<p>Chapter 10 – Contamination and Greenhouse Gas</p> <p>Technical report H Greenhouse gas</p>
<p><b>Landscape and visual impact:</b> Potential landscape character and visual impacts from removal of vegetation and construction activities</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Stakeholders, particularly landholders, provided feedback about retaining landscape and visual values on their properties or surrounding properties impacted by the pipeline alignment. In response to feedback with the affected landholders, APA will be required to reinstate the construction corridor to enable it to be used as per the previous use as far as practicable, in consultation with the landholder.</li> </ul>	<p>Chapter 14 – Landscape and Visual</p> <p>Technical report J Landscape and visual</p>

Issue/concern	APA response and mitigation measures	Location in EES
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• APA would avoid tree removal during construction where possible and machinery, materials and temporary infrastructure would be removed as soon as it is no longer required. Construction laydown areas would also be kept tidy and dust kept to a minimum.</li> <li>• For loss of trees and shrubs within the approved construction area affecting public places or existing screening of private residences from road reserves, screening measures will be implemented (outside the easement) where reasonably requested and where practicable, in consultation with the affected landholder and/or responsible authority. With the landholder's agreement, APA will also screen above-ground facilities.</li> <li>• A planting and remediation plan would be developed where planting of trees and shrubs is proposed (in consultation with any affected landholders and consistent with APA guidelines on restricted uses within an easement and other necessary approvals granted).</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Safety, hazard and risk:</b> Identify potential safety hazards and associated risks with the Project on people and environment</p>	<p>Safety is common community concern for pipeline projects. APA have performed a threat analysis according to Australian standards. This is a bottom-up look at threats to the pipeline such as seismic events, and other natural phenomena, as well as events such as corrosion. APA then look at how these risks can be mitigated, using safety measures, categorised into physical measures (e.g. depth of pipe, width of steel), as well as other patrol measures (e.g. signage, visual guidance and periodic patrols of the pipeline).</p>	<p>Chapter 17 – Safety</p> <p>Technical report M Safety</p>
<p><b>Contamination:</b> Disturbance of potentially contaminated soil in construction</p>	<p>Technical Report E, Contamination, assessed potential impacts on human health and the environment as a result of disturbance and management of contaminated soils and groundwater, acid sulfate soils and other wastes; and identified:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No contamination was identified at the locations sampled, indicating shallow soils are likely suitable for reuse at the site of origin in areas not identified as potential sources of contamination</li> <li>• There is potential for regional groundwater contamination impacts from landfills but due to Project design and construction methodology, the Project is unlikely to interact with groundwater in these areas. Analysis of groundwater to date at locations sampled has also not identified contamination.</li> <li>• Spoil management measures will be developed in consultation with EPA Victoria and include processes for classifying and managing all types of excavated material in accordance with applicable regulatory requirements. It is expected that the main spoil types would include mostly uncontaminated soils and potentially small volumes of prescribed industrial waste in the vicinity of known potential contamination sources.</li> </ul>	<p>Chapter 10 – Contamination and Greenhouse Gas</p> <p>Technical report E Contamination</p>

Issue/concern	APA response and mitigation measures	Location in EES
	A process will also be implemented for identifying, containing and managing unexpected contamination.	
<p><b>Noise and vibration:</b> Potential impacts on sensitive receptors from construction noise and vibration of the Project and operation of the Wollert Compressor Station</p>	<p>Amenity impacts during construction are frequently mentioned as a concern by impacted stakeholders. Technical Report F Noise and Vibration, has assessed the noise and vibration impacts of the Project during construction and operation of the Wollert Compressor Station. The assessment found that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Where works would occur in proximity to sensitive receptors, construction activities may result in short-term noise and vibration impacts</li> <li>• Noise from the operation of the expanded Wollert Compressor Station is predicted to comply with the applicable noise limits (<i>State Environment Protection Policy – Control of Noise from Commerce, Industry and Trade No. N-1</i> (SEPP N-1) at all of the sensitive receptors during the day, evening and night-time.</li> <li>• To avoid and minimise noise and vibration impacts during construction APA will implement a range of measures including preparation and implementation of a Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) detailing measures to avoid and minimise construction and vibration, and condition/dilapidation surveys where required (EMM NV1).</li> <li>• Following the implementation of the CEMP and where noise is still predicted to exceed the adopted criteria, information on the impact will be discussed with affected residents and depending on the circumstances, further measures to minimise noise impact will be considered including alternative temporary accommodation or other respite options (EMM NV7).</li> <li>• Prior to any blasting, a detailed blast study and impact management plan would be developed to confirm potential blasting impacts and identify any further management measures required (EMM NV3).</li> </ul>	<p>Chapter 12 – Noise and Vibration</p> <p>Technical report F Noise and vibration</p>
<p><b>Air quality:</b> Potential impacts on sensitive receptors from construction dust or operation of the Wollert Compressor Station</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Amenity impacts during construction have been mentioned as a concern by impacted stakeholders. In response, APA will put measures in place to control dust during the construction phase.</li> <li>• APA have established separation distances to meet dust standards and will implement mitigation measures where residences are within these distances. Measures will be adapted to suit the location, activities and conditions and could include watering, placing crushed rock on access tracks, restricting vehicle speeds, compaction of stockpiles. Additional measures such as wind barriers may be used in particular circumstances...</li> <li>• Realtime dust monitoring would be employed in locations where residences are within impact zones.</li> <li>• The compressor station design adopts the latest technology. Modelling has shown that State</li> </ul>	<p>Chapter 11 – Air Quality</p> <p>Technical report G Air quality</p>

Issue/concern	APA response and mitigation measures	Location in EES
	<p>Environmental Planning Policy emission requirements would be achieved, and no further mitigation of emissions is required. This has been assessed by EPA Victoria, with impacts deemed low enough that a Works Approval and operational licence are not required.</p>	
<p><b>Ground movement and land stability:</b> Potential ground instability or movement from trenching and boring</p>	<p>Technical Report D Ground Movement and Stability, assessed potential impacts relating to trenchless crossing ground movement, slope stability and trench stability. The report identified that encountering cohesionless granular material in trench construction could result in trench wall collapse and result in localised impact on nearby land. There is potential for impact on slope stability in the valley north of the Jacksons Creek crossing.</p> <p>To manage potential impacts associated with land stability and ground movement, the following key measures would be applied:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Requirements for fluid application for bore support during trenchless crossings</li> <li>• Adherence to third party asset clearances</li> <li>• Prior to construction, an investigation to confirm locations of sodic soils along the alignment. Sodic soil management measures will be developed in response to this investigation and implemented during construction</li> <li>• Provision of trench support or battering to reduce the potential for slope or trench wall failure and associated impacts.</li> <li>• Rehabilitation of the land in the case of soil disturbance and if there are issues with soil sinkage, bring in more soil to manage that. Routine inspections and maintenance will be ongoing during operation of the pipeline to manage any issues such as those associated with dispersive soils.</li> </ul>	<p>Chapter 9 – Ground movement and land stability</p> <p>Technical report D Ground movement and land stability</p>



## 8.6 Pipeline alignment updates

APA have incorporated feedback from stakeholders and the community into the design of the high-pressure gas main operation and the pipeline alignment since Project conception. Changes to the pipeline alignment have increased the overall pipeline length by 0.4 kilometres. Multiple updates to the pipeline alignment have been made at the time of drafting this report, with many in response to consultation and negotiation with landholders and other stakeholders. A trenchless approach (including horizontal directional drilling method) to installing the pipeline has been adopted at 18 locations along the 51-kilometre alignment, resulting in an approximate combined total of 2.4 kilometres of the pipeline, to reduce or mitigate impacts of the Pipeline Works.

APA will continue assess the pipeline under the most stringent safety standards, so that it is safe for the surrounding community. Table 8-3 provides a snapshot of changes to the pipeline alignment.

**Table 8-3 Changes to pipeline alignment**

	Early alignments	Current alignment
Number of trenchless sections	6	18
Length of trenchless section	~1.6 km	2.4 km
Overall pipeline length	50.6 km	51.0 km
Total number of changes to the pipeline	0	56

## 9. Monitoring and evaluation

The consultation program will continue to be monitored and evaluated through to the conclusion of the EES process and beyond to satisfy the ongoing requirements of the Project Pipeline Licence.

Consultation will continue to consider community and stakeholder needs and to provide opportunities to contribute feedback to inform the Project. APA actively seeks feedback from participants at engagement events and via online platforms to continue to improve their processes.

Participation levels and feedback received on the engagement process are being recorded, collected and considered as part of ongoing evaluation and continuous improvement of the engagement program during EES process.

Stakeholder contact information and interaction details are being collected using a stakeholder management database (X-Info Connect) to enable feedback from community members and stakeholders to be accurately recorded and analysed during the engagement process.

Data is also being collected and recorded using tools available on the engagement website and website analytics tools. Issues raised by community and stakeholders are being considered and addressed as part of the EES process. Information is being stored in accordance with the *Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014*.

Consultation and engagement updates were provided at TRG meetings. These meetings included a summary of engagement events and activities as well as around emerging issues and how these are being addressed. The Pipelines Act Consultation Plan and implementation program are being reviewed and modified in response to feedback and Project evolution to improve the engagement approach and efficiency.

Pending the granting of statutory approvals, APA are committed to ongoing engagement with the local community and stakeholders during construction and operation of the Project. The outcomes of the EES process, conditions of any statutory approvals and approved documents such as the Environment Management Plan would inform and contribute to the engagement approach. The ongoing engagement strategy would reflect relevant construction and operation issues impacting the community.

# 10. Conclusion

Public participation has been integral to the development of the Project. Engagement started early during selection of the pipeline corridor through 2018 and 2019, in keeping with *Pipelines Act 2005* requirements. This engagement focused particularly on landholders and occupiers affected directly by the Project.

Consistent with EES Scoping Requirements approved in August 2020, APA have gradually built Project awareness and increasing levels of stakeholder input on Project issues, impacts and alignments, as well as on the EES studies and findings through use of communication and engagement.

While engagement activities, due to the pandemic, have had an online focus, the APA community engagement team has worked hard to leverage other channels, including a Project hotline and direct mailshots to local residents. Stakeholders, in particular councils, have responded well to online meetings and virtual information sessions, giving them the opportunity to provide feedback and raise awareness of the Project in local communities. In early 2021, with COVID-19 restrictions easing, four drop-in information sessions were held in Hume, Melton, Mitchell and Whittlesea, enabling community members and stakeholders to interact directly with the team. In spite of strong advance communications through a range of channels, including the councils' own social media, turnout was low. However, those that did attend expressed strong interest and feedback on the Project.

Feedback to date has covered a broad range of topics linked to the technical studies – notably land use planning, biodiversity and social impact (accounting for over 50% of the items of feedback recorded). Stakeholders also showed interest in how community engagement was being conducted and the impact on traffic and transport infrastructure such as shared paths. Feedback from these ongoing conversations with the community and Project stakeholders continues to inform Project design and this EES. The importance of stakeholder involvement and influence on the Project is reflected by the number of changes to the pipeline alignment.

If the Project receives statutory approvals, the engagement approach would be reviewed to consider how to continue to effectively engage with the community during construction. Engagement during construction would seek to keep the community and stakeholders informed and would include consultation with potentially affected members of the community where required about specific mitigation measures. APA would continue to engage with stakeholders throughout the operational life of the pipeline.

# Appendices

# **Appendix A** – Project collateral examples



## western outer ring main.



Working towards a more efficient gas supply network for Victoria.

### Who is APA?

APA is a leading Australian energy infrastructure business, operating and maintaining networks that connect around 1.4 million Australian homes and businesses to the benefits of natural gas. Our 15,000 kilometres of natural gas pipelines connect sources of supply and markets across Australia.

### What are we doing?

APA proposes to construct a high pressure gas pipeline between Plumpton and Wollert in Victoria, which will present a number of benefits, including:

- Increasing the amount of natural gas that can be stored for times of peak demand.
- Improved network performance and reliability.
- Opportunity for natural gas supply to new growth areas in the northwest, including Sunbury South, Lindum Vale, Merrifield and Kalkalla.
- Addressing gas shortages as forecast by the Australian Energy Market Operator.

The proposed Western Outer Ring Main Project will include the construction of:

- A buried pipeline, approximately 51 kilometres long.
- An additional Compressor and Regulating Station at the existing Wollert Compressor Station, owned by APA.
- Three main line valves and associated above ground components.
- Connections into our existing APA infrastructure at Plumpton and Wollert.

### Project rationale

Refilling rates for the Iona Underground Storage (UGS) are currently limited as gas is required to be transferred through the low pressure pipeline network in Melbourne.

This limits the amount of gas that can be moved across the network in Victoria to Iona UGS.

The Western Outer Ring Main pipeline will enable gas to be sent at high pressure directly to Port Campbell (to support Iona UGS refilling) which will support peak demand supply during winter periods in Victoria.

By completing this missing link in Victoria's high-pressure gas transmission network it would allow gas to be transferred across the state with greater efficiency by allowing increased transfer capacity from one side of Victoria to the other.

### Project update

In December 2019, the Victorian Minister for Planning determined that an Environment Effects Statement (EES) is required for the Western Outer Ring Main Project.

In February 2020, the Commonwealth Department for Agriculture, Water and Environment (DAWE) issued a decision that the Project is a 'controlled action' under the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999 (EPBC Act) and that the Project will be assessed under the assessment bilateral agreement with Victoria.

The EES will assess the potential environmental, economic and social impacts of the Western Outer Ring Main Project during the construction and operational phases and describe how any impacts would be managed. The EES process will address both Commonwealth and Victorian requirements.

To learn about how the EES process works, visit the link: <https://www.planning.vic.gov.au/environment-assessment/what-is-the-ees-process-in-victoria>.

### EES Scoping Requirements

The Draft Scoping Requirements were exhibited for public comment during July 2020. The EES Scoping Requirements have been approved by the Minister for Planning in August 2020.

The Draft Scoping Requirements can be found on the DELWP webpage using the link: <https://www.planning.vic.gov.au/environment-assessment/browse-projects/projects/western-outer-ring-main-gas-pipeline#overview>.

Note: timeline provided is indicative only and will be subject to further discussions and agreement with state and federal governments.

### Proposed Project EES timeline

#### Stakeholder engagement

##### 2020 – 2022

- Consultation with government agencies, local councils and other stakeholders.
- Ongoing consultation with landowners where the pipeline is proposed to be located on their property.
- Consultation with the wider community.

#### EES process and regulatory approvals

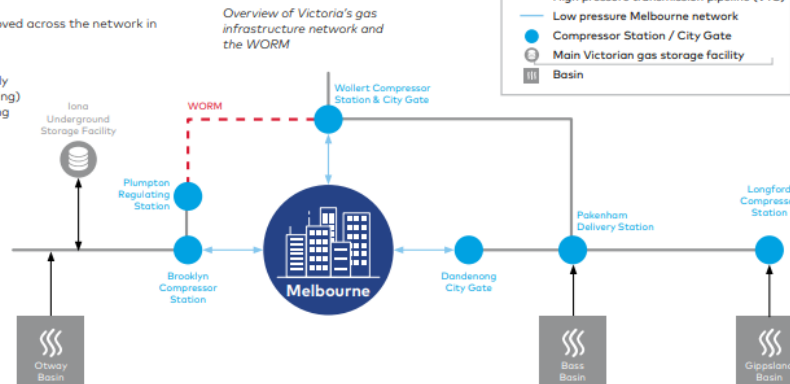
##### 2020 – 2021

- EES Scoping Requirements issued by the Victorian Minister for Planning.
- Undertake EES technical studies.
- Prepare and exhibit EES documentation.
- Victorian Minister for Planning provides an assessment.
- Commonwealth Minister for the Environment provides a decision on EPBC Act approval.
- All other relevant Project approvals obtained.

#### Project construction

##### Late-2021 – Mid-2022

Construction of the pipeline and compressor station at Wollert.



### Pipeline stats

length	Approximately 51 kilometres
material	Epoxy coated high strength steel line pipe.
diameter	500 millimetres
minimum cover	750 millimetres
	(final depth determined as an outcome of the Safety Management Study)
design principles	Strictly in accordance with the latest version of Australian Standard (AS) AS2885 Pipelines Gas and Liquid Petroleum.
temporary construction corridor	Generally 30 metres, plus ancillary areas to facilitate safe construction.
easement width	15 metres



# western outer ring main.



### What does an Environment Effects Statement (EES) mean for the Project?

APA is required to prepare EES documentation which responds to the Scoping Requirements to understand the potential environmental effects of the Project. APA is currently at the stage of scoping and preparing the EES technical reports and EES chapters. The documentation will be reviewed by an inter-agency Technical Reference Group (TRG) convened by the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP), who comment on the scoping and adequacy of the EES studies and documentation. Once complete, the EES will go on public exhibition, which will enable public comment on the project documentation.

### What is APA's engagement commitment during the Environment Effects Statement (EES) process?

During the EES process, APA will liaise with various local councils and government stakeholders, to seek input into project risks and statutory requirements that apply to the Project.

A tailored EES Consultation Plan has been progressed and describes how APA will engage with stakeholders during the EES process. The Consultation Plan details how communities potentially impacted will be informed and outlines opportunities for the public to submit any queries and provide relevant feedback for consideration during the EES process.

### What are we currently doing along the pipeline alignment?

APA is completing a range of comprehensive assessments in relation to the existing values along the proposed pipeline alignment, which inform the EES for the Project. The proposed alignment will maximise the use of existing APA pipeline easements wherever possible.

### Further investigations:

Further investigations are being undertaken to assess potential impacts from the Project, which include the following areas:

- Waterways and groundwater.
- Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal cultural heritage.
- Land stability and erosion.
- Ecology (Flora and fauna).
- Noise and vibration.
- Air quality.
- Greenhouse gas.
- Land use.
- Social and community.
- Safety and hazard.
- Contamination.
- Landscape and visual.

### Further information:

project hotline: 1800 951 444

[WORM@apa.com.au](mailto:WORM@apa.com.au)

[apa.com.au](http://apa.com.au)

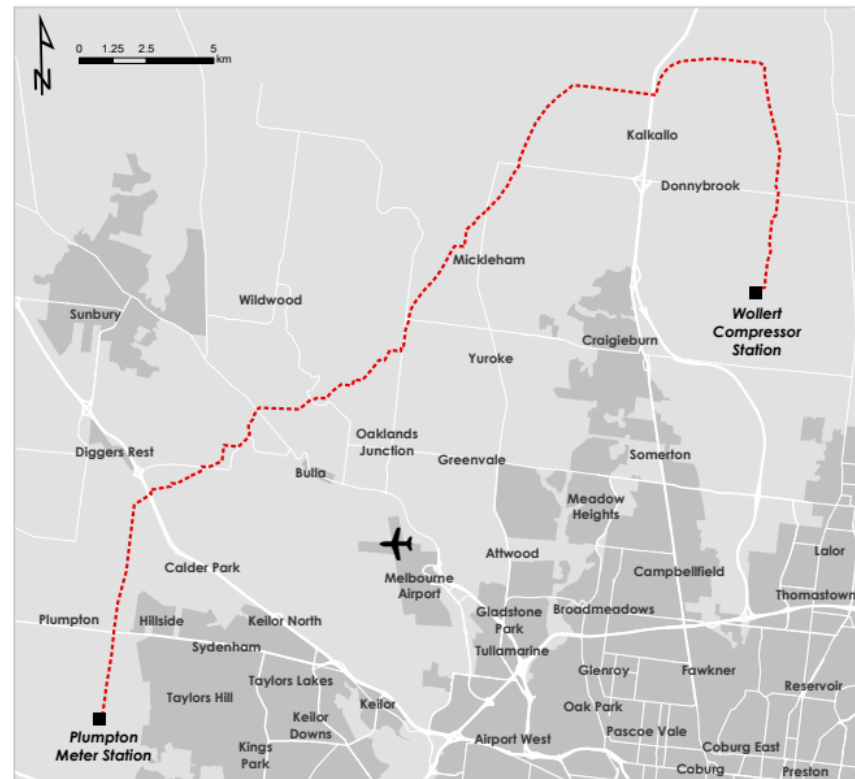
For questions about the EES process, please contact:

**Impact assessment unit, DELWP**


03 8392 5503

[environment\\_assessment@delwp.vic.gov.au](mailto:environment_assessment@delwp.vic.gov.au)

Project map




## Community information sessions flyer (December 2020)




# western outer ring main.

a project of



Community information sessions



**You are invited to attend our topic-focused online information sessions.**

APA has selected two session topics based on feedback received on the project so far:

- Ecology and Cultural Heritage
- Community (Impacts and Opportunities)

These sessions will be hosted in December using Microsoft Teams Live.

Further community sessions are planned for early 2021 to be held locally in Hume, Whittlesea, Mitchell and Melton.

APA project representatives will present the online information sessions and each will include a live, moderated Q&A session.

We encourage interested community members to submit their questions on the night. If you cannot attend the event live, you can also submit your question:

- by email to [worm@apa.com.au](mailto:worm@apa.com.au)
- or via our [community engagement hub](#)

To register your interest in an event, please visit <https://apa.mysocialpinpoint.com.au/worm>

**Session One: Ecology and Heritage**  
**Wednesday 9 December 2020, 6.00pm - 8.00pm.**

Topics to be covered include:

- Project overview
- Ecology (including local fauna, flora and waterways)
- Cultural Heritage
- Next steps in the EES process


To register your interest, visit: <https://apa.mysocialpinpoint.com.au/worm>

**Session Two: Community (Impacts and Opportunities)**  
**Monday 14 December 2020, 6.00pm - 8.00pm.**

Topics to be covered include:

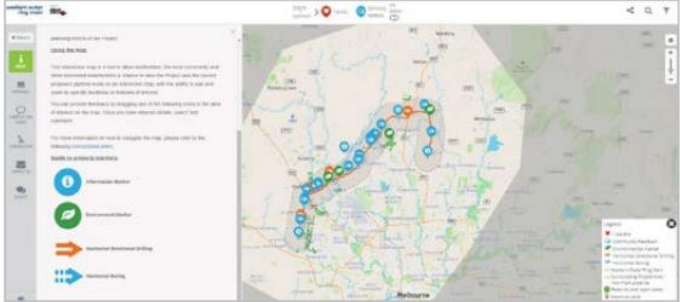
- Local construction impacts (including potential noise, dust and light)
- Land use and Pipeline Easement information
- Reinstatement
- Local job sourcing and opportunities
- Landscape guidelines (cycling and walking)
- Next steps in the EES process

To register your interest, visit: <https://apa.mysocialpinpoint.com.au/worm>



November 2020

Other ways to get involved:




**Interactive Engagement Hub**

To assist in APA's consultation process, our newly launched engagement hub includes:

- An interactive map to view the project alignment and collect feedback on key locations for consideration in our EES process.
- An online discussion forum where you can share your thoughts and ask questions on topics posted by the community and the project team.
- An online survey for providing your feedback to the project team.
- A live calendar outlining any upcoming community events.


Visit <https://apa.mysocialpinpoint.com.au/worm>



**Subscribe to our project e-news mailing list**

By subscribing, you will receive regular project updates and information on upcoming events and engagement activities for the Western Outer Ring Main Project.

To subscribe, visit: <https://apa.mysocialpinpoint.com.au/worm>.





# **Appendix B** – Stakeholder analysis

Target group	Examples of stakeholders	Potential involvement/Interest	Engagement level: Inform / Collaborate / Consult	Responsibility	Contact schedule	Contact method	Desired outcomes
<b>Landholders</b>	<p>Owners and occupiers impacted by the pipeline construction/operation</p> <p>DELWP - Committees of Management for Crown land reserves</p> <p>Neighbouring owners and occupiers of land (not directly impacted)</p>	<p>Owners and occupiers are likely to be interested in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Alignment of pipeline</li> <li>• Pipeline Licence Application</li> <li>• Reinstatement plan</li> <li>• Dust</li> <li>• Noise</li> <li>• Fencing</li> <li>• Access roads</li> <li>• Tree pruning and/or removal</li> <li>• Timing of works</li> </ul> <p>Neighbouring owners and occupiers will be interested in activity taking place in the area. General interest in scope and delivery approach.</p>	Collaborate/Consult	APA	Ongoing  Obtaining land access for surveys, construction, operation	Email, phone and face-to-face	<p>Parties are fully informed with input acknowledged and considered</p> <p>Agreement of pipeline corridor</p>
<b>Asset and infrastructure owners</b>	Melbourne Water, the Department of Transport (previously VicRoads), VicTrack (owners of land).	Asset owners are likely to be interested in impacts on assets, stakeholders and reinstatement.	Collaborate/Consult	APA	Ongoing  Obtaining land access for surveys, construction, operation	Email, phone and face-to-face, TRG meetings	Agreement of pipeline corridor and construction specification

Target group	Examples of stakeholders	Potential involvement/Interest	Engagement level: Inform / Collaborate / Consult	Responsibility	Contact schedule	Contact method	Desired outcomes
		<p>Asset owners will also potentially be interested in operational and construction impacts, if any, on the asset including ground movement, vibration.</p> <p>Operational and construction impacts on the asset purpose including existing waterways and reinstatement.</p> <p>Transport asset owners will be interested if the installation of gas pipeline works crosses major freeways, arterial roads and railway network.</p> <p>Rail asset owners will be interested if there are any temporary or long-term works in the rail corridor</p> <p>Department of Transport will be interested on the co-location of several sections of the pipeline within the Outer Metropolitan Ring Road</p>					

Target group	Examples of stakeholders	Potential involvement/Interest	Engagement level: Inform / Collaborate / Consult	Responsibility	Contact schedule	Contact method	Desired outcomes
		(Public Acquisition Overlay)					
	Utility asset owners/authorities including Telstra, Optus, Opticomm. NBN, Jemena, AusNet (Gas Services), AusNet (Power), Vocus and water service providers (City West Water, Western Water, Yarra Valley Water).	Asset owners are likely to be interested in Project design scope and timeline.  Asset owners may also be interested in operational and construction impacts, if any, on the asset including ground movement, vibration.  Operational and construction impacts on the asset purpose including reinstatement.		APA's Construction Contractor	Prior to construction and finalisation of detailed design/construction	Email and phone	Construction specification
<b>Regulatory authorities (State)</b>	DELWP, Environment Protection Authority, Aboriginal Victoria, Energy Safety Victoria, Heritage Victoria	Regulatory authorities may be interested in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Activities which could or do cause environment risk and or/impact relevant to approvals within their regulatory area of interest.</li> <li>Documentation related to their</li> </ul>	Collaborate/ Consult/Inform	APA	Ongoing  Completion of regulatory approvals process, construction, operation	Email, phone and face-to-face, TRG meetings	All regulatory requirements met prior to construction and compliance with approval documents. Agreement of environmental management measures.

Target group	Examples of stakeholders	Potential involvement/Interest	Engagement level: Inform / Collaborate / Consult	Responsibility	Contact schedule	Contact method	Desired outcomes
		<p>approvals processes.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Construction activities taking place within EPA guidelines.</li> <li>• Project scope, engagement with residents, community groups and businesses.</li> <li>• Mitigation measures, including environmental management plans</li> </ul> <p>Cultural heritage management plan.</p>					
<b>Regulatory authorities (Commonwealth)</b>	Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment	<p>Commonwealth regulatory authorities may be interested in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Activities which could or do cause environment risk and or/impact relevant to approvals within their regulatory area of interest.</li> <li>• Project scope, engagement with</li> </ul>	Consult/Inform	APA	Ongoing Completion of regulatory approvals process, construction, operation	Email, phone and face-to-face	All regulatory requirements met prior to construction and compliance with approval documents

Target group	Examples of stakeholders	Potential involvement/Interest	Engagement level: Inform / Collaborate / Consult	Responsibility	Contact schedule	Contact method	Desired outcomes
		<p>residents, community groups and businesses.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Mitigation measures, including environmental management plans.</li> </ul>					
<b>Registered Aboriginal Parties and Traditional Owner Groups</b>	<p>Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung Cultural Heritage Aboriginal Corporation</p> <p>Boon Wurrung Foundation</p> <p>Bunurong Land Council Aboriginal Corporation</p>	<p>Traditional Owners have an interest in protecting cultural heritage, with involvement in preparation of the CHMP. Relevant monitoring during works as required.</p> <p>Liaising with the Wurundjeri on the controls to be part of the CHMP.</p> <p>There is a direct interest in the Heritage technical study.</p>	Consult/Inform	APA	Ongoing  Completion of regulatory approvals process, construction, operation	Email, phone and face-to-face, TRG meetings	All regulatory requirements met prior to construction (approval of CHMP) and compliance with approval documents
<b>Elected Representatives</b>	<p>Relevant local, State and federal members of Parliament</p> <p>State (MPs):</p>	<p>Elected representatives may be interested in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Value that works will deliver for the community.</li> </ul>	Inform	APA	Initial meeting and progress updates at key milestones	Letter and face-to-face	Members fully informed and supportive of the Project

Target group	Examples of stakeholders	Potential involvement/Interest	Engagement level: Inform / Collaborate / Consult	Responsibility	Contact schedule	Contact method	Desired outcomes
	<p>Sydenham: Hon. Natalie Hutchins MP</p> <p>Kororoit: The Hon. Marlene Kairouz MP</p> <p>Sunbury: Mr Josh Bull MP</p> <p>Yuroke: Ms Ros Spence MP</p> <p>Yan Yean: Danielle Green MP</p> <p>Federal MPs:</p> <p>Gorton: Hon. Brendan O'Connor MP</p> <p>McEwan: Mr Rob Mitchell MP</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The works and investment in assets in the electorate.</li> <li>Project scope, engagement with residents, community groups and businesses.</li> <li>Mitigation measures.</li> </ul>					
<b>Local councils</b>	<p>Melton City Council</p> <p>Hume City Council</p> <p>Mitchell Shire Council</p> <p>Whittlesea City Council</p> <p>- as managers of respective areas at a local level and for specialist input</p>	<p>Councils are likely to be interested in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Project scope, timelines, and engagement with residents, community groups and businesses.</li> <li>Potential impacts on communities and the environment including biodiversity, water,</li> </ul>	Inform/Consult	APA	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>Obtaining land access for surveys, agreement of pipeline corridor, construction, operation, approvals</p>	<p>Email, phone, face-to-face, briefings, TRG meetings</p>	<p>Council is fully informed and supportive of Project</p>

Target group	Examples of stakeholders	Potential involvement/Interest	Engagement level: Inform / Collaborate / Consult	Responsibility	Contact schedule	Contact method	Desired outcomes
		<p>air, noise, social, landscape and visual, land use.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Statutory planning framework (land use planning study).</li> <li>• Mitigation measures.</li> <li>• Reinstatement.</li> </ul>					
	<p>CEO and high-level personnel:</p> <p>Melton City Council: Kelvin Tori</p> <p>Hume City Council: Domenic Isola</p> <p>Mitchell Shire Council: Brett Luxford</p> <p>Whittlesea City Council: Simon Overland</p>	<p>CEO and high-levels personnel may be Interested in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Project scope, engagement with residents, community groups and businesses.</li> <li>• Mitigation measures.</li> <li>• Reinstatement Plan.</li> </ul>	Inform/Consult	APA	Initial meeting and progress updates at key milestones	Letter and face-to-face	
<b>Community, Environment and Action Groups</b>	<p>Clubs, Land Care Groups, Friends of Parks groups, Including:</p> <p>Melton Environment Group, Bulla Hill Railway, Friends of Malcolm Creek &amp; Grasslands, Friends of Edgars Creek, Friends</p>	<p>The community groups may be interested in details of the works and potential impacts to the surrounding environment.</p> <p>Environmental Management Plan.</p>	Inform/Consult	APA	As part of broader community consultation then as required	Letter, email, phone, face-to-face, workshops	Groups are fully informed with input acknowledged and considered



Target group	Examples of stakeholders	Potential involvement/Interest	Engagement level: Inform / Collaborate / Consult	Responsibility	Contact schedule	Contact method	Desired outcomes
	of Merri Creek, Sunbury Residents Action Group, Environment Victoria, Environmental Justice Australia, Hume Climate Action Now, Northern Alliance for Greenhouse Action, Western Alliance for Greenhouse Action, Jacksons Creek Eco Network	Groups with an environment or conservation focus will have specific interest in biodiversity and water technical studies.					
<b>Media</b>	News organisations – print, television, digital, including:  The North Central Review, Whittlesea Review, Whittlesea Leader, Hume Leader, Sunbury Leader, Sunbury & Macedon Rangers Star Weekly, Northern Leader, Melton Leader, Melton And Moorabool Star Weekly, Sunbury & Macedon Ranges Star Weekly, Mirage News, Donnybrook Balingup Herald, Donnybrook Bridgetown Mail,	The media may be interested in issues that affect landholders, residents and businesses and the way in which Project is working.  They may wish to update community on works and impacts.	Inform	APA	As required – response to requests	Letter, email and phone	News organisations are fully informed of the Project and have balanced reporting

Target group	Examples of stakeholders	Potential involvement/Interest	Engagement level: Inform / Collaborate / Consult	Responsibility	Contact schedule	Contact method	Desired outcomes
	Preston Press, South Western Times						
<b>Local residents</b>	Residents of towns and locations close to works:  Plumpton, Diggers Rest, Bulla, Oaklands Junction, Wildwood, Mickleham, Kalkallo, Donnybrook, Craigieburn, Wollert	Residents may be interested in knowing the Project scope and timeline, long-term impacts and impacts during construction (levels of noise, dust, social and landscape/visual impacts, and work hour.	Inform	APA	As part of broader community consultation	Information sessions, email, phone, online engagement	Residents are fully informed with input acknowledged and considered
<b>Local businesses</b>	Business located close to works:  Hi-Quality Quarry Products Pty Ltd, Mickleham Musallah Muslims Sunni, Marnong Estate Winery and Homestead	Businesses may be interested in knowing the Project scope, timeline, long-term impacts and impacts during construction.	Inform	APA	As part of broader community consultation	Letter, email, phone, face-to-face (as required).	Businesses are fully informed with input acknowledged and considered

Target group	Examples of stakeholders	Potential involvement/Interest	Engagement level: Inform / Collaborate / Consult	Responsibility	Contact schedule	Contact method	Desired outcomes
<b>Property developers</b>	Dahua Group Dennis Family Corporation MAB Merristock Olivine by Mirvac Peppercorn Hill (planned community facilities) Potter George Santieri Developments Satterley Stockland Wolfdene	Developers will be interested in scope of works and changes to surrounding and access to local/arterial roads, parks and shared paths.	Inform/Consult	APA	As part of broader community consultation then as required	Letter, email, phone, face-to-face (as required).	Developers are fully informed with input acknowledged and considered

# Appendix C - FAQs

## WORM EES Community Session December 2020: Frequently asked questions

### About the Project

#### Who are APA?

APA is a leading Australian energy infrastructure business, operating and maintaining networks that connect around 1.4 million Australian homes and businesses to the benefits of natural gas. Our 15,000 kilometres of natural gas pipelines connect sources of supply and markets across mainland Australia.

#### What are we doing?

We are proposing to construct a high pressure gas pipeline between Plumpton and Wollert in Victoria, which will present a number of benefits, including:

- increasing the amount of natural gas that can be stored for times of peak demand
- improved network performance and reliability
- opportunity for natural gas supply to new growth areas in the northwest, including Sunbury South, Lindum Vale, Merrifield and Kalkallo
- addressing potential gas shortages as forecast by the Australian Energy Market Operator.

#### Why is this project happening (rationale)?

Refilling rates for the Iona Underground Storage (UGS) are currently limited as gas is required to be transferred through the low pressure pipeline network in Melbourne.

This limits the amount of gas that can be moved across the network in Victoria to Iona UGS.

The Western Outer Ring Main pipeline will enable gas to be sent at high pressure directly to Port Campbell (to support Iona UGS refilling) which will support peak demand supply during winter periods in Victoria.

By completing this missing link in Victoria's high-pressure gas transmission network it would allow gas to be transferred across the state with greater efficiency by allowing increased transfer capacity from one side of Victoria to the other.

#### What are the project objectives?

The overall project objectives are to:

- build a high pressure link between existing sources of gas supply in the north and east with those in the west of the State.
- improve system resilience and security of gas supply
- improve reliability in the network by increasing the amount of gas that can be stored for times of peak demand and ensuring that sufficient volumes of gas can be moved to where it is needed most.

#### What does the construction of the new pipeline include?

The proposed Western Outer Ring Main Project will include construction of:

- a buried pipeline, approximately 51 kilometres long
- an additional compressor, at the existing Wollert Compressor Station, owned by APA, on Summerhill Road
- three main line valves and associated above ground equipment
- Connections into our existing APA infrastructure at Plumpton and Wollert.

#### When will construction start and how long will it take to complete the project?

The Western Outer Ring Main pipeline project will not commence construction until after the Minister for Planning has completed an assessment of the EES and all necessary approvals have been obtained.

Once all necessary approvals have been obtained - expected in late-2021 - construction can commence. Construction is expected to take approximately nine months to complete, which would see the pipeline in-service in Q3 2021.

#### What community consultation has taken place so far?

Information gathering for Route Selection took place in late 2018 and included engagement with key stakeholders of relevance to the route selection process. The Initial Stakeholder Consultation phase commenced in November 2018 with project information and briefings being provided to relevant federal, state and local government authorities and utilities.

## WORM EES Community Session December 2020: Frequently asked questions

Further communications have taken place as follows:

- March 2019: publication of a web page on the APA website
- March 2019: project fact sheet published on the APA website
- March 2019: APA Worm Pipeline Project Consultation Plan published on the APA website
- March 2019 – ongoing: land owner and occupier engagement
- March 2019 – ongoing: council briefings and meetings
- November 2019: land use newsletter published on the APA website
- October 2019: distribution of project newsletter to local residents
- March 2020: distribution of project newsletter to local residents
- October 2020: distribution of project newsletter to local residents and via e-news
- October 2020: community engagement hub launch (online portal)
- October 2020: community presentation (MS Teams Live, 28 October 2020)
- November 2020: distribution of project notification to local residents and via e-news

#### How many pipeline route options were considered by APA?

From late 2018 to early 2019, APA undertook a comprehensive route selection process, assessing the possible alignments through a multi-criteria assessment aligning with the objectives of the Pipelines Act.

Five route options were considered as part of APA's business case submission to the Australian Energy Regulator (AER), detailed in the Route Selection Report available on our website [here](#).

All pipeline route options share a common alignment from KP0 through to approximately KP15, commencing at the Plumpton pressure reduction station, just north of Taylors Road and traversing generally north for approximately 9km within the existing Deer Park to Sunbury pipeline easement. The route traverses land zoned as Urban Growth Zone for the initial 3.5km and then Green Wedge Zone from approximately KP3.5 to KP9. All pipeline route options cross the Sunbury rail line and the Calder Freeway and traverse in a north-easterly direction for approximately 4km through land zone as Green Wedge A Zone. From approximately KP13 to KP15 all pipeline route options traverse generally north within the existing Ausnet 500kV high voltage powerline easement.

#### Which option was selected and why?

The preferred pipeline route traverses through land zoned as Green Wedge Zone, the proposed Outer Metropolitan Ring Road easement and other pipeline easements. It was selected for the following reasons:

1. Alignment with objectives of the Pipelines Act 2005
2. Minimised co-location with the Ausnet 500kV easement
3. Avoidance of impacts to the Mount Ridley Nature Conservation Reserve and adjoining MSA conservation area
4. Minimisation of impacts to Merri Creek

#### What is the process for approving this Project?

On 22 December 2019, the Victorian Minister for Planning determined that an Environment Effects Statement (EES) is required for the APA Western Outer Ring Main Gas Pipeline Project (the Project) under the Environment Effects Act 1978, listing the following reasons;

- The Project has potential for significant environmental effects, in particular on native vegetation, habitat of terrestrial and aquatic species listed under the Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act 1988, ecologically sensitive waterways and wetlands, and on Aboriginal cultural heritage.
- An Environment Effects Statement is warranted to provide an integrated, robust and transparent process to assess the proposal's effects and associated uncertainties, and to evaluate effectiveness of the proposed avoidance, mitigation, management and offsetting measures, prior to any statutory approval decisions.

## Easement and Construction

### What is happening to spoil/rock extracted during construction of the WORM?

- We are seeking arrangements for rock to go to a local quarry to be repurposed.

### Can landholders continue to use the easement on their property once the project is operating? Does this mean it can't be used for agricultural purposes?

- There are some conditions associated with the easement on what you can and cannot do in the pipeline corridor area. Some actions may require approval from APA such as earthworks, land levelling or use of some machinery. However, we encourage the land to be used for agriculture or horticultural purposes as this aids the reinstatement process. The only requirement is that the easement is kept clear for visual inspections which are undertaken for safety purposes.

### Who is responsible if there is environmental degradation after construction or during operation?

- APA is responsible for defects caused by the pipeline, no matter when they occur. Under the Pipelines Act, APA is required to rehabilitate any land on or under which a pipeline is situated as soon as practical after the completion of construction of that part of the pipeline.

### How does APA ensure weeds are not spread between properties when construction moves up and down the easement?

- During construction, APA will strictly manage vehicle cleaning with wheel wash bays to ensure weeds are not spread.

### How will soil be imported and what is the process in place to ensure it is weed free?

- Clean imported soil will be sourced from a local supplier, if required, for any shortfall of suitable backfill material. The clean soil will then be covered with the stockpiled spoil and, where suitable, followed by topsoil. All material imported for the project would have records on where materials are sourced to confirm their suitability.

### Is the pipeline a conduit for the spread of invasive weed or fungus species?

- The management of weeds will be undertaken for the project during the construction and operational phases. Biosecurity requirements will be in place during construction to restrict any spread of weeds from our works.
- **Fungus:** While the pathogen is more commonly spread through the movement of contaminated soil and gravel carried by vehicle or foot traffic, potential introduction and spread of Cinnamon Fungus is considered highly unlikely on the project, owing to vegetation and soil types in the project area. However, there are mitigation measures proposed to manage topsoil and spoil during construction.

### Have you found acid sulphate soils in your studies so far? How will you manage construction if they are present?

- Assessments undertaken to date have not found the presence of acid sulphate soils. APA will be undertaking further testing at the 3 main creek crossings (Merr, Jacksons, Deep Creeks) to confirm if there is any ASS in this area.

## Environment Effects Statement process

### What is an Environment Effects Statement?

An Environment Effects Statement (EES) is a document that provides a detailed description of the Project, assesses its potential effects on the environment, and assesses alternative layouts, designs and approaches to avoid, mitigate and manage effects. A number of technical studies are appended to the EES, undertaken to look at the potential environmental, social, cultural and economic impacts and how they will be managed.

The EES scoping requirements was issued by the Minister for Planning in August 2020 and sets out the broad range of environmental matters that need to be investigated and documented within the EES. Key areas for investigation and assessment for the Western Outer Ring Main Project include:

- **Energy efficiency, security, affordability and safety** provide for safe and cost-effective pipeline connection between the eastern and western sections of the Victorian Transmission System.
- **Biodiversity:** minimise and restore potential adverse effects on native vegetation, listed threatened and migratory species and ecological communities, and habitat for these species, as well as address offset requirements for residual environmental effects consistent with state and Commonwealth policies.
- **Water and catchment values:** maintain the functions and values of groundwater, surface water and floodplain environments and minimise effects on water quality and beneficial uses.
- **Cultural heritage:** avoid or minimise adverse effects on Aboriginal and historic cultural heritage.
- **Social, economic, amenity and land use:** minimise potential adverse social, economic, amenity and land use effects at local and regional scales.
- **Waste management:** minimise generation of wastes from the Project during construction and operation, and to prevent adverse environmental or health effects from storing, handling, transporting and disposing of waste products.

### What will be studied and investigated?

We will engage independent consultants to undertake technical studies to investigate the existing conditions of the proposed Project environment, and assess the potential impacts of the Project:

1. Biodiversity
2. Water (groundwater and surface water)
3. Ground movement and land stability
4. Contamination
5. Noise and vibration
6. Air quality
7. Greenhouse gas
8. Landscape and visual
9. Land use
10. Social impact
11. Cultural heritage (Aboriginal and historic heritage)
12. Safety and hazard

### What is a technical study?

A technical study is work carried out by a technical specialist on a particular aspect of potential project impact, for example noise. The study assesses the existing environment, the impact of project activities, and recommends appropriate environmental management measures.

### What impact will the EES process have on the Western Outer Ring Main?

The EES is not an approval process itself, rather it enables statutory decision-makers, including Ministers, local governments and statutory authorities, to make decisions about whether or how a project with potentially significant environmental effects should proceed.

### How is an EES managed?

The Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP) manages the process on behalf of the Minister for Planning. However, in close consultation with DELWP, APA will be responsible for coordinating

## WORM EES Community Session December 2020: Frequently asked questions

the investigations and technical studies to understand the impact to the environment and local community. We will refine the design during this period under the EES and will provide opportunities for input and feedback with the community during this process.

### What are we currently doing along the pipeline alignment?

APA is completing a range of comprehensive assessments in relation to the existing values along the proposed pipeline alignment, which inform the EES for the Project. The proposed alignment will maximise the use of existing APA pipeline easements wherever possible.

### When will the EES documentation be available to review?

The EES documentation is scheduled to go on exhibition May 2021 – June 2021.

We'll promote the announcements on our website, email our project subscribers, hold information sessions and post information on social media. We'll also engage local community groups, landowners, residents and businesses to help distribute information through their networks.

### How long will the EES be available for public comment?

When the Minister for Planning announces the formal exhibition of the EES documentation, a timeframe of public exhibition will be known. Usually a minimum of 30 business days is required for the exhibition period for submissions, for the full EES, and 15 business days for the scoping requirements. We'll ensure we communicate the opportunity for public feedback through all of our social and digital channels, as well as engage local community groups, residents and businesses to help ensure information is distributed to their networks.

## WORM EES Community Session December 2020: Frequently asked questions

### Community and stakeholder participation during EES

#### How can the community and stakeholder be involved in the EES development?

There are many opportunities for community involvement in the EES development phase, including meetings and workshops, information sessions, community advisory panel(s) (if supported by the community) and online engagement. We will also reach out to identified stakeholders to make them aware of the process and their opportunity to participate.

The community can also provide their feedback through the interactive engagement hub:

<https://apa.mysocialpinpoint.com.au/worm>

The engagement hub includes an interactive map, feedback survey, discussion forum as well as a link to sign up to receive e-news update.

#### How do the community and stakeholders provide feedback?

Community and stakeholder feedback is an integral part of the EES process. The community will be invited to review the full suite of EES documentation during the public exhibition period. This will include an extensive report on the studies and assessment of the potential impacts and how these will be managed.

The community can also provide their feedback through the interactive engagement hub:

<https://apa.mysocialpinpoint.com.au/worm>

The engagement hub includes an interactive map, feedback survey, discussion forum as well as a link to sign up to receive e-news update.

Feedback is also recorded during all engagement activities outside the public exhibition periods – with opportunities to comment via online platforms, during events, meetings and information sessions.

#### Why are APA using MS Teams Live for community engagement sessions

Due to the constraints of COVID-19, MS Teams Live has offered a workaround solution for engaging with community in a manageable solutions that still allows for community feedback via the Q&A chat function.

APA intends to return to in-person community event in 2021.

#### When will the EES documentation be available to review?

The scoping requirements for the EES was displayed during July and August 2020. Following the EES process, the Minister will announce the exhibition of full EES documentation, which is expected in mid-2021.

We'll promote the announcements on our website, email our project subscribers, hold information sessions and post information on social media. We'll also engage local community groups, landowners, residents and businesses to help distribute information through their networks.

#### How long will the EES be available for public comments?

When the Minister for Planning announces the formal exhibition of the EES documentation, a timeframe of public exhibition will be known. Usually a minimum of 30 business days is required for the exhibition period for submissions, for the full EES, and 15 business days for the scoping requirements. We'll ensure we communicate the opportunity for public feedback through all of our social and digital channels, as well as engage local community groups, residents and businesses to help ensure information is distributed to their networks.

#### Can I submit a survey response through traditional (non-digital) ways?

Yes, APA intends to send out the EES community survey to the local community with a pre-paid mail slip along with our next community update.

## WORM EES Community Session December 2020: Frequently asked questions

### What is the EES timeline?

The estimated timeline for the Project is as follows

- **December 2019** – Victorian Minister for Planning determined EES is required.
- **February 2020** – the Commonwealth Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment (DAWE) determined that the proposed action is a 'controlled action'.
- **July to August 2020** - EES draft scoping requirements open for public comment.
- **August 2020 to April 2021** - APA to undertake the EES technical studies
- **September 2020** - Minister for Planning formalised the EES scoping requirements
- **May 2021 to June 2021** – EES public exhibition.A
- **July 2021** – Panel hearing for Project (if required).
- **October 2021** – Victorian Minister for Planning assessment.

### What upcoming community engagement is there?

In the November – March 2021 period, APA intends to host further community sessions. They will consist of:

- **Topic focused presentations** – These presentations will focus on key topics based on community feedback from surveys and perceived community interest. Sessions will be hosted online and involve a Q&A component.

Session #1 will be hosted on 9/12/2020 and the topic will be on Ecology and Cultural Heritage

Session #2 will be hosted on 14/12/2020 and the topic will be on Community (Impacts and Opportunities)

- **Local council boundary sessions** – 2-3 community session separated based on the local boundaries of the project alignment (Melton, Whittlesea, Hume and Mitchell). Sessions will be focused on local community issues and interest, with more time devoted to Q&As. These session are expected to occur in early 2021.

### Why was the advertised event on 1/12/2020 postponed to 14/12/2020?

Due to unforeseen illness by APA staff that would have impacted the session, the event was postponed to 14/12/2020.

### How do I sign up to receive project updates?

You can receive project updates here: <https://confirmsubscription.com/h/d/90FB7E94250502CB>

You can also sign up via the interactive community engagement hub:  
<https://apa.mysocialpinpoint.com.au/worm>



# **Appendix D** – Survey questionnaire



**Subscribe to receive Project updates:**

Name: .....

Email Address: .....

I would like to receive occasional e-newsletter updates regarding the progress of the WORM Project.

Yes  No

**Community feedback survey**

The APA Western Outer Ring Main (WORM) Project is seeking your feedback to help inform the preparation of the Project Environment Effects Statement (EES).

The WORM Project is a proposed underground gas transmission pipeline between Plumpton and Wollert in Victoria, to provide a high-pressure connection between the eastern and western sections of the Victorian Transmission System.

**How to complete and submit this survey**

If you are interested in completing this survey, please post your response in the supplied pre-paid envelope. This survey is anonymous, however if you would like to opt-in to receive regular updates about the Project, you can supply your contact details.

Please note your response will be recorded in advance of the Project EES.

**Survey responses close 26/02/2021.**

**Contact Us**

**Phone:** 1800 951 444  
**Email:** worm@apa.com.au

**Project Website:**  
apa.com.au/worm

**Community engagement website:**  
<https://apa.mysocialpinpoint.com.au/worm>

# community feedback survey.



energy. connected.

western outer ring main



**Q1. Which of the following best describes you?**

*(Tick where relevant)*

- Landowner/Occupier (I am directly affected by the proposed pipeline alignment)
- Local resident (I live within Melton, Hume, Mitchell or Whittlesea LGAs)
- Local business or trader (I work or operate a business inside of the Project area)
- Community or environmental interest group
- Authority or government representative
- General public (Live outside the Project area)
- Other (Please specify)

**Q2. What is the main reason(s) you want to submit a survey response to the Western Outer Ring Main Project?**

*(Tick where relevant)*

- I want to learn more about the Project
- I want to show my support for the Project
- I don't want the Project to go ahead
- I have an idea I wish to share
- I want to understand how the Project fits in with the wider gas energy market in Victoria
- I have queries/concerns regarding the project's overall construction program
- I have concerns regarding land-use and planning impacts from the Project
- I am interested in work opportunities resulting from the Project

**Q3. From your perspective, which identified issues require particular attention for the Project EES process** *(Please rank in order from highest [1] to lowest priority [14])*

**Potential environmental and Heritage impacts**

- Fauna and Flora
- Greenhouse gases
- Waterways
- Visual amenity
- Cultural Heritage
- Waste

**Potential construction impacts**

- Air quality
- Noise
- Transport
- Dust
- Light

**Potential social impacts**

- Community impacts
- Industry
- Local business impacts

**Q4. Are there any specific issues you have identified that may occur from the construction or operation of the WORM Project?**

**Q5. Is there any flora or fauna species, or significant local areas that APA should be made aware of to consider into the Project Environment Effects Statement?**

**Q6. What do you see as the potential benefits of the WORM Project?**

**Q7. Are there any opportunities you have identified for community improvement that could be considered as part of the construction or operation of the WORM Project?**

**Q8. Which forms of communication would you prefer APA focus on when engaging with community and key stakeholders in future?** *(Please select your top 3, OR rank from highest to lowest priority)*

- Email updates
- Website (apa.com.au/worm)
- Social Media
- Traditional media (Print, TV, Radio)
- Online information sessions with live Q&As
- In-person information sessions
- Online discussion forum
- Interactive maps
- Regular community updates via maildrops
- Regular e-news updates online

**Q9. Are there any other remarks, ideas or concerns you wish to share with the Project team?**

**Q10. Do you have any suggestions for community investment as part of the Project?**



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