

LATROBE CITY COUNCIL

AGENDA FOR THE UNSCHEDULED COUNCIL MEETING

TO BE HELD VIA AUDIO-VISUAL LINK AT 6PM ON 16 AUGUST 2021

UCM567

Please note:

Pursuant to s66(2)(b) and s66(2)(c), this Council Meeting will not be open to the public to attend in person. Instead participation may occur by video link and the Meeting may be viewed live on the internet from Council's website or Facebook page.

Opinions expressed or statements made by participants are the opinions or statements of those individuals and do not imply any form of endorsement by Council.

By attending a Council Meeting via audio-visual link those present will be recorded or their image captured. When participating in the meeting, consent is automatically given for those participating to be recorded and have images captured.



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COUNCILLOR AND PUBLIC ATTENDANCE

PLEASE NOTE

The Victorian Government's *COVID-19 Omnibus* (*Emergency Measures*) *Act 2020* has introduced into the *Local Government Act 2020* new mechanisms that allow for virtual Council Meetings to ensure local government decision-making can continue during the coronavirus pandemic.

Pursuant to section 394 of the *Local Government Act 2020*, a Councillor may attend this Council Meeting remotely by electronic means of communication; and

Pursuant to section 395 of the *Local Government Act 2020* this Council Meeting may be closed to the attendance by members of the public by making available access to a live stream of the Meeting on the Council's internet site.

1. OPENING PRAYER

Our Father who art in Heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in Heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us, and lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours now and forever. Amen.

2. ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF THE TRADITIONAL OWNERS OF THE LAND

I would like to acknowledge that we are meeting here today on the traditional land of the Braiakaulung people of the Gunaikurnai nation and I pay respect to their elders past and present.

If there are other Elders present I would also like to acknowledge them.

- 3. APOLOGIES AND LEAVE OF ABSENCE
- 4. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS
- 5. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION TIME

Attend as an observer

The Victorian Government's *COVID-19 Omnibus* (*Emergency Measures*) *Act 2020* has introduced into the *Local Government Act 2020* new mechanisms that allow for virtual Council Meetings and allow for Council Meetings to be closed to the public.



The safety of Councillors, Council staff and our community is at the forefront of our decisions therefore this Meeting will be closed to physical participation by members of the public. To meet our legislated obligations and in the spirit of open, accessible and transparent governance, this Council Meeting is livestreamed and can be viewed by using the link on Council's website or Facebook page.

Public Speakers

An opportunity for members of the public to speak to an item on the agenda will be made available by necessary means. To partipicate, members of the public must have registered before 12noon on the day of the Council meeting.



CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICE



6. CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICE

Agenda Item: 6.1

Agenda Item: Draft Submission: Planning Permits Applications for

the use and development of land for a wind energy facility and battery energy storage system (Delburn

Wind Farm)

Sponsor: Chief Executive Office

Council Plan Objective: Support job creation and industry diversification to

enable economic growth in Latrobe City.

Status: For Decision

Proposed Resolution:

That Council:

1. Endorses the attached submission and lodge it with the Minister for Planning and Planning Panels Victoria in relation to Planning Permit Applications for the use and development of land for a wind energy facility and battery storage energy storage system (Delburn Wind Farm).

The submission provides an overview of the submissions received (supportive and against) by the community and details that Council requests that further consideration be given to the following matters:

- Visual impacts from the proposal on sensitive receptors (dwellings);
- Bushfire risk;
- Noise;
- Air services; and
- Flora and fauna impacts.
- 2. Presents to the Planning Panel consistent with Council's written submission at the scheduled Panel Hearing (as detailed generally in attachment 1); and
- 3. Given the concerns being raised by some members of the community the need for the Minister for Planning, as the Responsible Authority for



large scale renewable energy project, conducts the following strategic planning work in full consultation with Local Government and affected communities as a matter of priority:

- a) A fully consulted Planning Scheme Amendment process to consider planning overlays for clarifying where it would be appropriate or not appropriate to build and operate renewable developments so that the community have a clear understanding of where such developments may be permitted; and
- b) Consider assessing renewable energy projects on a wider range of criteria including the suitability of a location from a community impact perspective and the degree of community support.

Executive Summary:

The purpose of this report is to consider Council's submission to the Minister for Planning (the Minister) in relation to the planning permit applications associated with the Delburn Wind Farm. The Minister is the responsible authority for planning permit applications for wind energy facilities, and any power lines and substations required to connect facilities to the electricity network.

Four planning permit applications were lodged with the Minister for Planning on 23 December 2020 for a Wind Energy Facility and associated infrastructure and works. There are three separate applications for the Wind Energy Facility; one in Latrobe City, one in Baw Baw Shire and one in South Gippsland Shire. The application within Latrobe City is for the development and use of land for a wind energy facility and associated buildings and works (including two permanent anemometers, a battery energy storage system facility and associated infrastructure), removal of native vegetation, alterations to a road in a Road Zone Category 1, business identification signage and car parking to the satisfaction of the Responsible Authority.

The fourth application is for buildings and works associated with a utility installation (Battery Energy Storage System [BESS]), removal of native vegetation and display of business identification signage on land adjoining the Strzelecki Highway in Delburn.

The overall project comprises the development of 33 wind turbines with a maximum height of 250 metres (from foundation to blade tip) in HVP/Grand Ridge Plantations land and associated works. The total generating capacity of the facility is approximately 200MW. The proposal spans a total land area of approximately 4,778 hectares (of which approximately 4,183 hectares is within Latrobe City).

In addition to the turbines, the application also seeks approval to install a BESS facility of up to 50MW/200MWh rated capacity. To facilitate the proposal, native vegetation is required to be removed which comprises a total of 12.344ha (of which



10.591ha is located within Latrobe City).

The parts of the application specifically located within Latrobe City comprise the following:

- Development of 28 wind turbines with a maximum height of 250 metres;
- Development of two permanent anemometers (wind monitoring masts) at a height of 180 metres above natural ground level;
- Development of one temporary anemometer at a height of 160 metres (currently in situ), to be removed at the end of the development phase;
- Development of a battery energy storage system facility (BESS facility);
- Development of an operations and maintenance facility proximate to the corner of Smiths Road and Strzelecki Highway, Driffield;
- Provision of two visitor information areas on Smiths Road, Driffield one adjacent to the maintenance facility and one adjacent to a turbine;
- Development of underground 33kV electrical reticulation and fibre optic cabling to connect the turbines into the substation;
- Various works and upgrades to site access tracks, forestry tracks, Council roads and an upgrade to the intersection of Strzelecki Highway and Creamery Road, Delburn; and
- Display of business identification signage.

The planning permit applications have been 'called in' by the Minister under Section 97B of the *Planning and Environment Act 1987*. The effect of this is that the proposal will be considered by an independent planning panel run by Planning Panels Victoria, which will hear from all submitters who wish to present to the Panel, and ultimately make a recommendation to the Minister for Planning on the applications. The permit applications are currently being exhibited, with a closing date of 5:00pm 18 August 2021 for submissions to be made.

To assist Council to hear the views of the community regarding the proposed wind farm, Council held a community listening post. At the listening post community members spoke both for and against the proposal including representatives from the following community groups:

- Strzelecki Community Alliance;
- Latrobe Valley Sustainability Group;
- Strzelecki Sustainable Futures;
- Voices of the Valley; and



Friends of the Earth.

At the listening post community members were encouraged to submit their views in writing to Council. At the time of writing this report, 11 submissions were received in support of the proposal and 67 submissions were received objecting to the proposal.

Council Planning Officers have reviewed the application documentation and the draft submission outlines the views of the community (both for and against the proposal) and also details that Council requires further consideration be given to the following matters:

- Visual impacts from the proposal on sensitive receptors (dwellings);
- Bushfire risk;
- Noise;
- Flora and fauna impacts; and
- Air services.

If Council resolves to make a submission to the Minister for Planning and the Planning Panel before the closing date, it will have the opportunity to present the endorsed submission to the Panel once it is convened.

Given the technical nature of the proposal, if Council want to make further detailed submissions to the Planning Panel it is recommended that Council engage legal representation and expert witnesses to attend on Councils behalf. As the Panel has been provided two weeks for hearings, this would likely cost around \$70,000.

It is expected that the Panel hearings will commence on 18 October 2021.

A copy of the draft submission can be viewed at Attachment 1 to this report.

Background:

An application for the use and development of land for a wind energy facility and associated buildings and works (including two permanent anemometers, a battery energy storage system facility and associated infrastructure), removal of native vegetation, alterations to a road in a Road Zone Category 1, business identification signage and car parking to the satisfaction of the Responsible Authority on HVP Plantations land between Delburn and Driffield was submitted to the Minister for Planning (DELWP) in December 2020.

The application is currently on public notification, and all submissions received by DELWP by 5:00pm 18 August 2021 will be referred to an independent planning panel for consideration.



Overview of the proposal:

The subject land comprises 4,778 hectares of land within the Latrobe, South Gippsland and Baw Baw municipal districts; with 4,183 hectares being within Latrobe. The vast majority of this land is located within the Farming Zone (Schedule 1 within Latrobe, unscheduled within South Gippsland and Baw Baw), with a small portion of the site within the Latrobe Special Use Zone 1 (Brown Coal). The subject land is affected by the following planning overlays:

Latrobe

- Design and Development Overlay Schedule 1 (Major Pipeline Infrastructure) (DDO1)
- Bushfire Management Overlay (BMO)

South Gippsland

- Environmental Significance Overlay Schedule 5 (Areas Susceptible to Erosion) (ESO5)
- Bushfire Management Overlay (BMO)

Baw Baw

- Erosion Management Overlay (EMO)
- Bushfire Management Overlay (BMO)
- Development Contributions Plan Overlay (DCPO)

The subject land is wholly owned by HVP/Grand Ridge Plantations and used for timber production.

The applicant proposes to use and develop the land with a 200MW wind energy facility as follows:

- Installation of:
 - 33 wind turbines with a height of 250 metres above foundation level and wind tip span (rotor diameter) of 180 metres;
 - Three permanent and one temporary anemometer; the permanent anemometers at a height of 180 metres and the temporary anemometer at 160 metres height;
 - a Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) of up to 50MW/200MWh rated capacity;
 - Two viewing areas proximate to Smiths Road/Strzelecki Highway, Driffield;



- An operations/maintenance facility proximate to Smiths Road/Strzelecki Highway, Driffield;
- Associated electrical infrastructure; and
- Business identification signage.
- Removal of native vegetation comprising of 12.344 hectares (10.591 hectares within Latrobe City), including 49 large trees and 9.492 Strzelecki Gum Species Habitat Units;
- Upgrade works to various site access tracks, forestry tracks, Council roads (Golden Gully Road, Smiths Road, Creamery Road) and upgrade of intersection at Strzelecki Highway and Creamery Road, Delburn;
- Development of underground 33kV electrical reticulation and fibre optic cabling between turbines and the proposed utility installation (substation); and
- Display of business identification signage.

A copy of a site plan for the proposed facility can be viewed at Attachment 2 to this report.

The application documents and plans show that:

- Approximately 103 dwellings will be located within 1-2 kilometres of a turbine;
- Approximately 214 dwellings will be located within 2-3 kilometres of a turbine;
- Approximately 256 dwellings will be located within 3-4 kilometres of a turbine;
 and
- Approximately 694 dwellings will be located within 4-5 kilometres of a turbine (including the Boolarra and Yinnar townships).

The proponent details that the project will:

- Generate enough energy from a renewable source to power approximately 125,000 homes;
- The estimated cost of the development is \$358 million;
- Create approximately 186 direct indirect regional jobs during the construction phase; and
- Create approximately 25 jobs throughout the operational phase of the project.

Planning officer's assessment:

Council Officers have undertaken a review of the application documentation, including seeking comments from internal Council departments and the Latrobe Regional Airport.



From a review of the application, Council Planning Officers identified a number of matters that should be considered if a permit was to be approved.

Visual impacts from the proposal on sensitive receptors (dwellings)

The Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LV Assessment) submitted details that the proposal is not identified as being located in an area of scenic quality (i.e. areas protected through Significant Landscape Overlays); although land within the Baw Baw Shire that is affected by such a control would have some turbine visibility

It is noted that the South Gippsland Planning Scheme Clause 21.13 has the objective to ensure that the use of alternative energy technology does not detrimentally affect the surrounding environment. A specific strategy of this clause discourages tall structures on ridgelines or in view corridors.

An assessment of visual impact from major routes and tourist drives (Princes Freeway, Strzelecki Highway, Grand Ridge Road, amongst others) has been undertaken by the proponent. The assessment concludes that impacts from these routes range from negligible to moderate, subject to the particular vantage point and weighing of factors such as:

- Volume of traffic/viewer numbers;
- Existing landscape characterisation; and
- Distance from vantage point to turbine/s.

The greatest impacts are seen on the Strzelecki Highway northbound approximately 360 metres from the intersection with Ten Mile Creek Road (within South Gippsland Shire).

The assessment details that from many of these vantage points, the views will be present for the life of the development and will not be screened by vegetation or other elements.

The assessment identifies that a number of individual dwellings within the development area would have high visual impact from the turbines with limited ability to provide mitigation (due to topography and/or bushfire risk from screening vegetation). On some properties, mitigation measures through landscaping may also remove existing views enjoyed by the property (such as valleys, rolling hills, waterways etc).

The LV Assessment highlighted five dwellings, of the 1,267 dwellings located within 5 kilometres of a proposed turbine, where impacts are likely to be high from the proposal, and cannot be reasonably mitigated.

For those properties where mitigation measures are proposed or recommended, permit conditions should be imposed requiring these measures to be implemented at the cost of the proponent, for vegetation plantings to be undertaken early in the construction timeline and for large vegetation specimens to be provided where



practicable to provide a dense screen in a timely manner. These matters have been addressed in the attached draft submission.

Bushfire risk

While the proposal does not trigger the need for a Planning Permit under the Bushfire Management Overlay, Clause 52.32-4 in relation to Wind Energy Facilities specifically requires an application to consider bushfire risk. Planning Policy at Clauses 13.02-1S and 13.02-1L of the Scheme also requires consideration of bushfire.

To support the application, the proponent has engaged 'Fire Risk Consultants' to undertake a bushfire risk assessment of the proposal.

The applicants consultant has detailed that the plantation land and its associated fire risk remains the same whether the wind energy facility is approved or not. In considering the proposal, assessment in regards to bushfire risk must consider whether the proposal represents an unacceptable outcome in respect of this existing risk and what the risk would be with the wind energy facility in place.

The key risks posed from the facility in terms of bushfire are considered to be:

- Impeding aerial firefighting equipment in a fire event; or
- A blaze sparking from the facility/failure of infrastructure and impacts on fire fighting efforts.

Aerial firefighting

The proposed turbines would have a maximum height of 250 metres above natural ground level. As discussed further in this report, the height of the turbines will result in some operational changes being required for the Latrobe Regional Airport. It is evident that the turbines will be a feature in the landscape that would require risk management for aerial firefighting equipment.

The applicants consultant has detailed that in the event of a bushfire, turbines would cease to operate, with the risk to aerial firefighting being addressed by the relevant fire agency as part of a risk assessment in approaching the relevant fire event.

Blaze sparking from facility/failure of infrastructure and fire fighting efforts

In addition to the physical turbine structures, the proposal includes the development of a BESS facility proximate to the northern extremity of the development area, with access from Varys Track. The BESS is proposed to have a storage capacity of approximately 50MW/200MWh,

The proposal has included defendable space of 48 metres around each wind turbine, however no defendable space area is shown on the submitted plan for the BESS (refer plan DWF_OVR_024-4B-3-5 BESS in Attachment 5).

The applicant has not proposed to provide defendable space around the BESS facility. Given the potential for a fire to occur within the battery facility, the draft



submission recommends that defendable space be provided in accordance with Column A of Table 2 to Clause 53.02-5 for 'Forest' vegetation, which will result in defendable space of at least 48 metres to the facility (possibly greater dependent on slope) and that further consideration be given to the bushfire risk from the BESS facility.

Noise/Acoustic Impact

Clause 52.32-4 of the Planning Scheme requires any application for a Wind Energy Facility to be accompanied by the following material (as amended by the introduction of the *Environment Protection Act 2017* on 1 July 2021):

- A pre-construction (predictive) noise assessment report demonstrating that the proposal can comply with the New Zealand Standard NZS6808:2010, Acoustics

 Wind Farm Noise, including an assessment of whether a high amenity noise limit is applicable under Section 5.3 of the Standard.
- An environmental audit report of the pre-construction (predictive) noise assessment report prepared under Part 8.3, Division 3 of the Environment Protection Act 2017 by an environmental auditor appointed under Part 8.3, Division 1 of the Environment Protection Act 2017. The environmental audit report must verify that the acoustic assessment undertaken for the purpose of the pre-construction (predictive) noise assessment report has been conducted in accordance with the New Zealand Standard NZS6808:2010, Acoustics – Wind Farm Noise.

The New Zealand Standard provides that the noise level from a wind turbine at a noise sensitive location (such as a dwelling) should not exceed the background noise level by more than 5dB or a base limit of 40dB, whichever is greater.

Further to this, the Standard also provides that in high amenity areas, wind farm noise levels during evening and night-time periods should not exceed the background noise level by more than 5dB or a level of 35dB, whichever is greater. It is noted that the nuisance complaint relating to the Bald Hills Wind Farms was mainly related to night time noise.

However, it is noted that these Standards are at an audible range where compliance with the Standard may result in noise from the wind turbines being audible at times, typically during the daytime where the Standard allows greater noise.

The acoustic assessments submitted with the application detail that the proposal can meet required standards. It is noted that Council Planning Officers are not technical experts in acoustics and do not have the ability to test the underlying claims and assumptions within these reports; however noting that the assumptions and findings appear to be comparable with other wind energy facilities in Victoria where such information is available.

In addition to these matters, the gazettal of the new *Environment Protection Act 2017* and *Division 5 – Wind Turbine Noise* of the *Environment Protection Regulations 2021* have introduced a 'general environmental duty' and 'unreasonable noise' provisions



that would be applicable to the facility. These require the operator/s of the wind energy facility:

- To minimise harm to human health and the environment and must not emit unreasonable noise, including by:
 - Complying with the New Zealand Noise Standard;
 - Implementing a noise management plan;
 - Implementing a complaints management plan;
 - Providing an annual statement with details of complaints, maintenance activities and noise remediation actions during the previous 12 months; and
 - Undertaking noise monitoring procedures every five years to ensure ongoing compliance with the relevant noise limits.

While this does have the effect of mandating compliance once the facility is operating, the regulation of noise from the facility is now primarily led by the Environment Protection Authority, with significant powers available to compel compliance if the proposal did not meet the Standard in its operations.

Air services

Due to the height and location of the proposed turbines, comment was sought from Airservices Australia in relation to the potential for the proposal to impact the operations of the Latrobe Regional Airport. Advice provided by Airservices Ausralia states that:

With respect to procedures designed by Airservices in accordance with ICAO PANS-OPS and Document 9905, at a maximum height of 550m (1805ft) AHD, the windfarm will affect the RNAV (GNSS) RWY 03 and the RNAV (GNSS) RWY 21 instrument procedures at Latrobe Valley Airport.

The RNAV (GNSS) RWY 03 procedure will require amendment to its intermediate segment to accommodate the wind farm. The RNAV (GNSS) RWY 21 procedure will require an increase in its LNAV/VNAV minima in order to accommodate the wind farm...

... Airservices requires that the operator of Latrobe Valley Airport (included in this email response) to be consulted and confirm that the proposed permanent change to RNAV GNSS RWY 03 and the RNAV GNSS RWY 21 instrument procedures at Latrobe Valley will not adversely impact on their operations before any change (temporary or permanent) can implemented by Airservices. Any Airservices work associated with amending the flight procedures will be undertaken on a commercial basis and require further consultation with Airservices.

These impacts are also reflected in the Aeronautic Impact Assessment submitted by the proponent.



Advice was sought from the Latrobe Regional Airport who detailed that they do not object to the proposed development and any changes to operational conditions because of the proposed Wind Farm will be undertaken by Latrobe Regional Airport in consultation with operators and regulators.

It is recommended that if a permit is issued that conditions be included to ensure that all relevant approvals have been gained by the Latrobe Regional Airport before the erection of the turbines T03, T04, T09 – T20 inclusive and T23 shown on the submitted plans.

Flora and fauna impacts

Most of the study area is currently used for plantation forestry and has therefore largely been cleared of native vegetation, with little of the pre-1750 extent of EVCs remaining within the subject land area and surrounds. Potential impacts however to remnant native flora and fauna associated with the proposal include the removal of native vegetation and habitat loss. The potential for spread of weeds and reduced water quality as a result of water runoff during construction is also possible.

The study area is located within the Strzelecki Ranges bioregion – comprising seven EVCs types including:

- Lowland Forest (EVC 16);
- Herb-rich Foothill Forest (EVC 23);
- Damp Forest (EVC 29);
- Swamp Scrub (EVC 53);
- Aquatic Herbland (EVC 653);
- Tall Marsh (EVC 821); and
- Swampy Woodland (EVC 937).

Of these, five are considered to be endangered.

The area supports some larger patches of remnant native vegetation which provide important habitat for fauna including Koala, Greater Glider and Sugar Glider and many species of birds. The largest patch of native forest areas is an area known as the Darlimurla Forest Block (approximately 320 hectares in area) and adjoins the eastern boundary of the study area. Sayers Trig Bushland Reserve (north) and Mirboo North Regional Park (south/west) also abut the subject land. These locations are recognised as being 'core patches' within the area known as the Strzelecki-Alpine Biolink as described by the Latrobe Planning Scheme. Disturbance to these locations has been avoided by the proposed development.

The proposal is supported by ecological investigations for the proposed development titled 'Biodiversity Assessment for the proposed Delburn Wind Farm, Gippsland, Victoria' (Ecologly and Heritage Partners December 2020). This report includes an



assessment of flora and fauna values likely to be impacted (including rare and threatened species) and responds to the requirements of Clause 52.17 of the Latrobe Planning Scheme.

Based on review of the assessments provided in support of the proposed development, it is considered that the proposal has adequately responded to the requirements of Clause 52.17 of the Latrobe Planning Scheme.

Other matters

Cultural Heritage

It is noted that a Cultural Heritage Management Plan (CHMP) is required for the proposal pursuant to Section 52 of the *Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006*. The application documents state that such plan has been prepared and approved by the relevant Registered Aboriginal Party (RAP), however a copy of this plan has not been provided in the advertised material from DELWP.

The Aboriginal Heritage Act requires any approval for a project to be consistent with the approved CHMP. This is a matter that the independent planning panel will be required to address as part of any recommendation to the Minister.

Dilapidation Plan

The proposed submission includes a recommendation that any permit issued include conditions relating to construction management, to ensure that Council assets are maintained during the construction and decommissioning periods and that ratepayers are not burdened with additional maintenance costs from the development.

Decommissioning of Facility

The proposed submission includes recommendations that any permit issued include conditions relating to the decommissioning of the facility, which requires:

- the submission of a resource recovery plan, which include details of materials that can be recovered, for re-use and recycling;
- that infrastructure be removed at the end of the use of the facility; and
- the land made good to the satisfaction of Council and at the cost of the permit holder.

Public Submissions:

To assist Council to hear the views of the community regarding the proposed wind farm, Council held a listening post on 3 August 2021 by zoom and in person at the Yinnar Hall for anyone who was unable to attend virtually.

At the listening post community members were encouraged to submit their views in writing to Council. The table below provides an overview of the key points raised in the submissions received.



Points raised	Officers Comments
Visual Impact to sensitive receptors (dwellings)	The majority of dwellings that would experience visual impact can be mitigated by use of landscaping to screen out views of the turbines or where the impacts are negligible to medium.
	It is noted that there are 5 dwellings where mitigation measures are not practical and high impacts would be experienced. Whether this is an appropriate outcome should be considered by the independent planning panel.
Visual Amenity on the landscape	The wind farm would be visible for a significant distance, and from parts of all major towns in Latrobe City. Whether this is an appropriate outcome should be considered by the planning panel.
Property Values	Property values are not a relevant planning consideration.
Increased fire risk and that the turbines obstructing fire bombing and ability to fight fires	The application is accompanied by a bushfire risk assessment which provides an analysis of the risk and measures that can be put in place to address this. Council officers have also highlighted additional measures that should be in place for the BESS facility. The planning panel should consider the bushfire risk, including any advice from experts and/or the CFA.
Impact of Native Flora and Fauna	The application is accompanied by flora and fauna assessments which detail the impacts to native flora and fauna populations. The impact on biodiversity is a matter which should be considered by the relevant planning panel and whether the impact is acceptable for the project.
Noise Impacts	The application is accompanied by acoustic assessments detailing that the proposal can meet the relevant acoustic standard. Technical information regarding these assessments should be considered by the relevant planning panel. It is noted that the Environment Protection Authority
	are now the lead agency for investigating any noise issues since the introduction of the <i>Environment Protection Act 2017.</i>



Points raised	Officers Comments
Impacts on kids and development of children	There is no information available that suggests that a wind farm will negatively affect the development of children. However, this is a matter that can be considered by the planning panel.
Concerns about the level of engagement undertaken by the proponent	The proponent has been directed to give notice of the application by the Minister in accordance with Section 52 of the <i>Planning and Environment Act 1987</i> . Further engagement outside of this process is at the discretion of the proponent, noting that there has been other community consultation that the proponents have undertaken.
Concerns raised about the negative narrative around Wind Farms and their impacts.	The application has been accompanied by technical assessments and reports which will be considered by the panel.
Poor site selection, and selection made due to ease of access to transmission lines	The location of transmission lines is stated in the application as a reason in favour of the project. The appropriateness of the site for a wind farm will be considered by the planning panel.
Concerns that the Wind Farm will be sold to a foreign company	Ownership of the wind farm is not a relevant planning consideration.
Concerns regarding the reports undertaken by the proponent in support of the application	The veracity of the reports submitted by the proponent will be able to be tested at the panel hearings, which will likely include the calling of expert evidence.
Poor siting of the terminal station	The terminal station appears to be located to achieve close proximity to existing high voltage transmission lines. The siting of the terminal station and whether this is appropriate will be considered by the planning panel.
Proposal will not create significant number of jobs for Latrobe City	The economic benefits of the proposal and the accuracy of the forecasts will be matters that the planning panel can consider.



Points raised	Officers Comments
The transition to renewable energy will assist with black outs.	The benefits of the projects need to be balanced against the merits of any application and how the proposal meets the requirements of the Planning Scheme. This is a matter that the panel should consider in determining whether the proposal is acceptable or not.
Health Impacts	Consideration of noise issues is discussed in this report and will be considered by the planning panel. Any other concerns regarding possible health impacts would also be able to be heard by the panel.
Impacts on livestock, decrease in breeding of animals	The site is partially located in the Farming Zone and abuts land in the Farming Zone. The agricultural impacts of the proposal would be considered by the planning panel.
Impact of shadow flicker from the turbines	The impact of shadow flicker forms part of the broader issues of visual amenity and impacts to properties, which will be considered by the planning panel.
Concerns regarding complaint management when the facility is operating	It is likely that if the proposal is approved, conditions would require a complaints policy/procedure to be developed by the operator to receive complaints if there are issues. Statutory authorities, such as the EPA and Council are also able to investigate complaints depending on what the concern is.
Interruption to services (mobile, internet, tv, emergency communication etc)	Any potential impacts to telecommunication/radio services will be able to be assessed by the planning panel.
Concerns raised in relation to blade throw, ice throw and turbine collapse	These matters are considered unlikely to occur, but would be able to be considered by the planning panel in determining whether the proposal is acceptable or not.
Concerns that the wind farm will distract drivers	Any potential impacts on road safety would be able to be assessed by the planning panel. It is noted that the Department of Transport will also have opportunity to comment on the application and whether they hold concerns from a road safety perspective.



Points raised	Officers Comments
The proposal will assist Latrobe City transition from being the home of coal fire power stations to being at the forefront of energy transition and assist in strengthening the economy.	The benefits of the projects need to be balanced against the merits of any application and how the proposal meets the requirements of the Planning Scheme. This is a matter that the panel should consider in determining whether the proposal is acceptable or not.

A copy of all submissions received can be viewed at Attachment 3 and a summary of submissions can be viewed at Attachment 4 of this report.

Strategy Implications

- Support job creation and industry diversification to enable growth in Latrobe City; and
- Ensure Council operates openly, transparently and responsibly.

Health Implications

These have been discussed throughout this report.

Communication

The Minister for Planning is the responsible authority for the proposal. The details of the application are on Council's website with a link to all application documentation.

Financial Implications

As the proposal is being heard by an independent Planning Panel, Council will be able to attend the hearing and make submissions to the Panel.

Council Planning Officers could present the endorsed submission and any costs associated with Officers time would be able to be absorbed from the Regional City Planning team's operational budget.

Given the technical nature of the proposal, if Council want to make further detailed submissions to the Planning Panel it is recommended that Council engage a legal representative and expert witnesses to attend on Councils behalf. As the Panel has been provided two weeks for hearings, this would likely cost \$70,000.

If Council is to be represented at the Panel this amount would need to be funded by from the current unallocated surplus budget.



Risk Analysis

Identified risk	Risk likelihood*	Controls to manage risk
Reputational Risk Reputational risk to Council from the community if Council supports the application due to objections received to the proposal.	4 – Likely	To manage and limit the potential risk it is recommended that Council make an informed decision and if they support the proposal it is subject to conditions being included to mitigate concerns.
Reputational Risk If Council are not supportive of the proposal it could be perceived that Council are not in general supportive of renewable energy projects in Latrobe City, with renewable energy generally perceived as being less damaging to the environment than other forms of energy production e.g. carbon fuels	3 – Possible	Any Council submission made needs to clearly articulate that its consideration relates solely on the subject proposal and it is not an indication of the official position of Council in relation to the establishment of renewable energy facilities more widely in Latrobe City.
Strategic Risk This is the first wind energy facility proposed in the municipality. Council's position on this proposal could be seen as a precedent on Council's position on the establishment of renewable energy facilities as a whole in Latrobe City.	3 – Possible	Any Council submission to the Minister needs to clearly identify that Council's consideration is solely on the subject proposal.

Legal and Compliance

If a permit is ultimately issued, it will be the onus of the operator of the permit to ensure that the use and development operates as allowed by the conditions of the permit.

In the event that non-compliances occurred, action may be taken under the *Planning and Environment Act* 1987. The seeking of an 'Enforcement Order' from the Victorian



Civil and Administrative Tribunal can be initiated by Council or individuals under Section 114 of the Act.

Community Implications

As the matter will be considered by an independent Planning Panel, all community members who make a submission by before 5:00pm on 18 August 2021 will be able to appear at the Panel and make submissions to it.

Environmental Implications

These have been discussed throughout this report.

Consultation

Council held a listening post on Tuesday 3 August 2021, to hear the views of the community in relation to the Wind Farm proposal.

The Minister for Planning has also directed the applicant to advertise the application which allows for all submissions received by the Minister before 5:00pm on 18 August 2021 to be referred to an independent Planning Panel for consideration.

Declaration of Interests:

The general conflict of interest under Section 127 of the *Local Government Act 2020* previously declared by the General Manager Regional City Growth and Investment no longer exists. Given previous declarations of a conflict of interest however, the General Manager Regional City Growth and Investment has not been involved in the preparation of this report and will remain removed from any involvement in the matter.

Supporting Documents:

Nil

Attachments

11. Attachment 1 - Draft Submission

2. Attachment 2 - Map of Wind Turbine Locations

3. Attachment 3 - Submissions (Published Separately)

This attachment is designated as confidential under subsection (f) of the definition of confidential information contained in section 3(1) of the *Local Government Act 2020*, as it relates to personal information, being information which if released would result in the unreasonable disclosure of information about any person or their personal affairs. These submissions contain private information about individuals

4. Attachment 4 - Summary of Submissions (Published Separately)

This attachment is designated as confidential under subsection (f) of the definition of confidential information contained in section 3(1) of the *Local Government Act 2020*, as it relates to personal information, being information which if released would result in the unreasonable disclosure of information about any person or their personal



affairs. The submission contains personal information about community members 5. Application Plans



6.1

Draft Submission: Planning Permits Applications for the use and development of land for a wind energy facility and battery energy storage system (Delburn Wind Farm)

1	Attachment 1 - Draft Submission	26
2	Attachment 2 - Map of Wind Turbine Locations	34
5	Attachment 5 - Application Plans	35



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PO Box 264 Morwell 3840 Email latrobe@latrobe.vic.gov.au www.latrobe.vic.gov.au **AUSDOC** DX2 17733 Morwell

Our Ref: xxxxxx

Your Ref: PA2001063, PA2001064, PA2001065 and PA2001066

16 August 2021

The Hon. Richard Wynne Minister for Planning PO Box 500 EAST MELBOURNE VIC 8002

Dear Minister,

RE: SUBMISSION TO PA2001063, PA2001064, PA2001065

AND PA2001066

USE AND DEVELOPMENT OF LAND FOR A WIND **ENERGY FACILITY INCLUDING THE CONSTRUCTION** OF BUILDINGS AND CARRYING OUT OF WORKS, **BUILDINGS AND WORKS ASSOCIATED WITH A UTILITY INSTALLATION (BATTERY ENERGY STORAGE** SYSTEM), THE REMOVAL, DESTRUCTION OR LOPPING OF NATIVE VEGETATION, THE ALTERATION OF ACCESS TO A ROAD IN A ROAD ZONE CATEGORY 1. AND THE CONSTRUCTION AND PUTTING UP FOR **DISPLAY OF BUSINESS IDENTIFICATION SIGNAGE**

VARIOUS LAND PARCELS IN HVP PLANTATIONS LAND BETWEEN DELBURN AND DRIFFIELD

Thank you for the opportunity to make a submission to the above-mentioned renewable energy facility proposed in Latrobe City, Baw Baw Shire and South Gippsland Shire.

Council acknowledges the importance of renewable energy projects in supporting diversification of electricity production and manufacturing in Latrobe City. In considering the Delburn Wind Farm proposal, Council understands the merit of such development and the benefits to communities when developed in consideration of minimum standards and community expectations.

Given the concerns raised by some members of the community about the

Moe 1-29 George Street Morwell 141 Commercial Road Churchill Hub 9-11 Philip Parade

Traralgon 34-38 Kay Street

inappropriate siting of the proposed facility Council ask that as the Responsible Authority for large scale renewable energy projects, the Minister for Planning undertakes the following strategic planning work in full consultation with Local Government and affected communities as a matter of priority:

- A fully consulted Planning Scheme Amendment process to consider planning overlays for clarifying where it would be appropriate or not appropriate to build and operate renewable developments so that the community have a clear understanding of where such developments may be permitted; and
- Consider assessing renewable energy projects on a wider range of criteria including the suitability of a location from a community impact perspective and the degree of community support.

In addition, Council requests that as the Minister for Planning is the Responsible Authority for all large scale renewable energy projects that he should also be the responsible authority for the enforcement of permits related to all renewable energy facilities.

In terms of the current proposal, Council has carefully considered the advertised documentation and requests that the following should also be taken into consideration:

Landscaping

The submitted Landscape and Visual Assessment details that landscape screening will assist in mitigating visual impacts from a large number of private residential properties.

Council requests that the Panel recommend if a permit is to be issued that landscaping be planted at the cost of the permit holder on any properties identified in the Landscape and Visual Assessment as experiencing visual impact from the development of 'low-moderate' or higher if requested by that landowner. Landscaping should be required to:

- Create a dense screen of the applicable height detailed in Table 10.1: Landscape Mitigation Indicative Heights in the Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment:
- · Be planted at a minimum height of 2 metres;
- Be planted prior to the commencement of construction works for the turbines;
 and
- Be subject to ongoing maintenance, including that any dead, dying, diseased or naturally damaged vegetation be replaced.

Noise

The proposal has been accompanied by acoustic assessments as required by Clause 52.32-4, detailing that the proposal will comply with New Zealand Standard NZS6808:210.

Council requests that the Panel recommend if a permit is issued, that further testing be undertaken prior to the commencement of the use and post commencement of the use to ensure that the facility meets these Standards, including a requirement for a peer review of such assessment.

A Noise Monitoring Plan should also be required to provide for ongoing noise monitoring measures relating to the operation of the facility.

Further conditions could also include reinforcing the requirements of the *Environment Protection Act 2017* and *Environment Protection Regulations 2021* in relation to Wind Energy Facilities.

Bushfire Risk

The proposal is located in an area of very high bushfire risk, and one which has been subject to large scale bushfire events such as Black Saturday. The proposal provides for defendable space to each turbine, however this is not extended to the proposed Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) facility.

Council requests that the Panel recommend if a permit is issued it requires amended plans to be submitted showing defendable space around the BESS facility of at least the distance stated in Column A of Table 2 for Clause 53.02-5 for 'Forest' vegetation. It is also requested that conditions be imposed relating to ongoing maintenance of the defendable space in accordance with Table 6 to Clause 53.02-5 and the preparation of a Bushfire Emergency Plan, which details procedures for turbine shutoff and closure and evacuation of the proposed visitor centre at specified trigger points.

Air services

The proposal requires modifications to aircraft operations from the Latrobe Regional Airport, which have been confirmed by Airservices Australia.

Council requests that the Panel recommend if a permit is issued that the operator of the permit seeks confirmation from Latrobe Regional Airport that they have approval for the variation of aircraft procedures before the erection of the following turbines shown on the submitted plans:

- T03
- T04
- T09 T20 inclusive
- T23

Or alternatively, the condition to state 'prior to the erection of any turbines or anemometers for the avoidance of doubt.

Flora and Fauna

The proposal shows that removal of 12.344ha of native vegetation to facilitate the proposal, which requires an offset in accordance with Clause 52.17-1 of the Latrobe, Baw Baw and South Gippsland Planning Schemes. The submitted biodiversity assessment states that the majority of Species Offsets for the Strzelecki Gum would be provided as a first party offset.

Council requests that the Panel recommend if a permit is issued it includes a first party offset site, that the site be secured by an agreement made under Section 69 of the *Conservation, Forests and Lands Act 1987*, including ongoing maintenance for the offset site/s.

A flora and fauna management plan, including consideration of avifauna should also be prepared prior to the commencement of any works, to reduce or minimise any impacts associated with the proposed development works.

Construction works

As detailed in the application documents, the proposal will necessitate a wide array of road works and maintenance requirements, particularly throughout the construction phase of the development.

Council requests that the Panel recommend if a permit is issued that a Traffic Management Plan (TMP) and Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) be required to be prepared and approved by the Latrobe City Council and the Responsible Authority prior to the commencement of works. The matters these plans should address include:

- An assessment of the existing condition of all public roads proposed to be used during the works;
- State that all public roads will be reinstated to the condition they were in prior to the commencement of construction works at the cost of the permit holder;
- Details including road safety audits and plans of any works required to upgrade public roads;
- Agreed processes and practices for the protection and maintenance of the existing road surface along all public roads proposed to be used during the works for works related activities;
- Measures proposed to protect and maintain vehicle use of the existing road system, how site access will be obtained, how construction vehicles will access and egress the site and the management of public access to the site;
- How issues such as erosion prevention, flood and stormwater mitigation, dust generation and sediment control will be managed, on site, during the construction of the permitted works.

Remediation/Decommissioning

The proposal will require significant works and vehicle movements during the commissioning and decommissioning of the facility, including impacts on public assets such as the Council road network.

Council requests that the Panel recommend if a permit is issued a remediation/dilapidation management plan be prepared and approved by the Latrobe City Council and the Responsible Authority, which requires:

- A resource recovery plan, which includes details of materials that can be recovered, for re-use and recycling, from all infrastructure associated with the facility;
- A decommissioning traffic management plan;
- An assessment of the existing condition of all public roads proposed to be used during the decommissioning works;
- All public roads to be reinstated to the condition they were in prior to the commencement of decommissioning works at the cost of the permit holder; and
- Rehabilitation of the development area, including removal of all infrastructure, plant and equipment that are no longer required for the ongoing use of the facility. In the case of access tracks, these must be rehabilitated unless the landowner states that they may be retained in situ.

In addition, to inform Councils position in relation to this matter Council engaged with the community through a listening post and social media posts. Council has received 78 submissions, with 11 submissions in favour and 67 in opposition to the proposal. A summary of all submissions is enclosed, and the table below provides an overview of the key points raised in submissions:

Points raised	Officers Comments
Visual Impact to sensitive receptors (dwellings)	The majority of dwellings that would experience visual impact can be mitigated by use of landscaping to screen out views of the turbines or where the impacts are negligible to medium.
	It is noted that there are 5 dwellings where mitigation measures are not practical and high impacts would be experienced. Whether this is an appropriate outcome should be considered by the independent planning panel.
Visual Amenity on the landscape	The wind farm would be visible for a significant distance, and from parts of all major towns in Latrobe City. Whether this is an appropriate outcome should be considered by the planning panel.
Property Values	Property values are not a relevant planning consideration.

Increased fire risk and that the turbines obstructing fire bombing and ability to fight fires	The application is accompanied by a bushfire risk assessment which provides an analysis of the risk and measures that can be put in place to address this. Council officers have also highlighted additional measures that should be in place for the BESS facility. The planning panel should consider the bushfire risk, including any advice from experts and/or the CFA.
Impact of Native Flora and Fauna	The application is accompanied by flora and fauna assessments which detail the impacts to native flora and fauna populations. The impact on biodiversity is a matter which should be considered by the relevant planning panel and whether the impact is acceptable for the project.
Noise Impacts	The application is accompanied by acoustic assessments detailing that the proposal can meet the relevant acoustic standard. Technical information regarding these assessments should be considered by the relevant planning panel. It is noted that the Environment Protection Authority are now the lead agency for investigating any noise issues since the introduction of the Environment Protection Act 2017.
Impacts on kids and development of children	There is no information available that suggests that a wind farm will negatively affect the development of children. However, this is a matter that can be considered by the planning panel.
Concerns about the level of engagement undertaken by the proponent	The proponent has been directed to give notice of the application by the Minister in accordance with Section 52 of the <i>Planning and Environment Act 1987</i> . Further engagement outside of this process is at the discretion of the proponent, noting that there has been other community consultation that the proponents have undertaken.
Concerns raised about the negative narrative around Wind Farms and their impacts.	The application has been accompanied by technical assessments and reports which will be considered by the panel.
Poor site selection, and selection made due to ease of access to transmission lines	The location of transmission lines is stated in the application as a reason in favour of the project. The appropriateness of the site for a wind farm will be considered by the planning panel.
Concerns that the Wind Farm	Ownership of the wind farm is not a relevant

will be sold to a foreign company	planning consideration.
Concerns regarding the reports undertaken by the proponent in support of the application	The veracity of the reports submitted by the proponent will be able to be tested at the panel hearings, which will likely include the calling of expert evidence.
Poor siting of the terminal station	The terminal station appears to be located to achieve close proximity to existing high voltage transmission lines. The siting of the terminal station and whether this is appropriate will be considered by the planning panel.
Proposal will not create significant number of jobs for Latrobe City	The economic benefits of the proposal and the accuracy of the forecasts will be matters that the planning panel can consider.
The transition to renewable energy will assist with black outs.	The benefits of the projects need to be balanced against the merits of any application and how the proposal meets the requirements of the Planning Scheme. This is a matter that the panel should consider in determining whether the proposal is acceptable or not.
Health Impacts	Consideration of noise issues is discussed in this report and will be considered by the planning panel. Any other concerns regarding possible health impacts would also be able to be heard by the panel.
Impacts on livestock, decrease in breeding of animals	The site is partially located in the Farming Zone and abuts land in the Farming Zone. The agricultural impacts of the proposal would be considered by the planning panel.
Impact of shadow flicker from the turbines	The impact of shadow flicker forms part of the broader issues of visual amenity and impacts to properties, which will be considered by the planning panel.
Concerns regarding complaint management when the facility is operating	It is likely that if the proposal is approved, conditions would require a complaints policy/procedure to be developed by the operator to receive complaints if there are issues. Statutory authorities, such as the EPA and Council are also able to investigate complaints depending on what the concern is.
Interruption to services (mobile,	Any potential impacts to telecommunication/radio

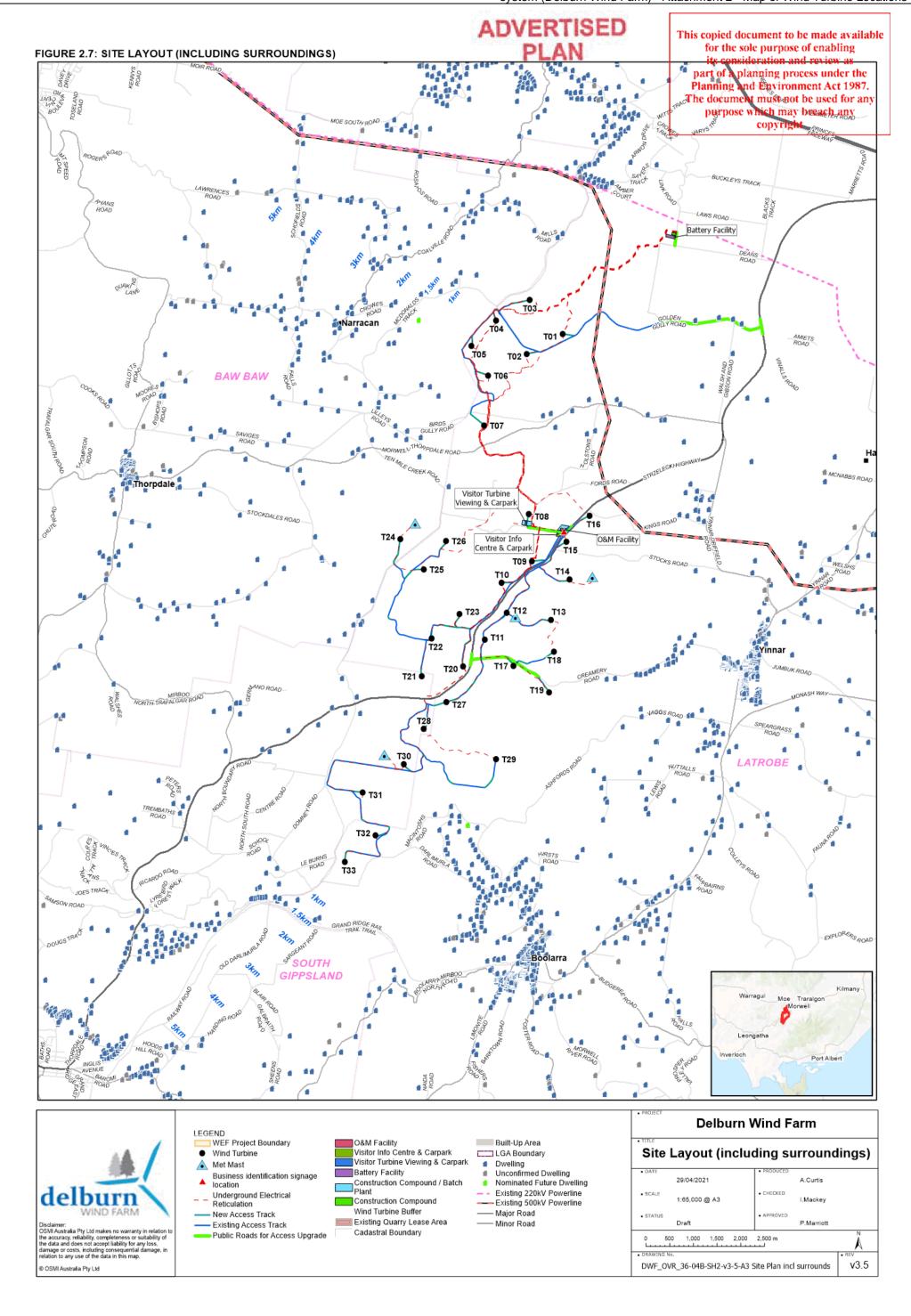
internet, tv, emergency communication etc)	services will be able to be assessed by the planning panel.
Concerns raised in relation to blade throw, ice throw and turbine collapse	These matters are considered unlikely to occur, but would be able to be considered by the planning panel in determining whether the proposal is acceptable or not.
Concerns that the wind farm will distract drivers	Any potential impacts on road safety would be able to be assessed by the planning panel. It is noted that the Department of Transport will also have opportunity to comment on the application and whether they hold concerns from a road safety perspective.
The proposal will assist Latrobe City transition from being the home of coal fire power stations to being at the forefront of energy transition and assist in strengthening the economy.	The benefits of the projects need to be balanced against the merits of any application and how the proposal meets the requirements of the Planning Scheme. This is a matter that the panel should consider in determining whether the proposal is acceptable or not.

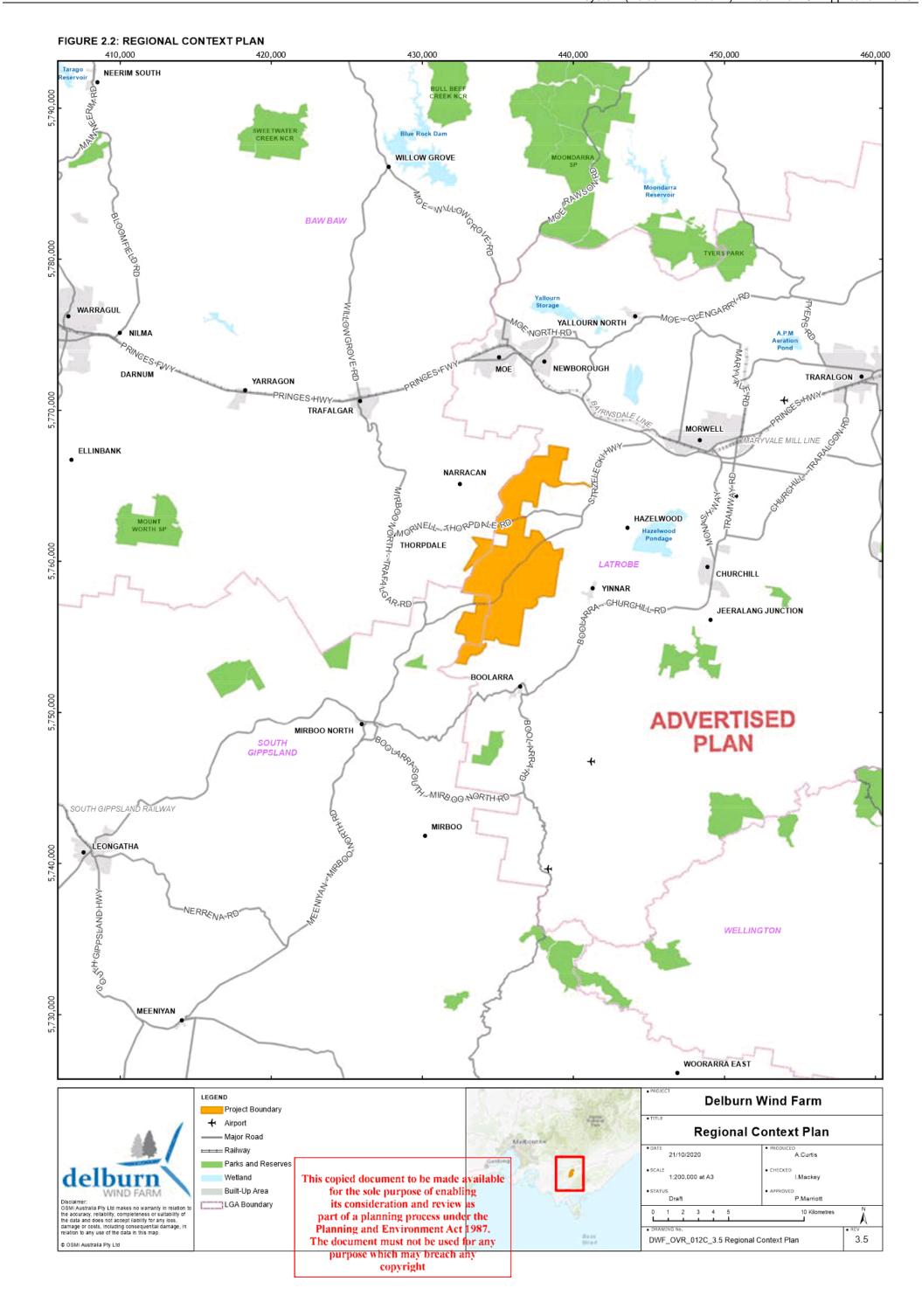
If you require any further information in relation to this matter, please contact Steven Piasente – Chief Executive Officer on 03 5128 5413 or steven.piasente@latrobe.vic.gov.au.

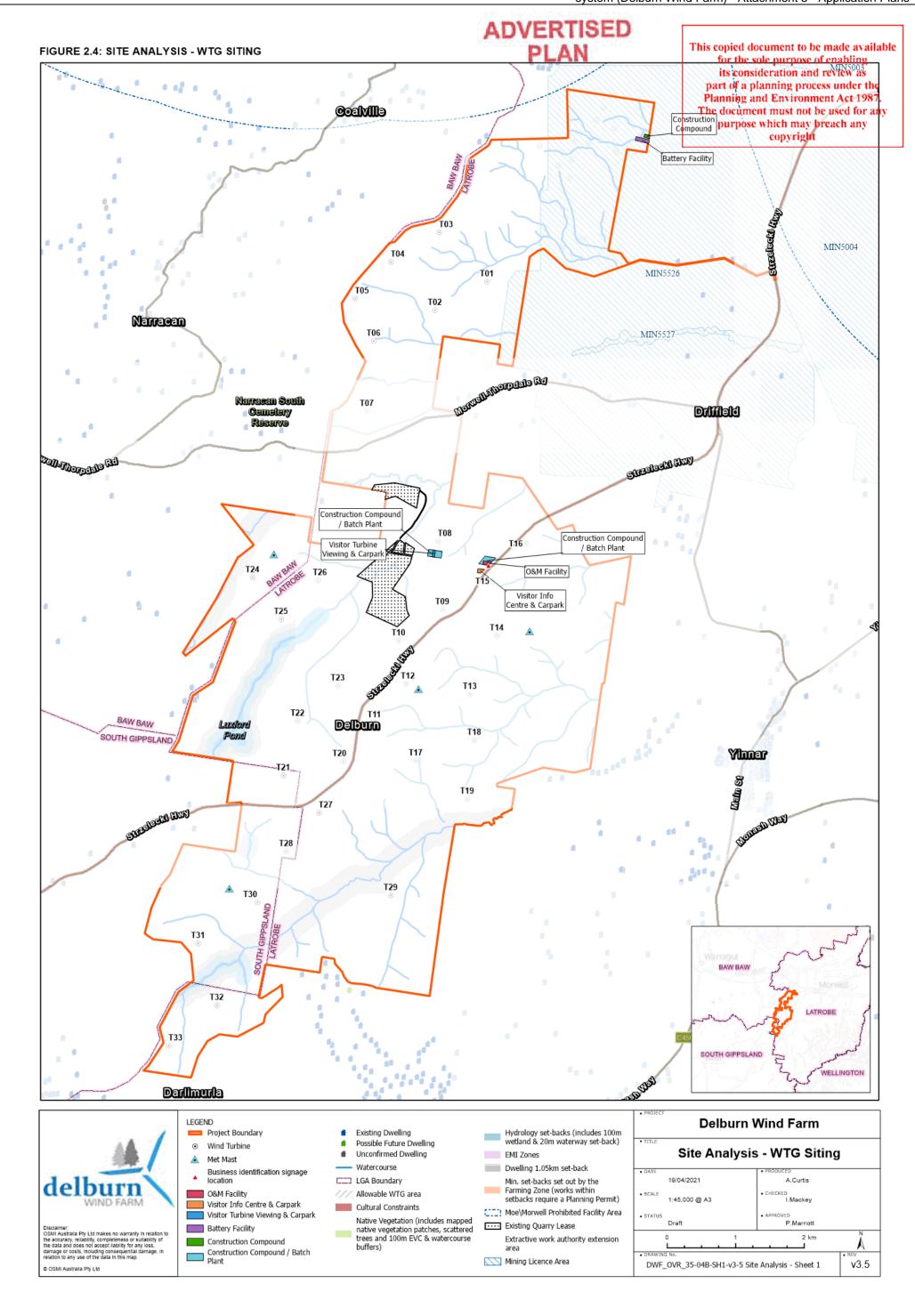
Yours sincerely

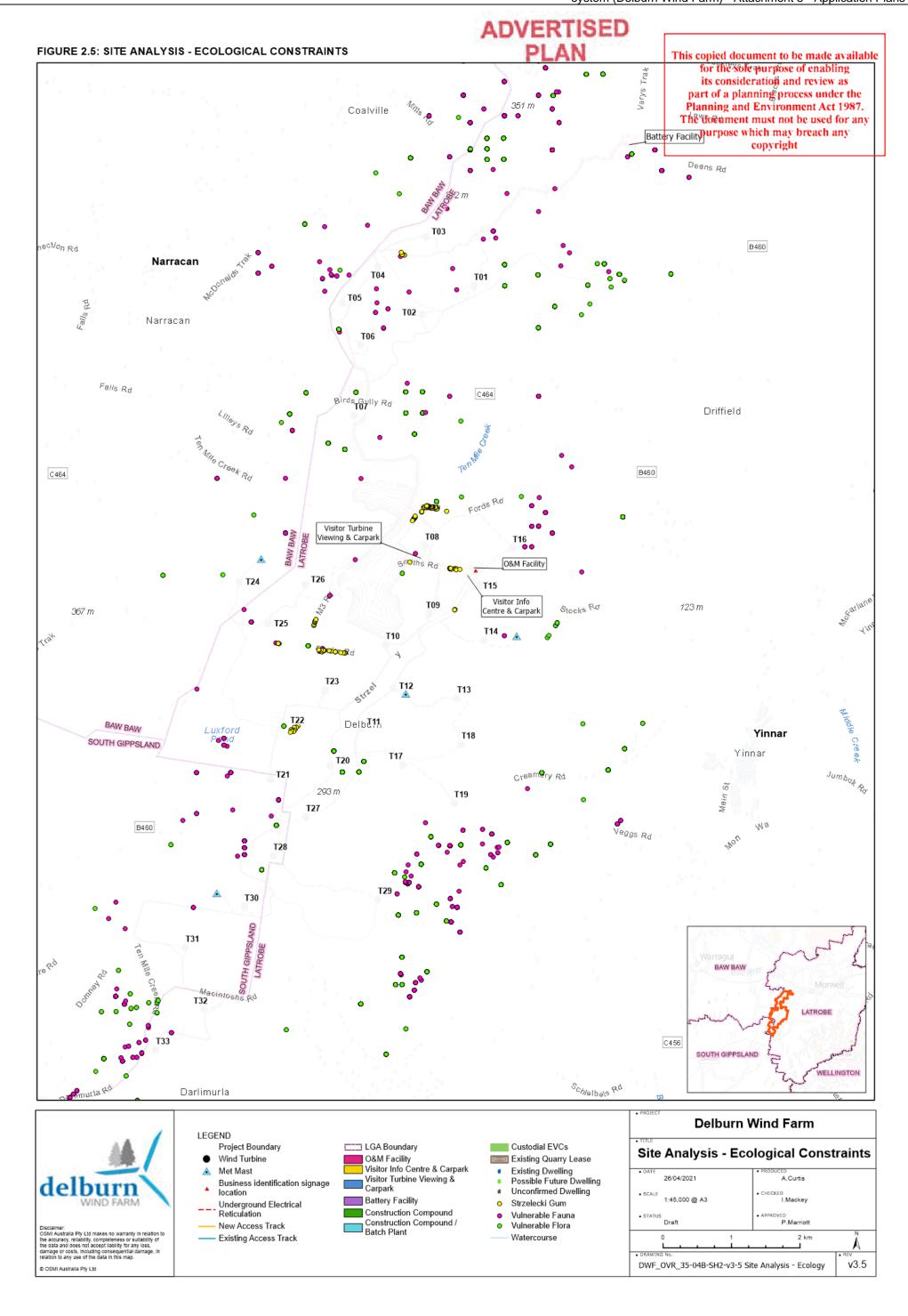
CR SHARON GIBSON Mayor

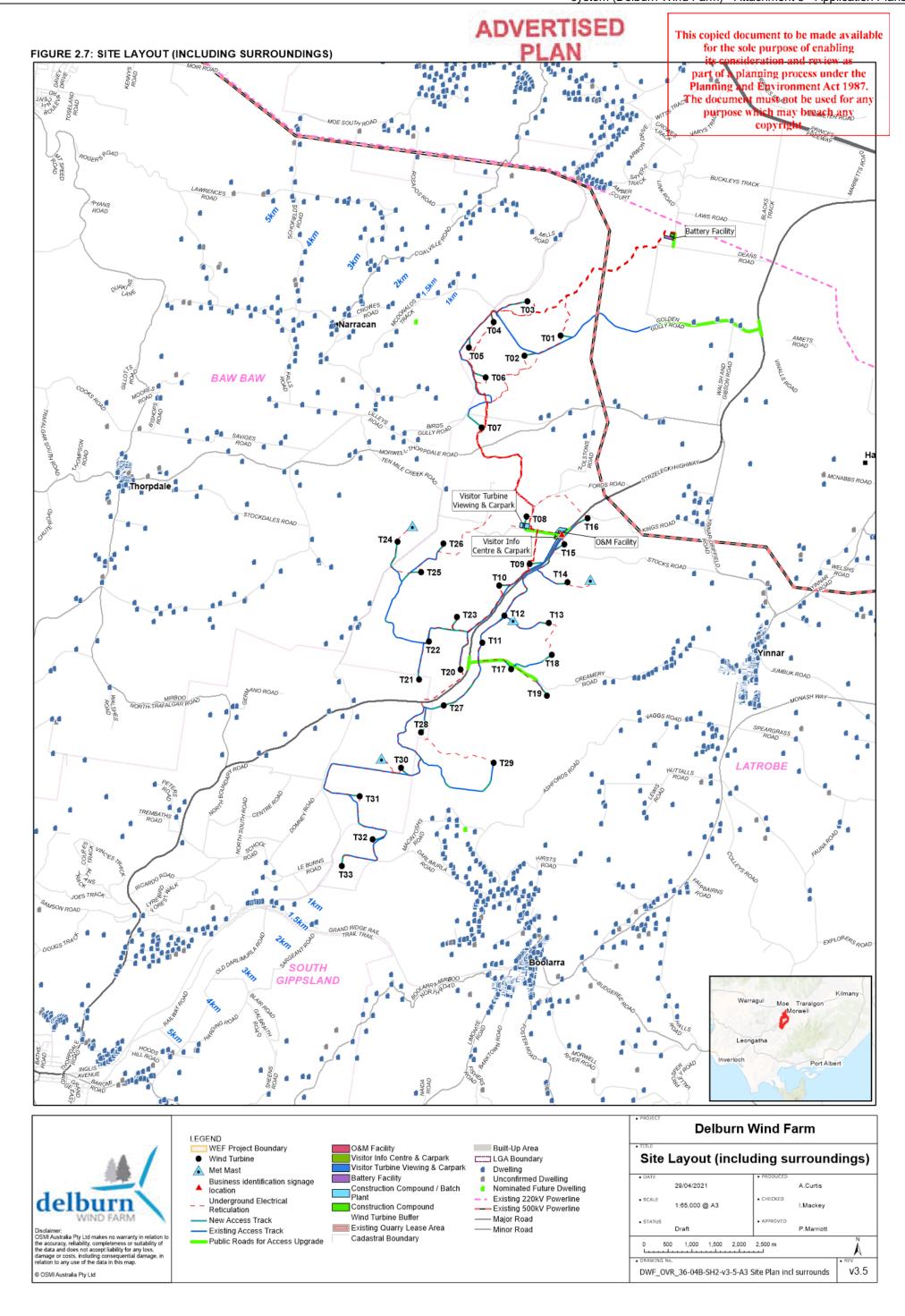
Enclosure: Summary of submissions

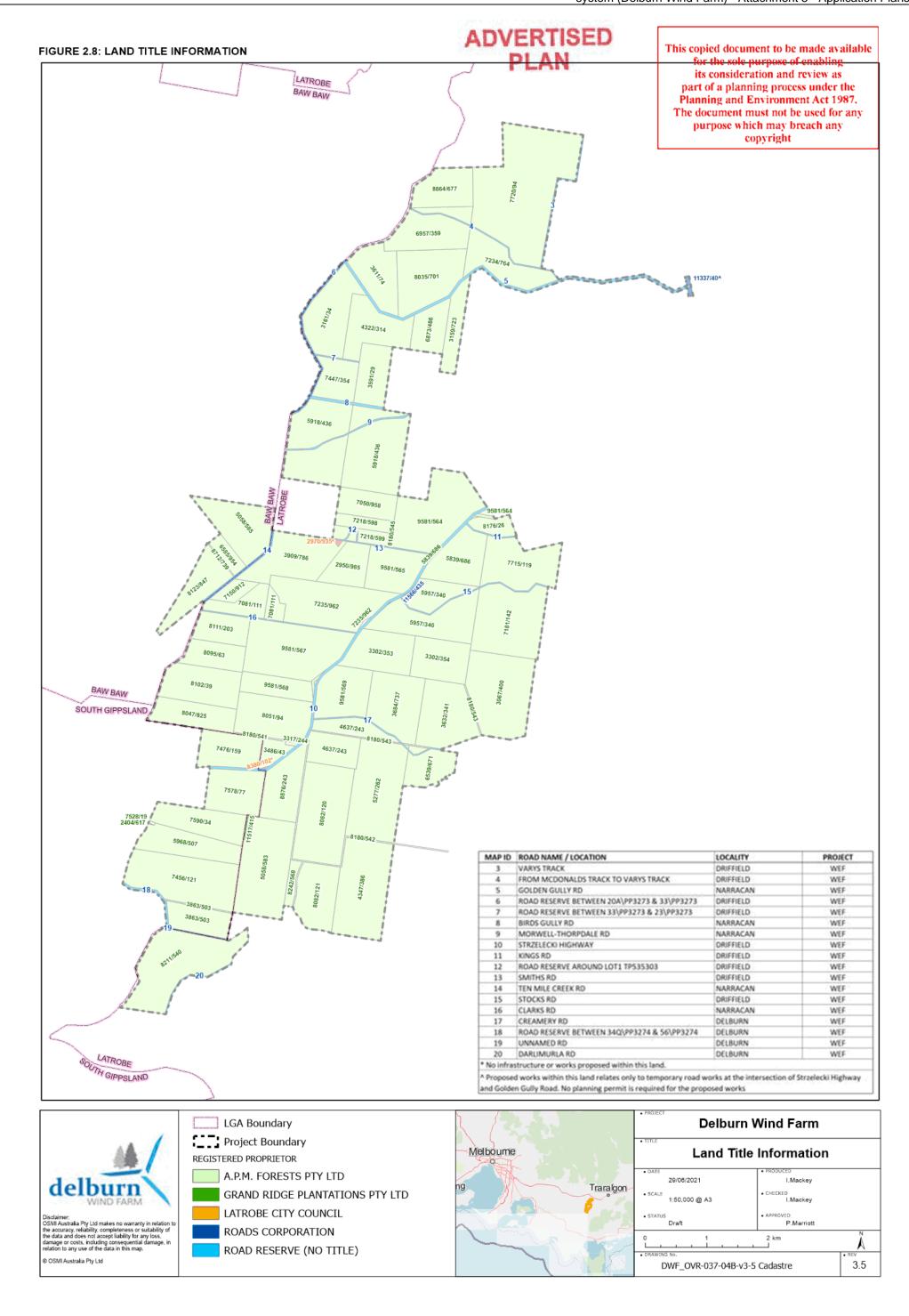


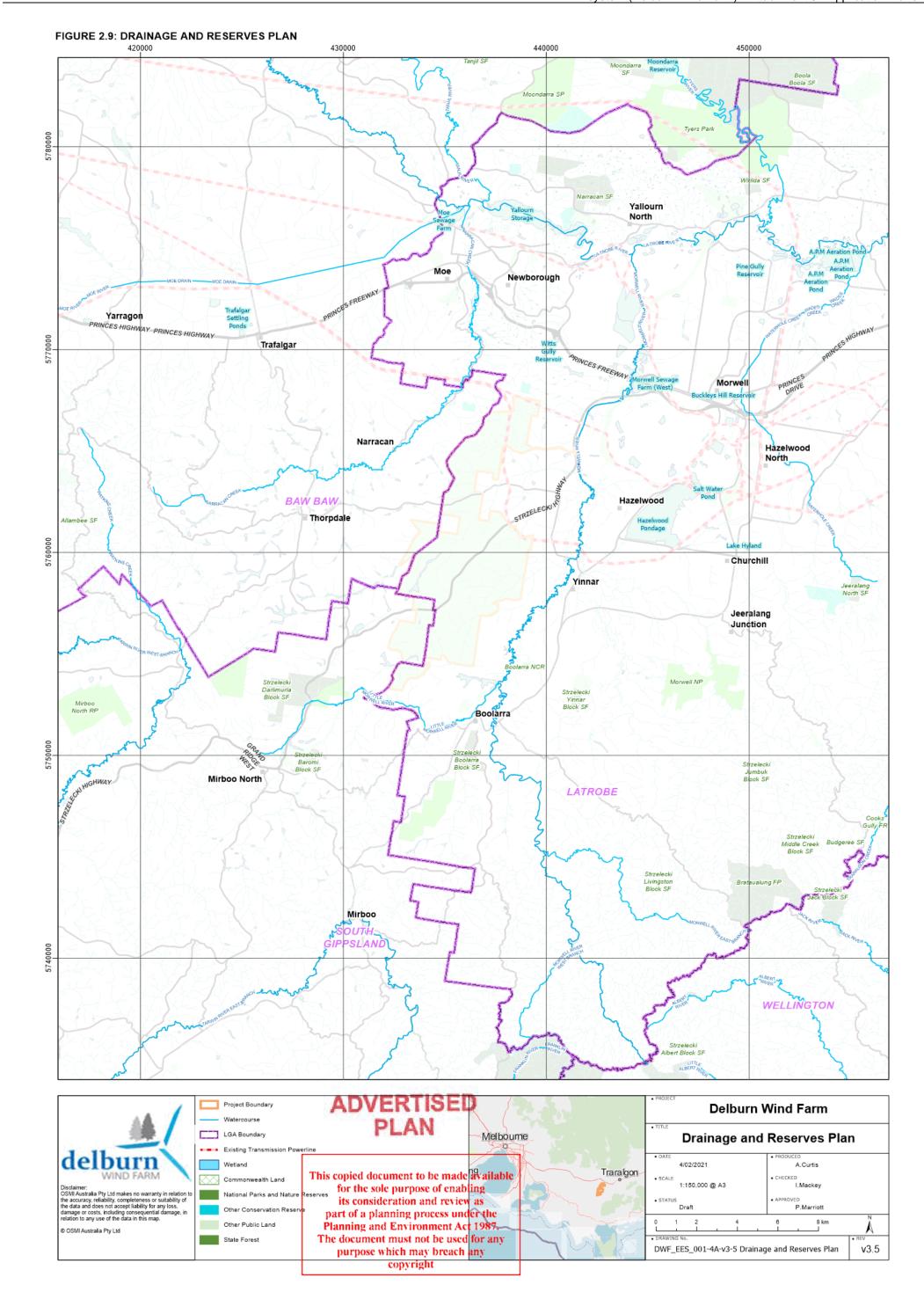


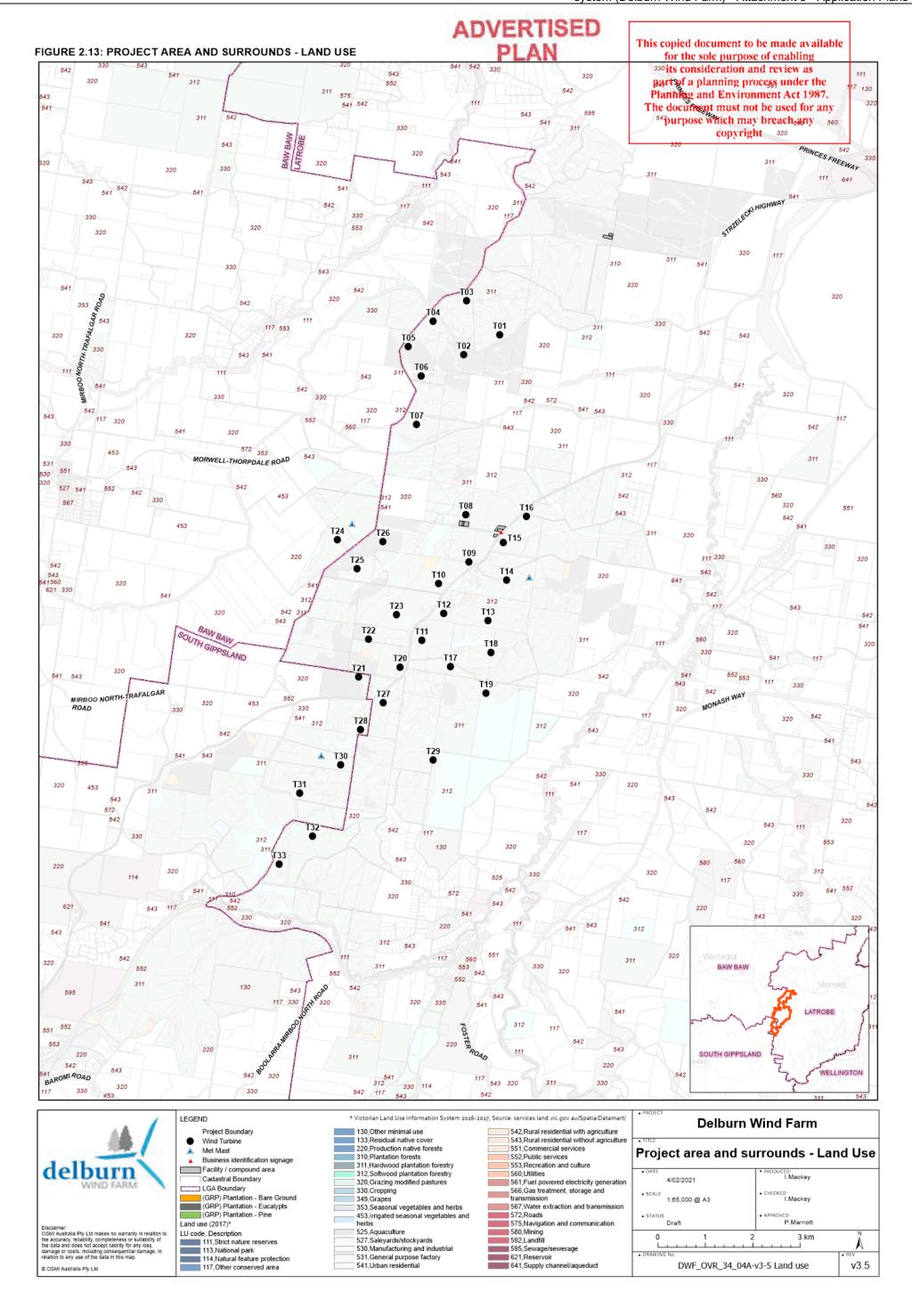


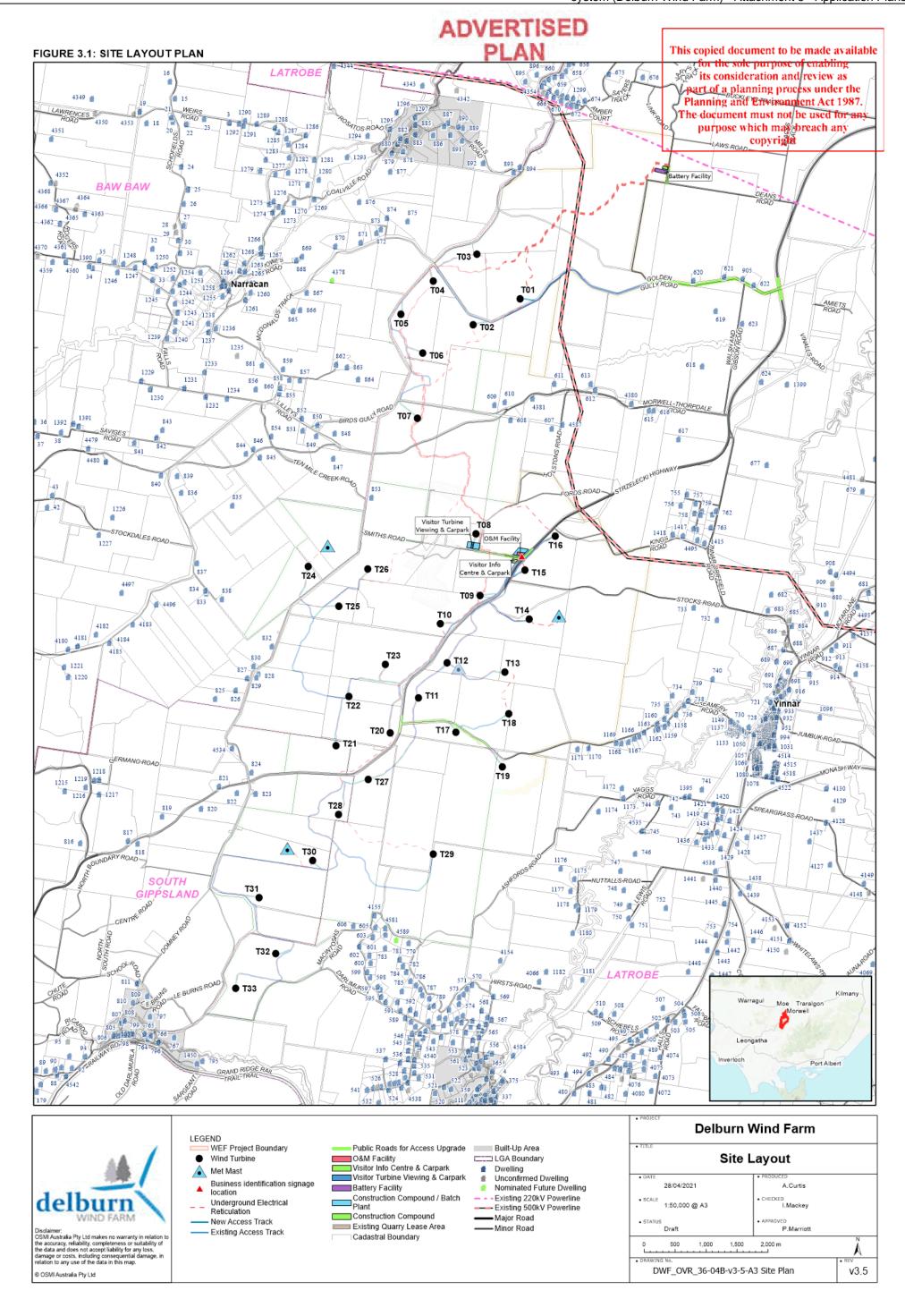


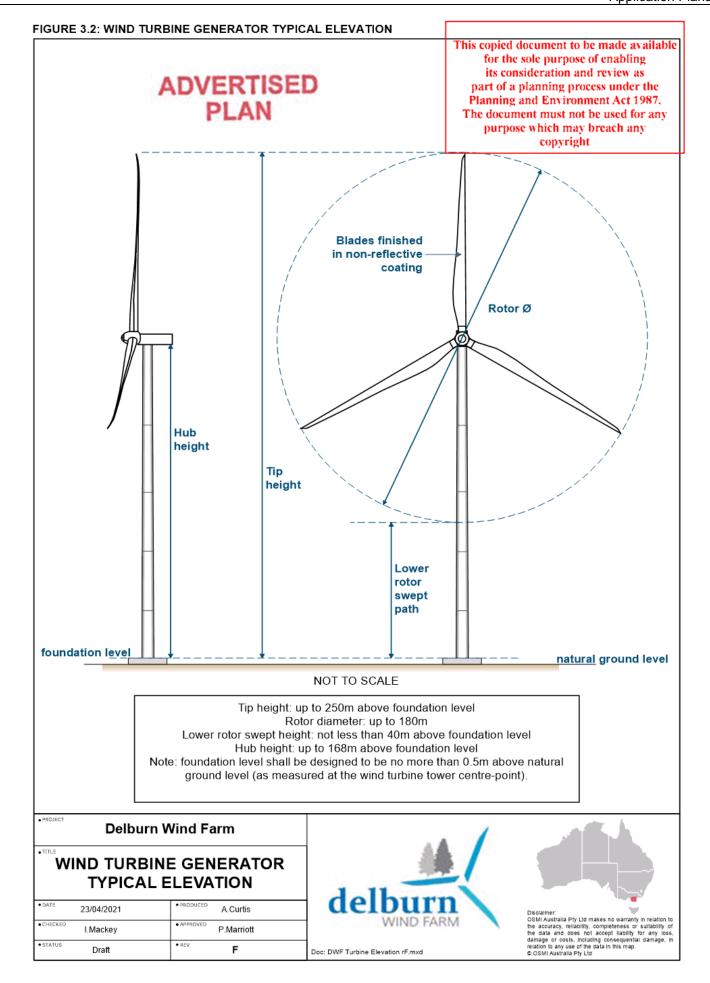


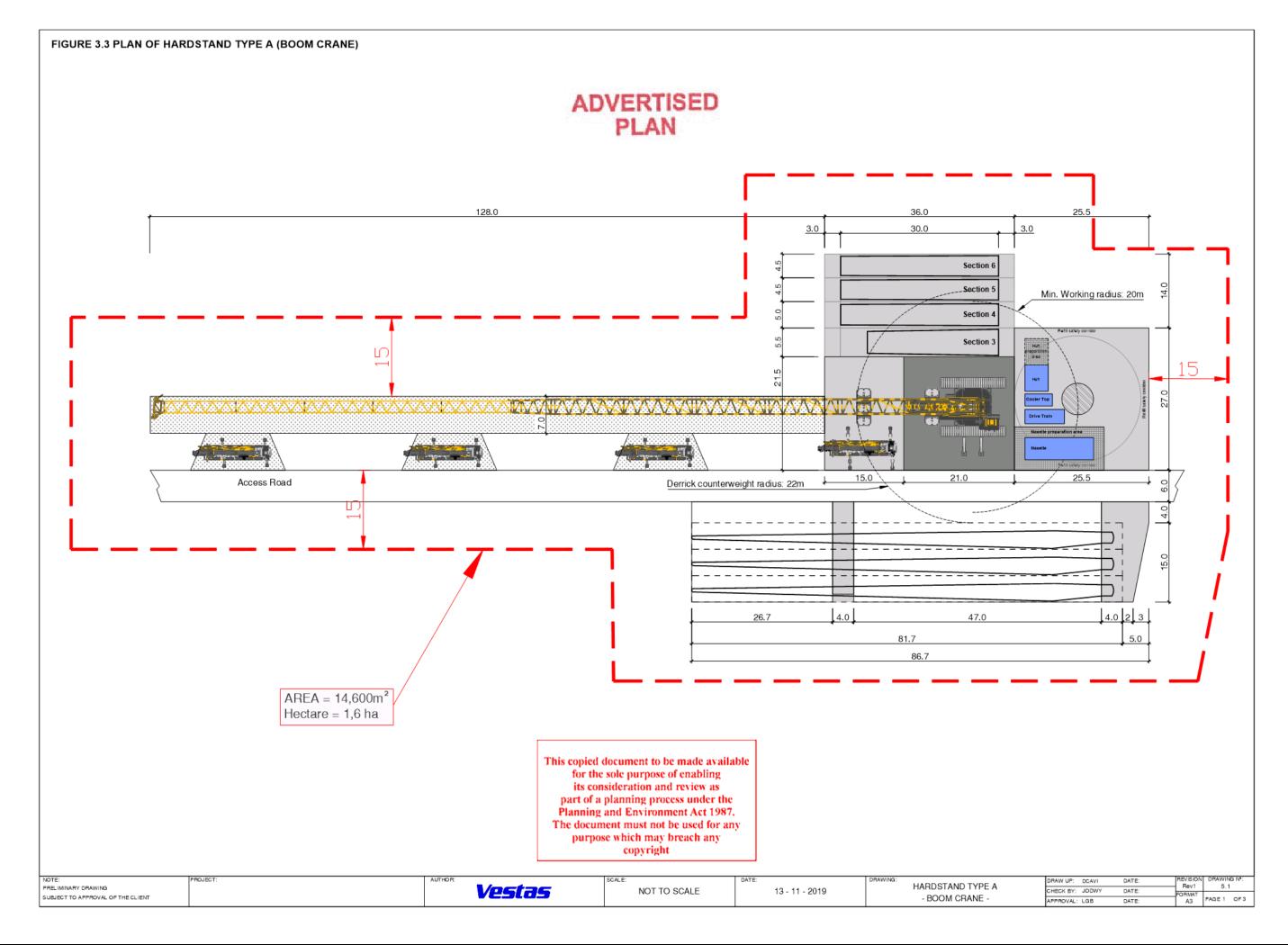


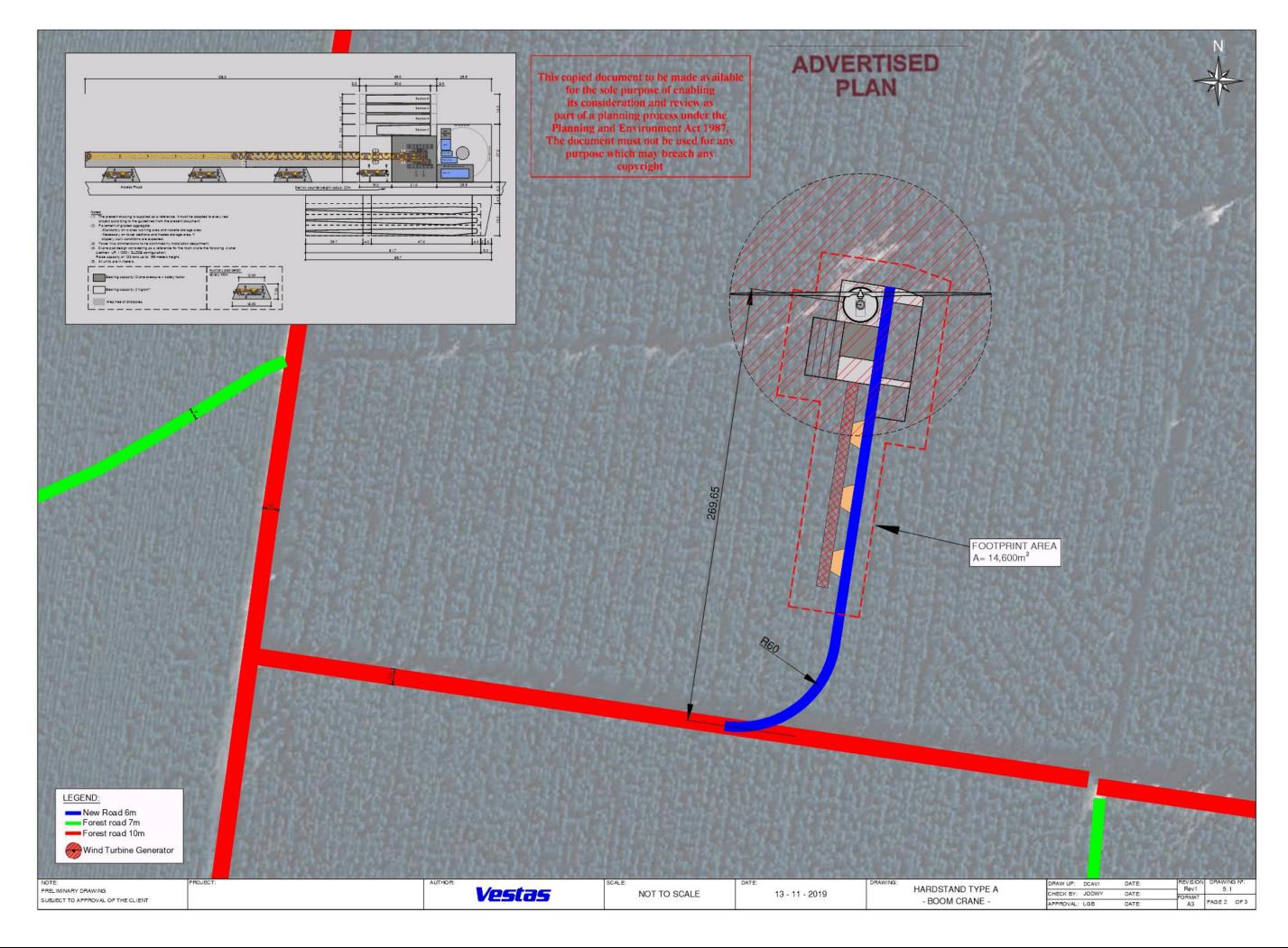


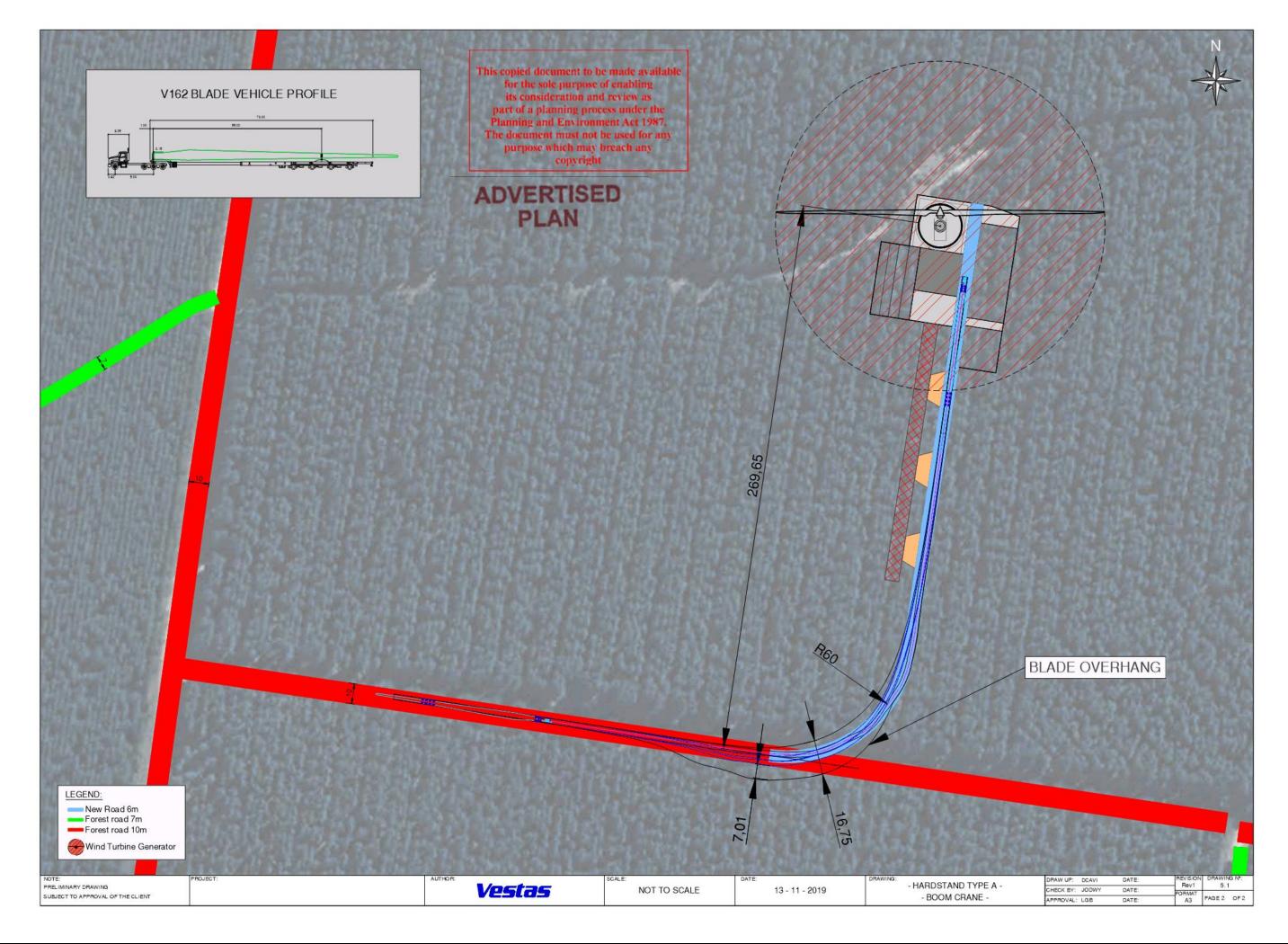


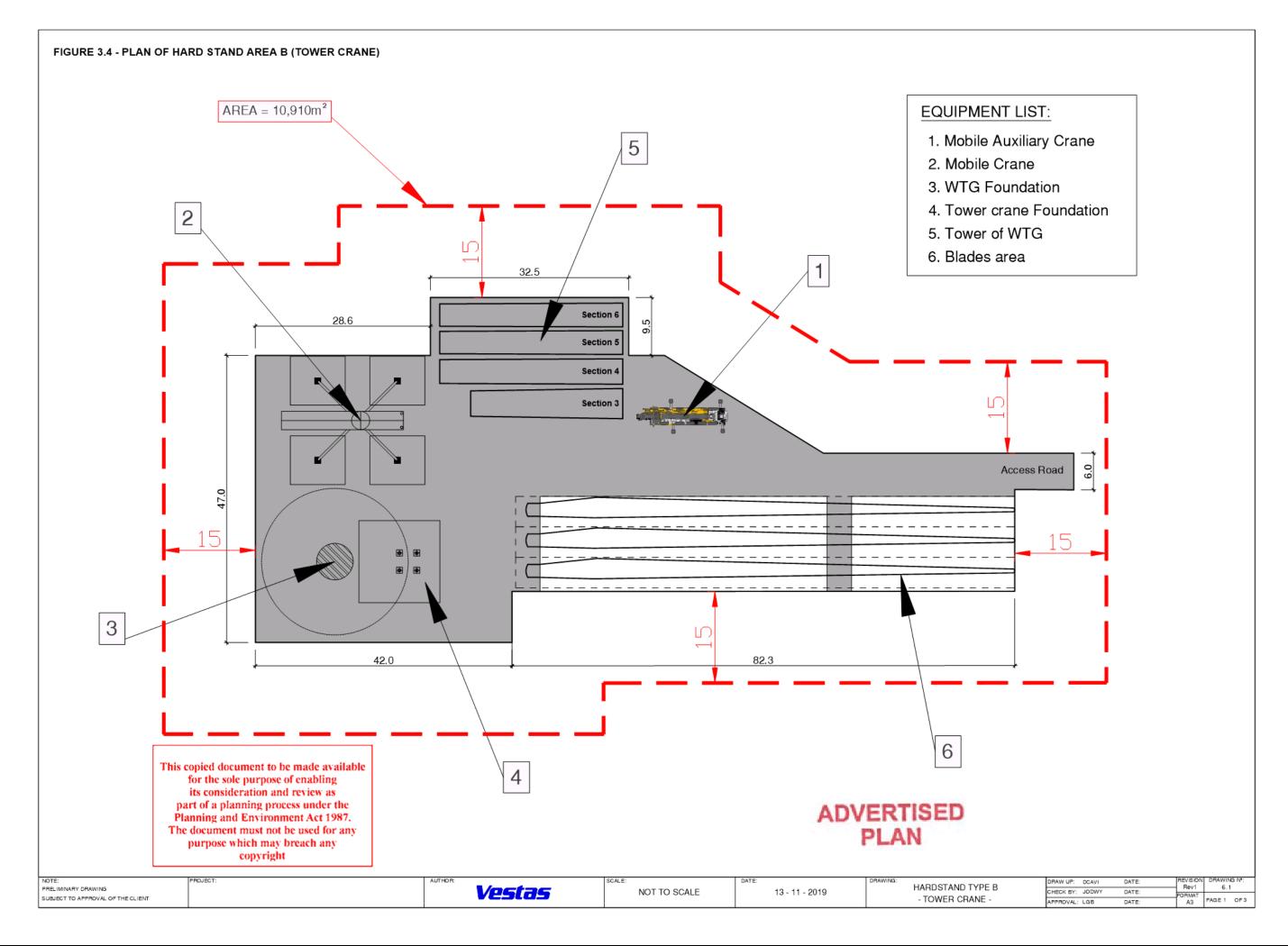


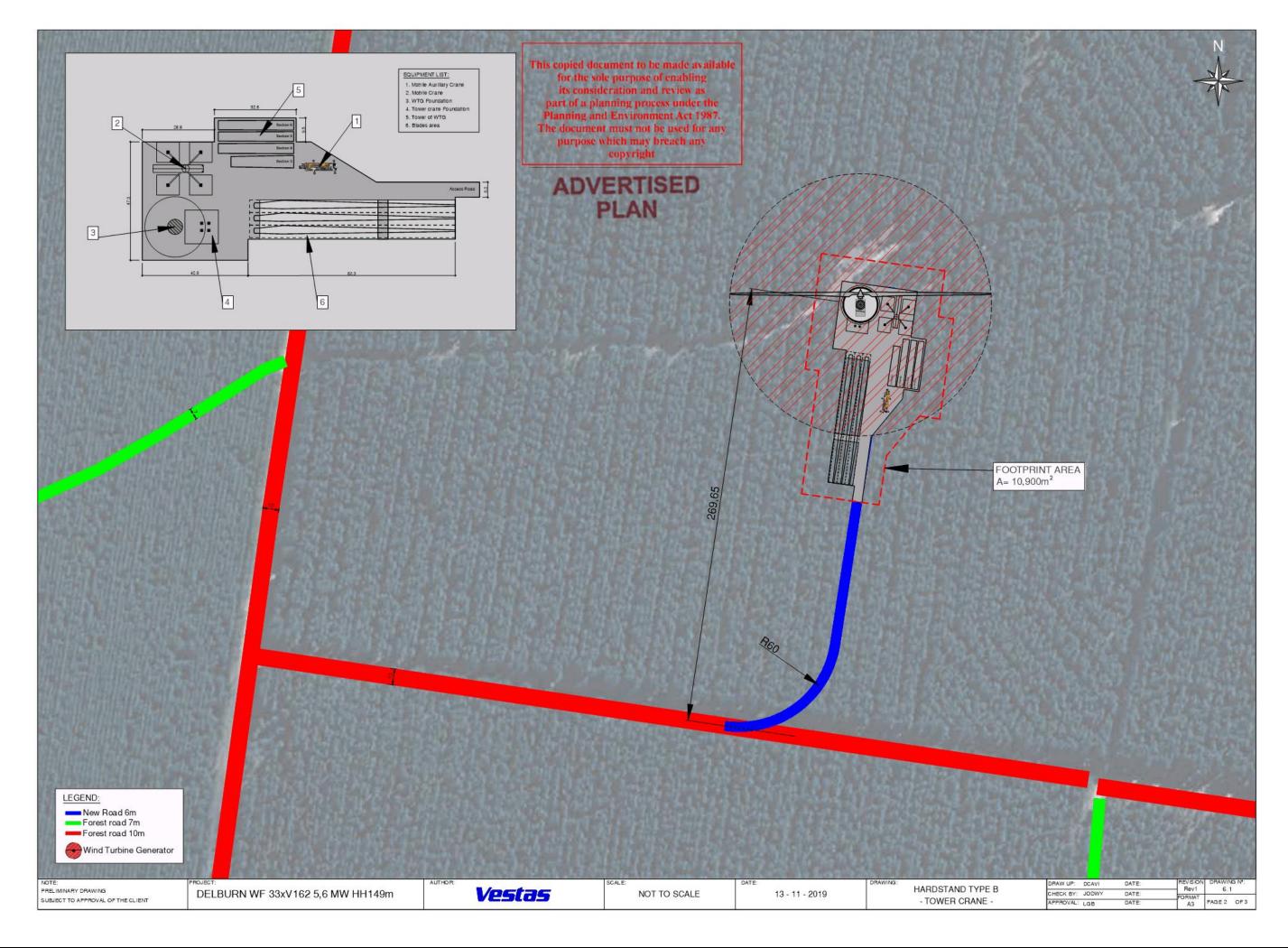


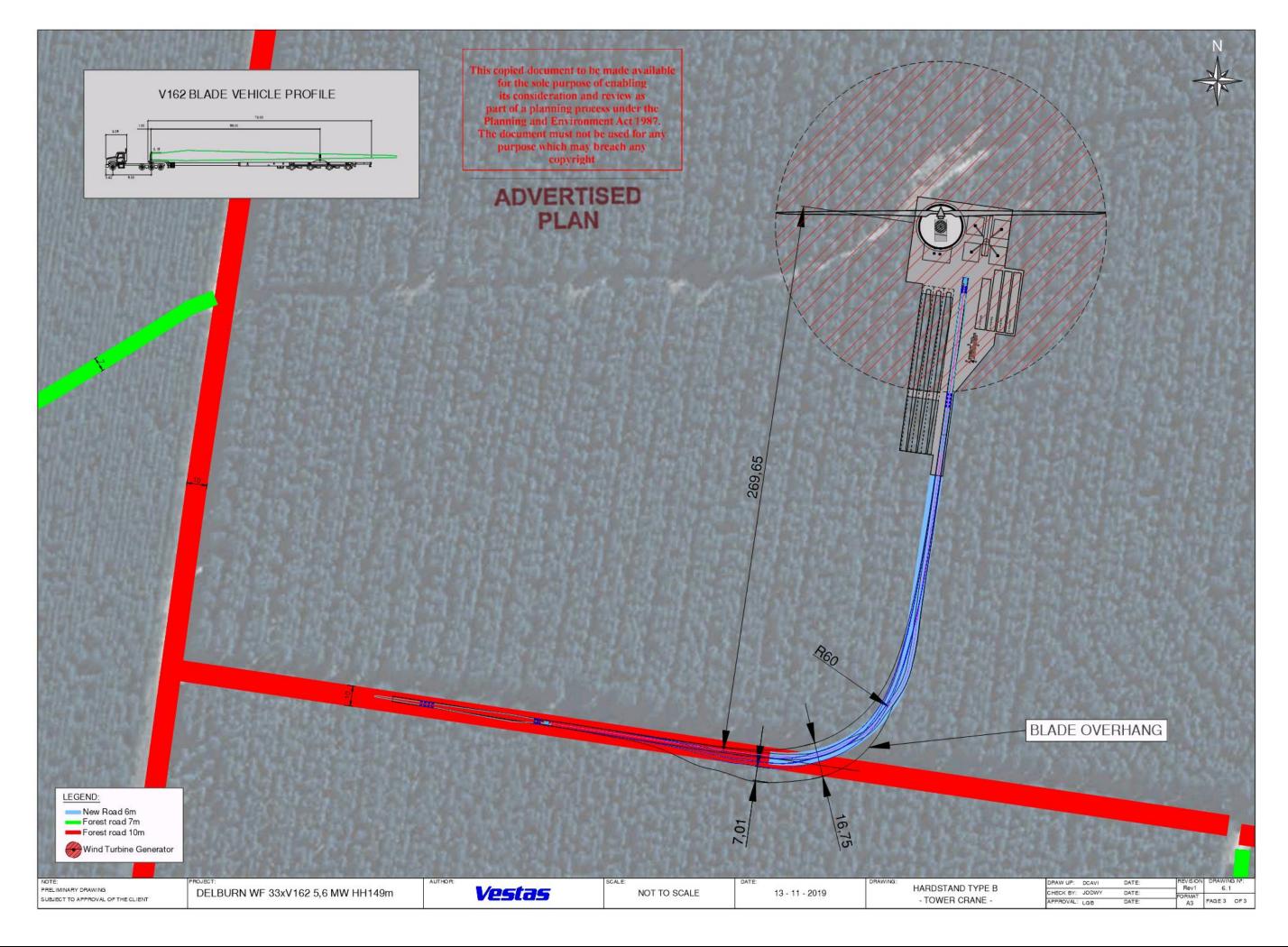












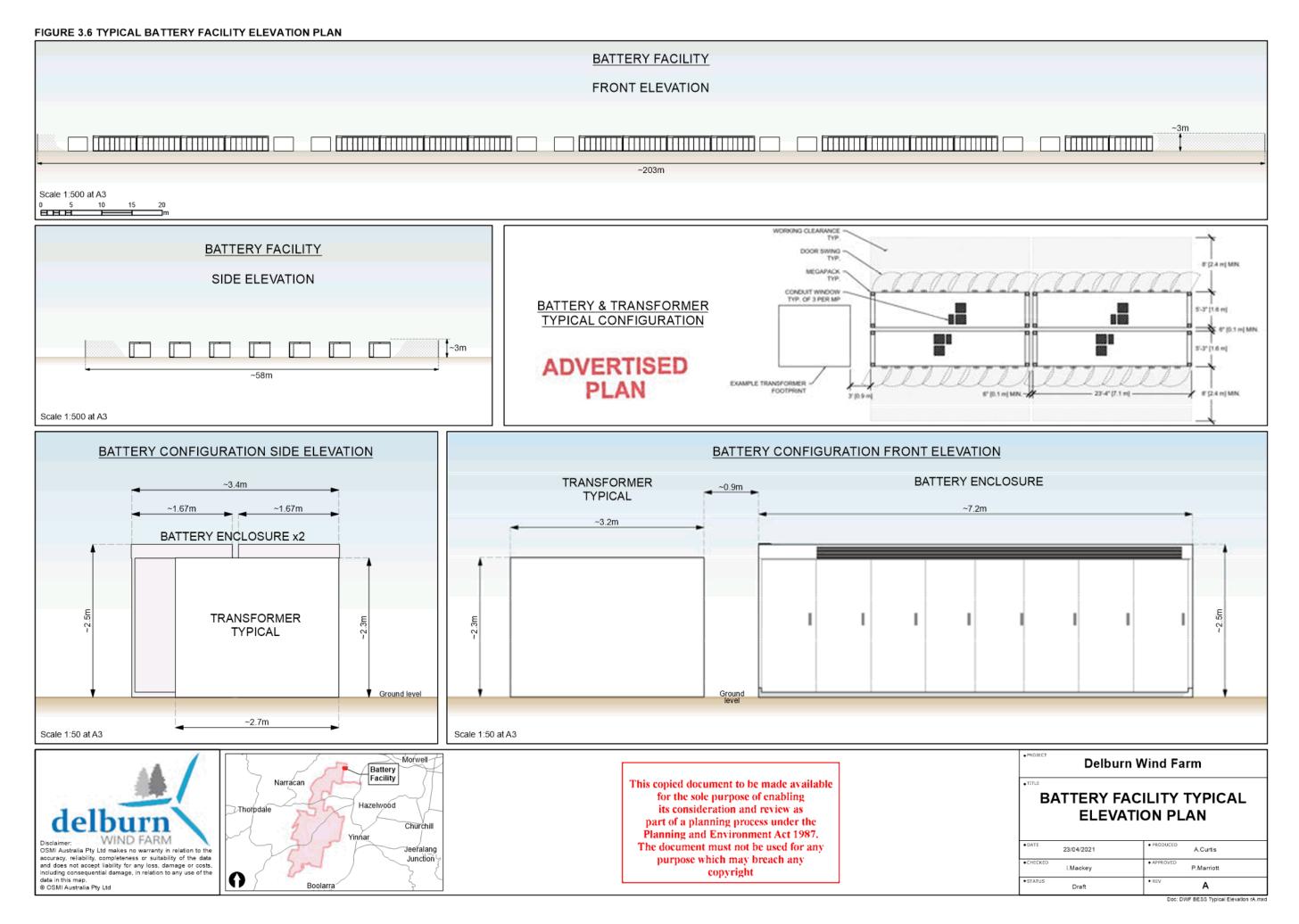
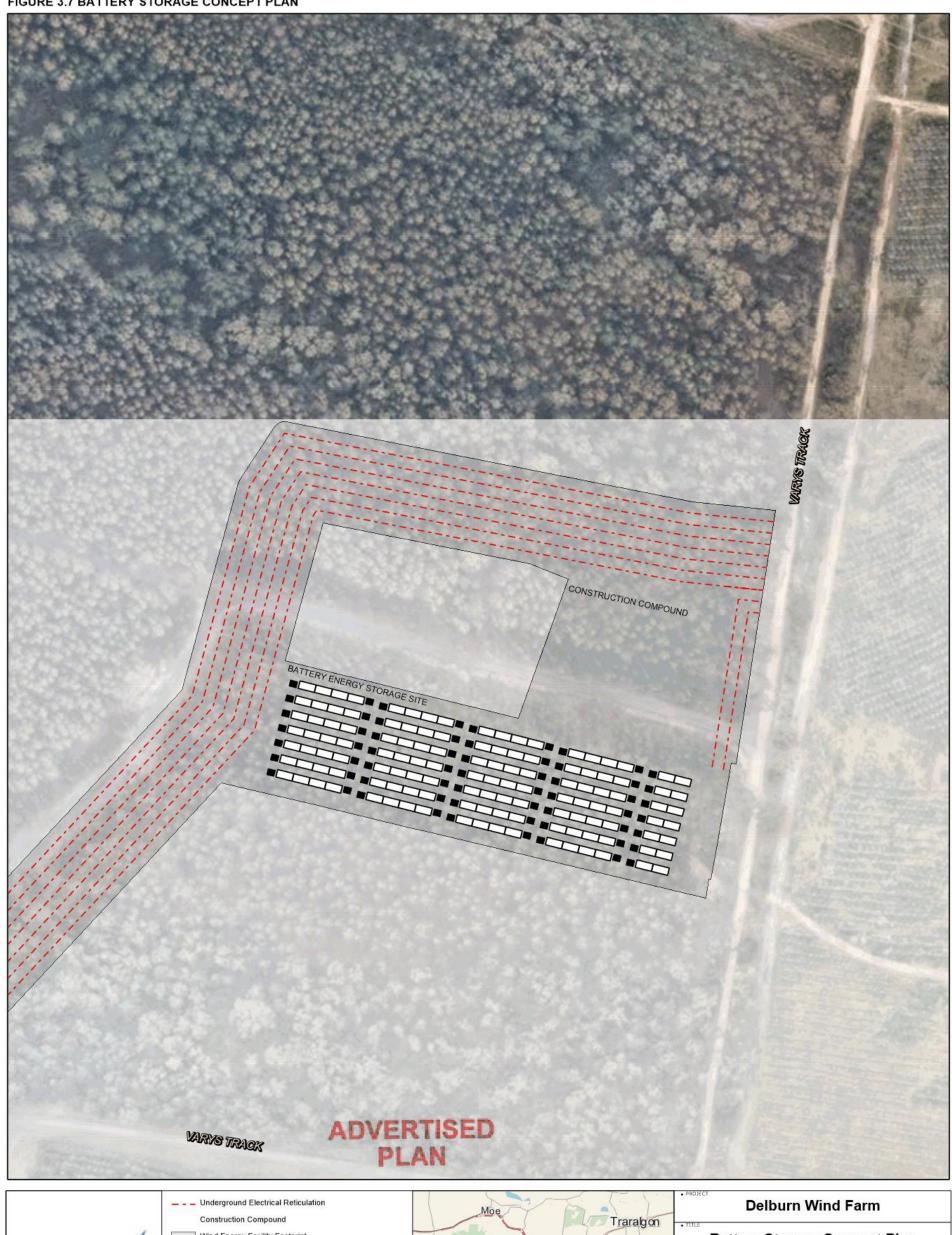
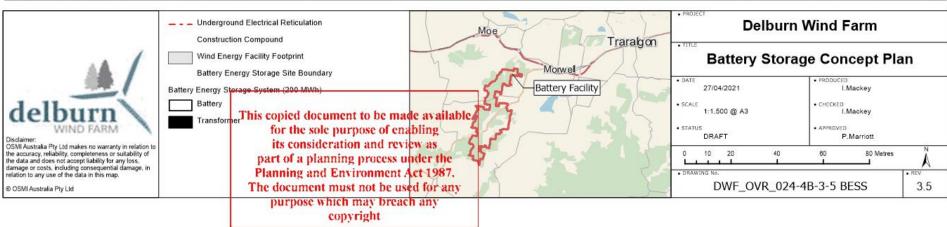
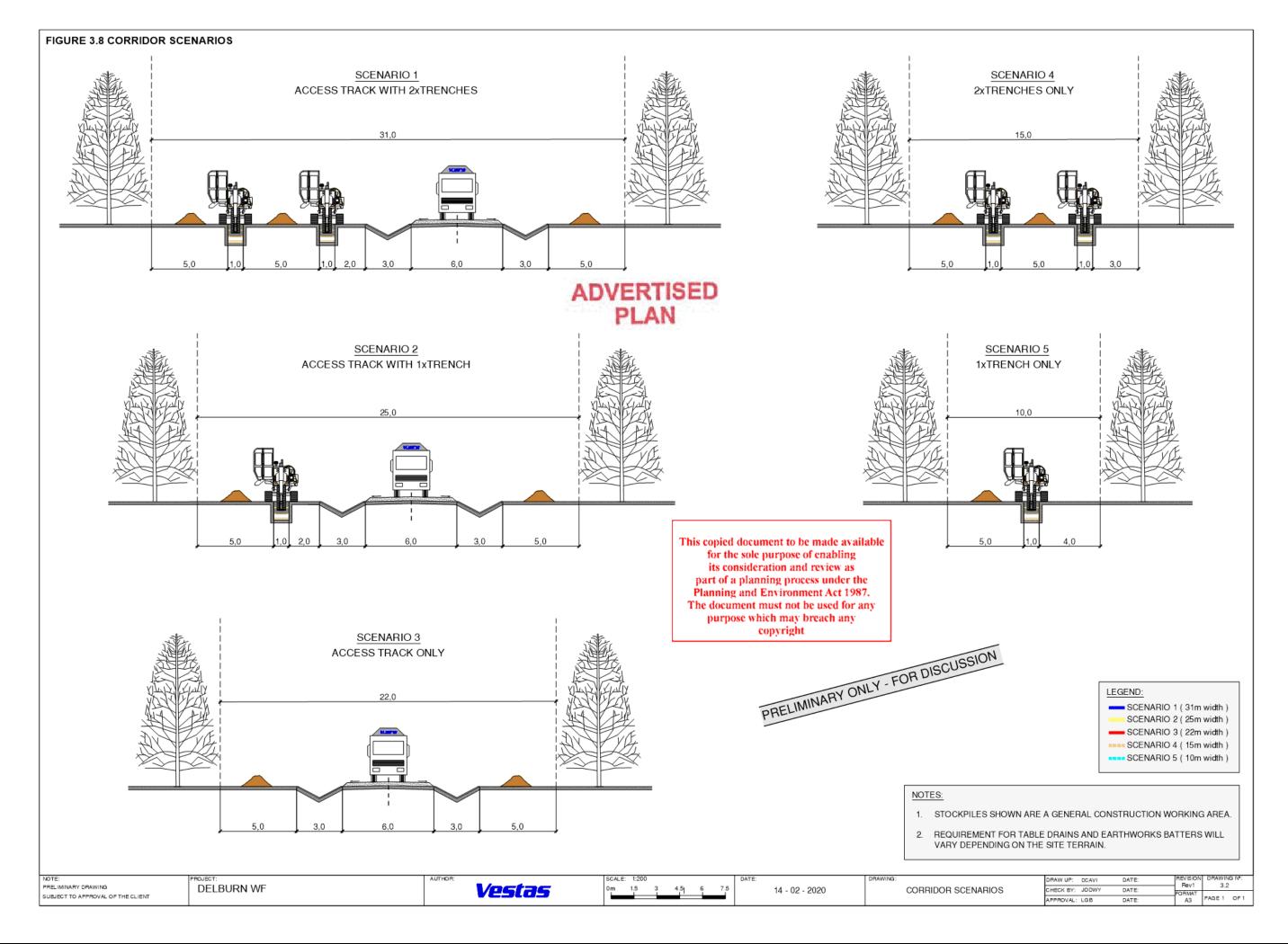


FIGURE 3.7 BATTERY STORAGE CONCEPT PLAN







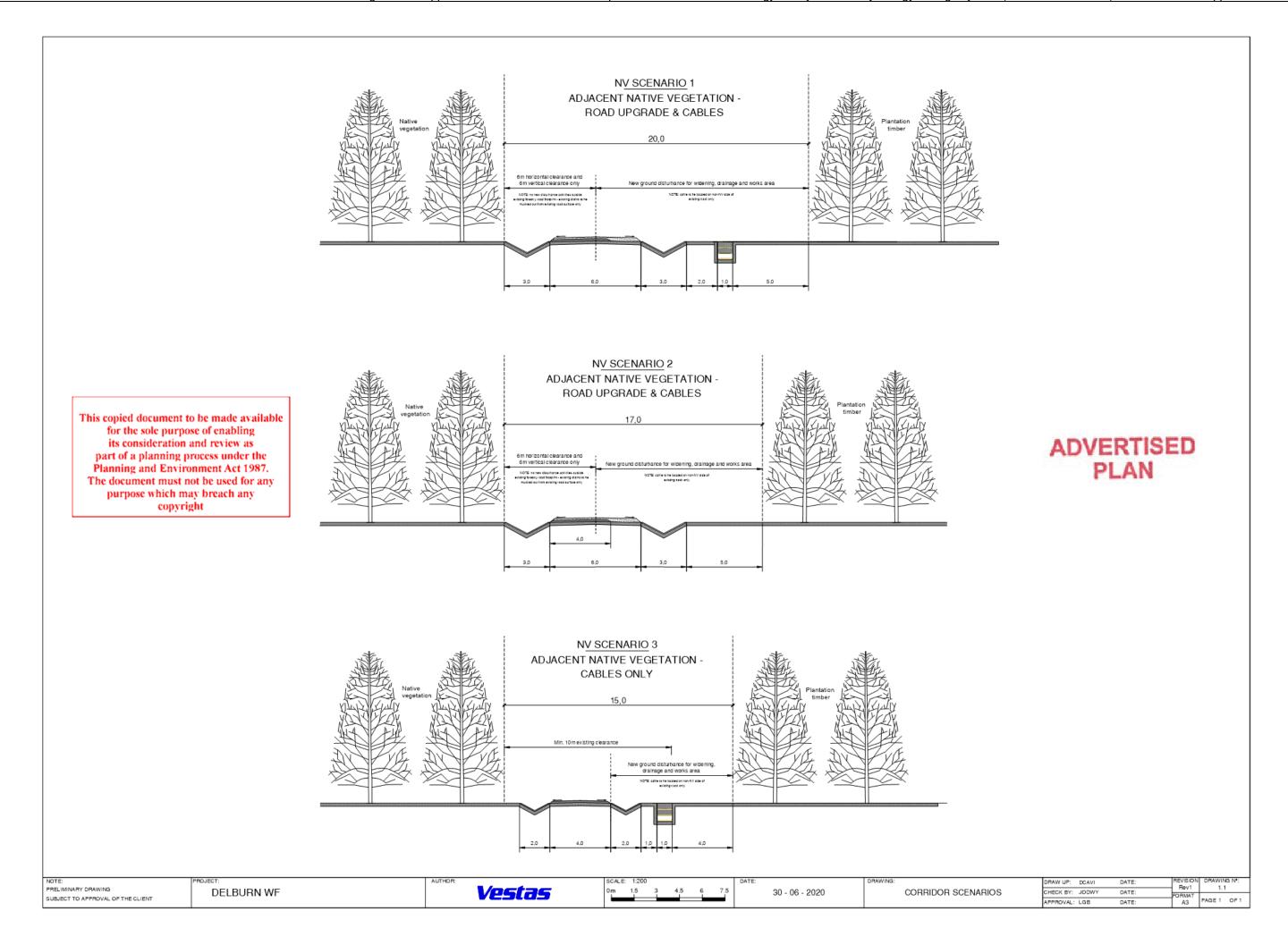


FIGURE 3.9 OPERATIONS AND MAINTENANCE FACILITY SITE PLAN

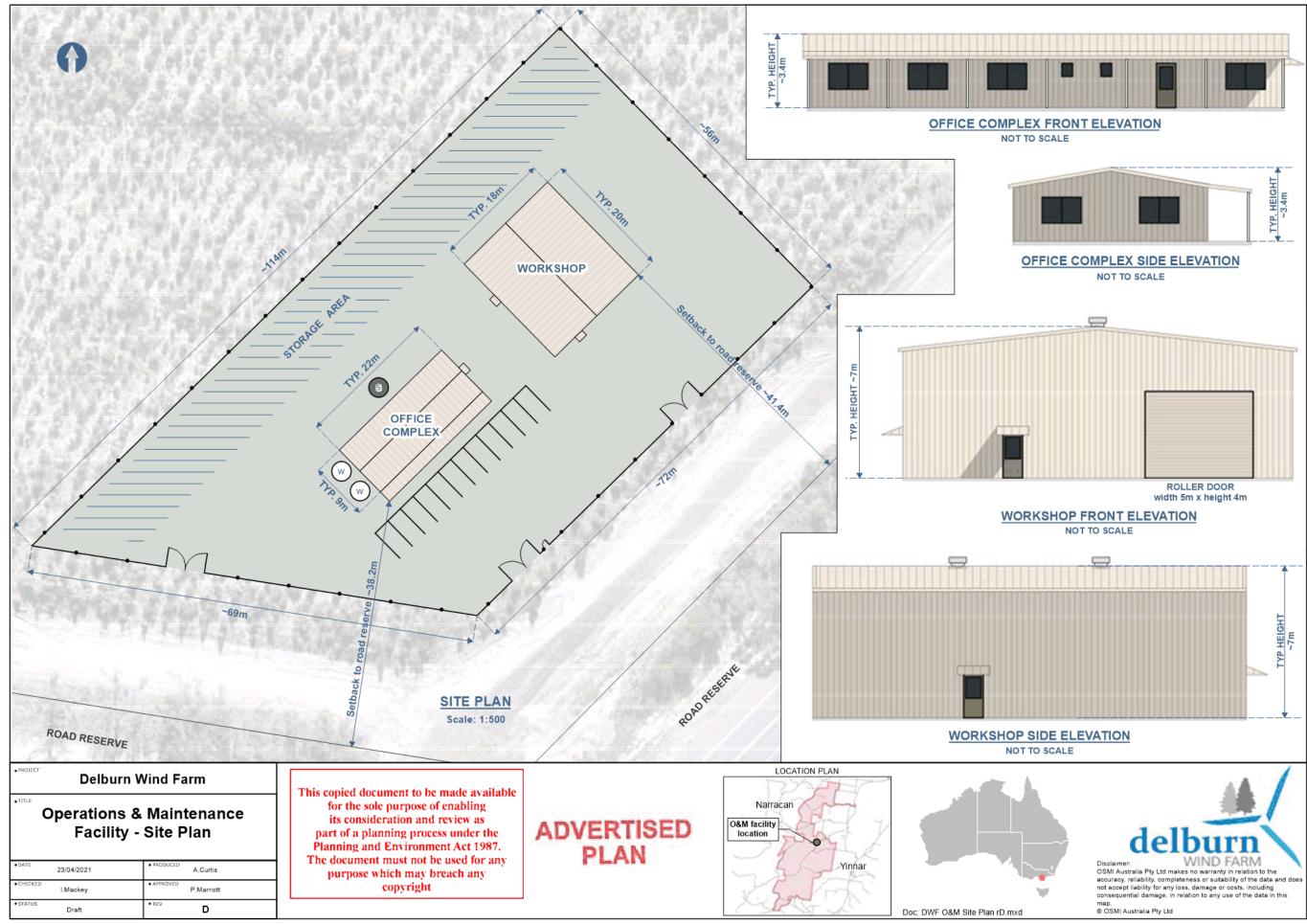


FIGURE 3.10 TYPICAL ELEVATION OF A PROPOSED METEOROLOGICAL MAST

