Hexham Wind Farm

Chapter 18

Aboriginal cultural heritage

WIND PROSPECT

18.1 Overview

This chapter describes Aboriginal cultural heritage values identified within the project site, and the potential impacts to these values from the construction, operation and decommissioning of the project. This chapter is based on the findings of Appendix J - ***Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Impact Assessment*** prepared by Tardis Archaeology.

Under the *Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006*, a Cultural Heritage Management Plan (CHMP) is to be prepared for projects where an EES is required. CHMP no. 19602 has been prepared for the project and will be submitted to the relevant Registered Aboriginal Party (RAP), the Eastern Maar Aboriginal Corporation, for evaluation and approval prior to commencing project construction. The CHMP included three levels of assessment, comprising:

- a background review (desktop assessment)
- field survey (standard assessment)
- subsurface excavation (complex assessment).

The Phase 1 standard assessment was undertaken in June and July 2019, attended by representatives from the Eastern Maar Aboriginal Corporation and Gunditj Mirring Traditional Owners Aboriginal Corporation (who both had a RAP application over the project site at the time of assessment). The Phase 2 standard assessment and complex assessment were undertaken from June to July and August to September 2025, respectively, and attended by Eastern Maar Aboriginal Corporation representatives.

The standard and complex assessments identified five stone artefacts within the investigation area. Consultation with the Eastern Maar Aboriginal Corporation also identified intangible Aboriginal cultural heritage values, being the Wedge-tailed Eagle and Southern Bent-wing Bat, and culturally significant flora, hydrology and ephemeral wetlands. It is considered that these values can be effectively managed with the implementation of design mitigation and additional management measures in consultation with the Eastern Maar Aboriginal Corporation.

Measure to avoid, mitigate and manage impacts on these values have been developed in consultation with Eastern Maar Aboriginal Corporation and considered in the project design. Further information on these measures can be found in Chapter 8 – ***Biodiversity and habitat*** and Chapter 9 – ***Bats***.

Through the implementation of design mitigations and management controls, the project avoids areas of known Aboriginal cultural heritage places and areas likely to contain Aboriginal cultural heritage. The likelihood of impacts to identified places during project construction, operation and decommissioning is considered low and the residual impact is considered negligible. Management conditions will be established as part of the CHMP and would be implemented during all project phases. Contingency plans will also be established for the unexpected discovery of Aboriginal cultural heritage and human remains, and measures for reviewing compliance with the CHMP.

18.2 EES objectives and key issues

The EES scoping requirements specify the evaluation objective and key issues, outlined in Table 18.1, relevant to Aboriginal cultural heritage that have guided this assessment.

Table 18.1 EES evaluation objective and key issues

Evaluation objective	
Cultural heritage: *Protect, avoid, or minimise where avoidance is not possible, adverse effects on historic heritage values, and tangible and intangible Aboriginal cultural heritage values, in partnership with Traditional Owners.*	
Key issues	• Destruction or disturbance of sites or places of Aboriginal cultural heritage. • Potential for indirect impacts on sites or places of Aboriginal significance close to the project site, both known and unknown. • Potential impacts on intangible Aboriginal cultural heritage values associated with the project areas and surrounds. • Potential for direct or indirect impacts to sites or places of historical heritage significance.

Matters relating to historic heritage are presented in Chapter 19 – ***Historical cultural heritage*** and Appendix K – ***Historical Heritage Impact Assessmen*** .

18.3 Legislation, policy and guidelines

Key legislation, policies and guidelines relevant to Aboriginal cultural heritage are summarised in Table 18.2.

Table 18.2 Relevant legislation and guidelines

Legislation / guideline	Description	Relevance to project
Commonwealth		
Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999 (EPBC Act)	The EPBC Act provides a framework to protect nine defined matters of national environmental significance, which include world heritage areas and national heritage places. The EPBC Act establishes the National Heritage List and Commonwealth Heritage List, which include natural, Indigenous and historic places.	There are no Aboriginal places listed on the National Heritage List or the Commonwealth Heritage List within the project site.
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Heritage Protection Act 1984	The *Aboriginal Torres Strait Islander Heritage Protection Act 1984* can provide protection for areas and objects that are of significance to Aboriginal People.	There are no known applications to the Minister for the Environment under this Act relevant to the project. This Act also covers the discovery and disposal of Aboriginal remains.
Native Title Act 1993	Native Title describes the rights and interests of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in land and waters, according to their traditional laws and customs. Under the *Native Title Act 1993*, Indigenous people can apply to have their native title rights recognised by Australian law by filing a Native Title application (Native Title claim) with the Federal Court. Native Title may exist on Crown land and waters if it has not extinguished (removed) by a valid government act. It cannot be claimed on freehold (private) land.	A small portion of the project site has been subject to a Native Title determination granted to the Eastern Maar People. (First Peoples – State Relations, 2024)

Legislation / guideline	Description	Relevance to project
State		
Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006 Aboriginal Heritage Regulations 2018	In Victoria, Aboriginal cultural heritage is protected by the *Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006* and the Aboriginal Heritage Regulations 2018. Under the *Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006*, certain actions require the preparation of a CHMP if they are both a 'high impact activity' and within a defined area of Aboriginal cultural heritage sensitivity, or if an EES is required. The Aboriginal Heritage Regulations 2018, made under section 194 of the *Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006*, specify the circumstances when a CHMP is required and outline the assessment process.	A CHMP is required for projects assessed under the *Environment Effects Act 1978* (i.e., where an EES is required). A notice of intent to prepare a CHMP was submitted in May 2023, and identifier number 19602 was assigned to the project CHMP.
Traditional Owner Settlement Act 2010	The *Traditional Owner Settlement Act 2010* provides for the out of court settlement of Native Title rights and interests in Victoria, through a Recognition and Settlement Agreement. To enter into a Recognition and Settlement Agreement, the relevant Traditional Owner group must withdraw any current Native Tile claim over the settlement area.	A Recognition and Settlement Agreement under the *Traditional Owner Settlement Act 2010* is currently being negotiated with the Victorian Government. This agreement would give formal recognition of Traditional Owner rights over Crown land, joint management rights, and a defined settlement package for Eastern Maar over the application area.

18.4 Cultural Heritage Management Plan

If an EES is required under the *Environment Effects Act 1978*, a CHMP for the area in which the works are to be carried out must also be prepared (in accordance with s.49 of the *Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006*) before commencing works.

In addition to the EES process requiring the preparation of a CHMP, other CHMP triggers relevant to the project are:

- the project site is located within areas of cultural heritage sensitivity, as defined under Division 3 of the Aboriginal Heritage Regulations 2018
- the project is a 'high impact activity' as it involves "the construction of a building or the construction or carrying out of works for a specified use, land used to generate electricity, including a wind energy facility"
- part or all of the project site has not been subject to previous significant ground disturbance as defined by the Aboriginal Heritage Regulations 2018.

A CHMP (no. 19602) has been prepared for the project by Tardis Archaeology in accordance with Part 4 of the *Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006*. Eastern Maar Aboriginal Corporation are the registered Registered Aboriginal Party (RAP) for the appointed area, and the responsible authority for the evaluation of the CHMP. When the notice of intent to prepare a CHMP was originally submitted in January 2019 there was no appointed RAP for the area. Therefore, both Eastern Maar Aboriginal Corporation and the Gunditj Mirring Traditional Owners Corporation were consulted during the preparation of the CHMP and participated in the standard assessment fieldwork conducted in 2019.

The draft CHMP will not be exhibited with this EES. Instead, an Aboriginal cultural heritage impact assessment has been prepared and can be found in Appendix J – ***Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Impact Assessment***. The CHMP would be finalised and lodged to Eastern Maar Aboriginal Corporation once the Minister for Planning has made an assessment on this EES.

18.5 Investigation area

The investigation area for the Aboriginal cultural heritage impact assessment comprises the project site, as well as land within 20 kilometres of the approximate centre of the project site (referred to as the 'activity area' in the CHMP). This 20-kilometre buffer area was used to create a 'geographic region' for the purposes of the desktop assessment. The purpose of the 20-kilometre buffer area is that it contains a representative sample of all geomorphic and landform features relevant to the Aboriginal cultural heritage that may be present, and it contains a large enough sample to identify areas of archaeological potential.

18.6 Method

The assessment of potential impacts to Aboriginal cultural heritage was undertaken through the CHMP process. Consultation was undertaken with Eastern Maar Aboriginal Corporation and Gunditj Mirring Traditional Owners Aboriginal Corporation to capture intangible Aboriginal cultural heritage values as part of the CHMP process.

The CHMP process consists of various stages of assessment, as summarised in Figure 18.1. The assessment stages are discussed in more detail in the following sections and have influenced the project design and development as discussed in Section 18.7.3.

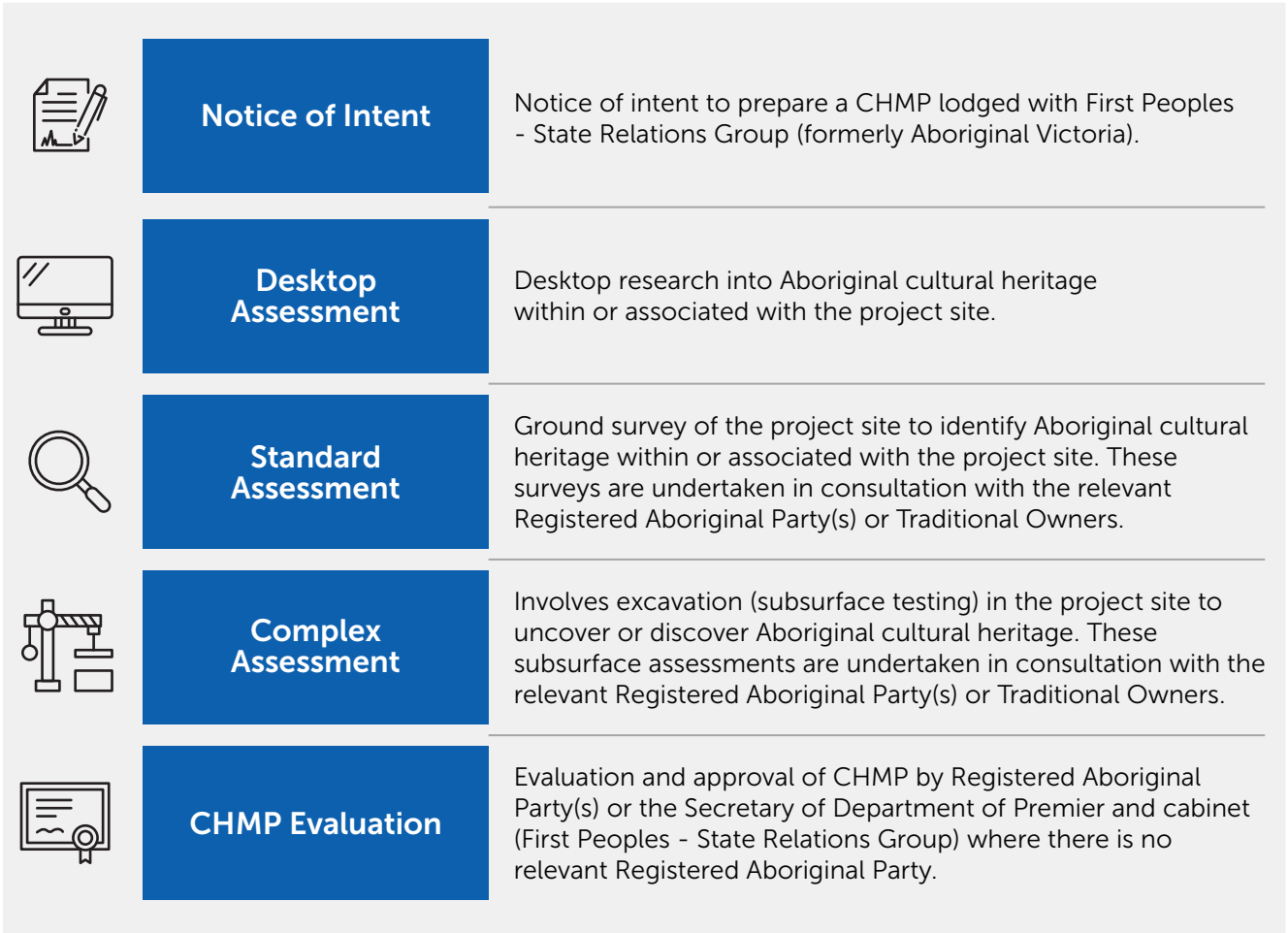


Figure 18.1 General CHMP assessment process overview

18.6.1 Desktop assessment

The desktop assessment reviewed the Aboriginal cultural history and the environmental context within the investigation area including:

- Registered Aboriginal places and reports on the Victorian Aboriginal Heritage Register
- History and ethnohistory
- Landforms and geomorphology including geology, soils and environment
- Land use history
- Strategic values.
- This review was used to predict Aboriginal heritage site types likely to occur within the investigation area and project site. These areas are termed 'areas of Aboriginal cultural heritage potential'.

Data from Light Detection and Ranging (LiDAR), a remote sensing method that uses near-infrared pulses to create high-resolution digital elevation models, collected for the project was also analysed to identify potential mound sites, which are earth features formed by the accumulation of material where Aboriginal people lived for long periods of time.

18.6.2 Standard assessment

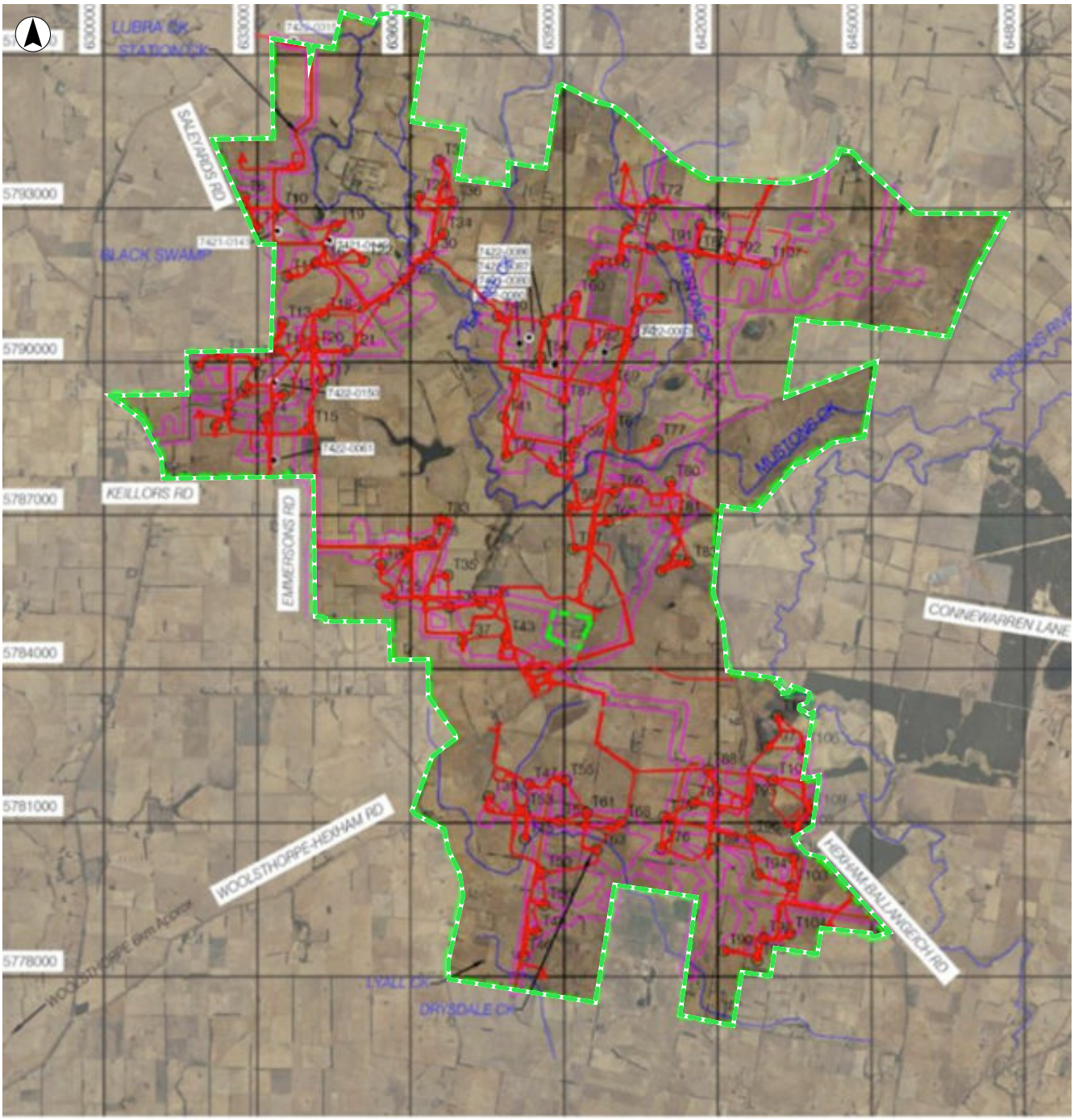
The desktop assessment confirmed that Aboriginal cultural heritage is present in the project site, and that further Aboriginal cultural heritage is likely to be present. As such, a ground surface survey (referred to as the 'standard assessment' phase of the CHMP) of the entire project site was required to identify areas of cultural heritage sensitivity (i.e., areas that potentially retained Aboriginal cultural heritage). This involved a survey of potential landforms and locations of previously recorded Aboriginal sites identified in the desktop assessment, as well as an assessment of ground surface visibility and areas of disturbance within the project site.

The standard assessment fieldwork comprised two phases, referred to as Phase 1 (in 2019) and Phase 2 (in 2025). The Phase 2 assessment sought to ensure changes in the project design since the Phase 1 assessment was undertaken were reviewed, specifically targeting locations not sufficiently covered by the previous survey.

Phase 1 was conducted from 24 June to 18 July 2019 by representatives from Tardis and the Eastern Maar Aboriginal Corporation and Gunditj Mirring Traditional Owners Aboriginal Corporation (who both had Registered Aboriginal Party applications over the project site at the time of the fieldwork). Eastern Maar Aboriginal Corporation was appointed the Registered Aboriginal Party for the entire activity area.

Phase 2 was conducted by representatives from Tardis and Eastern Maar Aboriginal Corporation from 20 June to 17 July 2025.

Figure 18.2 shows the extent of the Phase 1 and Phase 2 survey areas.



Legend

- Activity Area - Wind Farm 16,103 hectares (approx)
- 2019 Footprint
- 2025 Infrastructure

Scale

0 1 2 3

Scale of Kilometres

Data: State of Victoria (DECCA/Land Use Victoria), Commonwealth of Australia, Wind Prospect, and specialist studies/reports. Data is indicative only; accuracy and completeness are not guaranteed.

Figure 18.2 Phase 1 (2019 Footprint) and Phase 2 (2025 Infrastructure) Survey Areas

18.6.3 Complex assessment

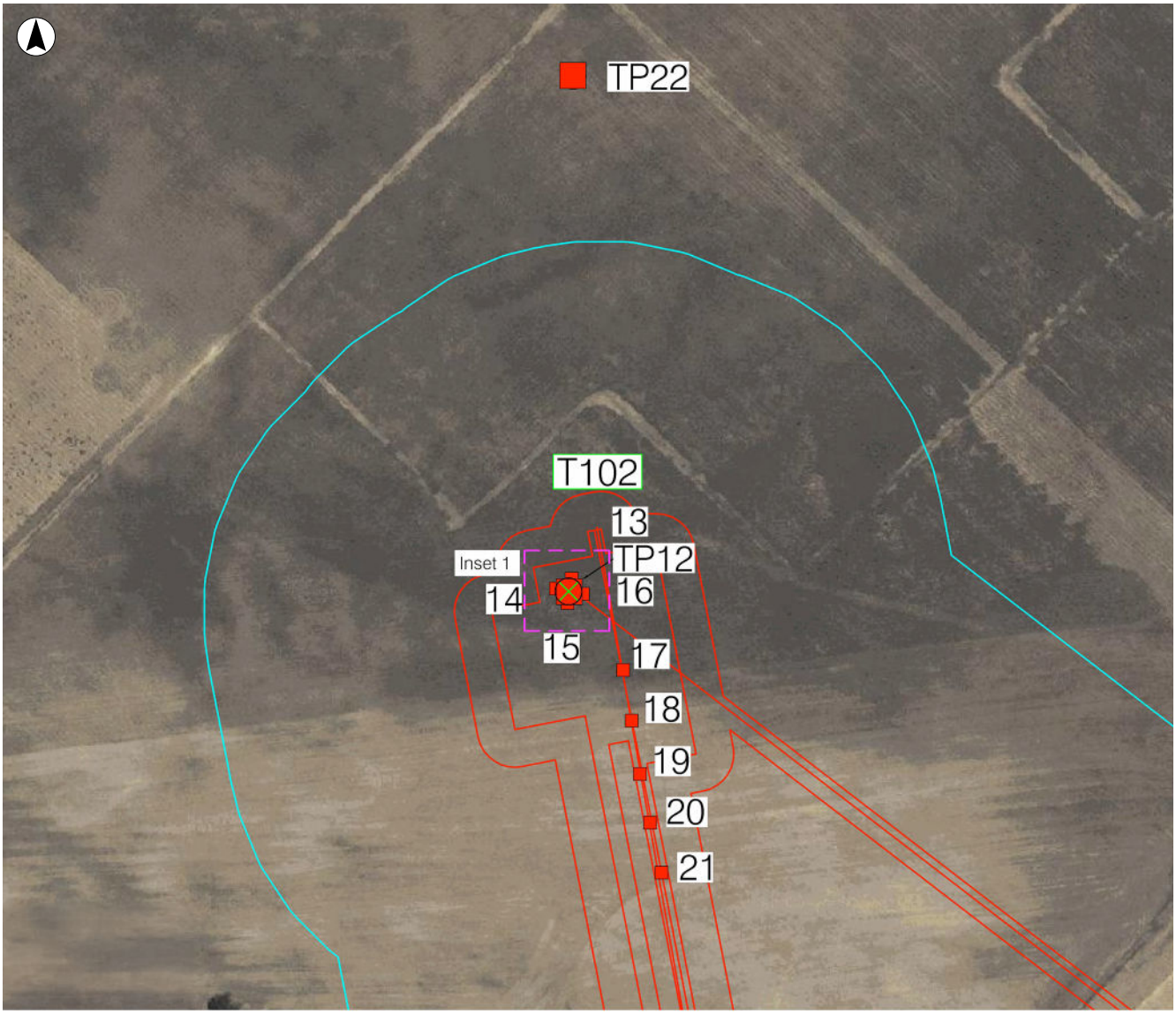
Subsurface excavation of an activity area (referred to as the 'complex assessment' phase of a CHMP) is required if the results of a desktop and standard assessment indicate that Aboriginal cultural heritage is, or is likely to be, present, and the extent, nature and significance of the Aboriginal cultural heritage cannot be determined unless a complex assessment is undertaken.

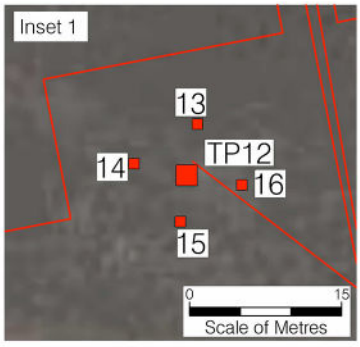
The standard assessment determined that a complex assessment was required as subsurface Aboriginal cultural heritage was considered likely to be present in parts of the activity area.

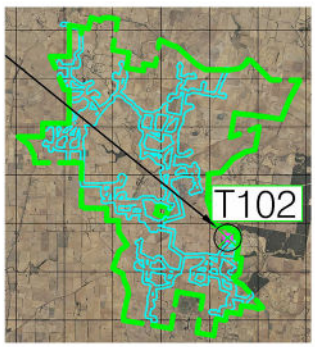
A complex assessment was conducted from 18 August to 12 September 2025 to determine the likely impact of the project on the Aboriginal cultural heritage values in the project site. The assessment investigated areas with archaeological potential identified during the standard assessment and from the LiDAR mound analysis.

The complex assessment method involved undertaking hand excavated 1m x 1m test pits (TPs) and 0.5m x 0.5m shovel test pits (STPs) at the following locations:

- Turbine T102 (TP12 & STP13-16), access track (STPs14-21) and possible mound to the north (TP22). See Figure 18.3.
- Turbine T38 (TP23 & STP24-27, possible mounds to the east (TP28-31) and access track to the east (STP32-37). See Figure 18.4.
- Turbine T33 (TP44 & STP45-48), access track (STP49-59) See Figure 18.5.
- Turbine T27 (TP67 & STP68-71) and T30 (TP111 & STP107-110) and access track (STP72-06) to the terrace and floodplain landform at the most strategic waterway in the activity area, Mustons Creek. See Figure 18.6.
- Proposed quarry (TP1 & STP2-40) to test the stony ridgeline / rises landform, swale and surrounding floodplain. See Figure 18.6







Legend

- Activity Area Boundary 16,103 hectares (approx)
- Area of Works (100m buffer)
- Infrastructure
- Rivers
- Turbine
- Possible Mound

x-y Test Pit 1mx1m: With Artefact
x= test pit number
y= number of artefacts

x-y Test Pit 50x50cm: With Artefact
x= test pit number
y= number of artefacts

xx Test Pit 1mx1m: No Artefact
xx= test pit number

xx Test Pit 50x50cm: No Artefact
xx= test pit number

Note: Test Pit Icons Not To Scale

Scale

0 25 50
Scale of Metres

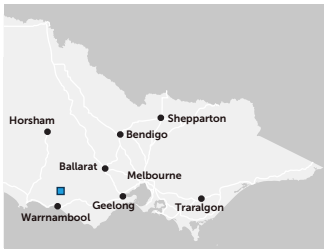
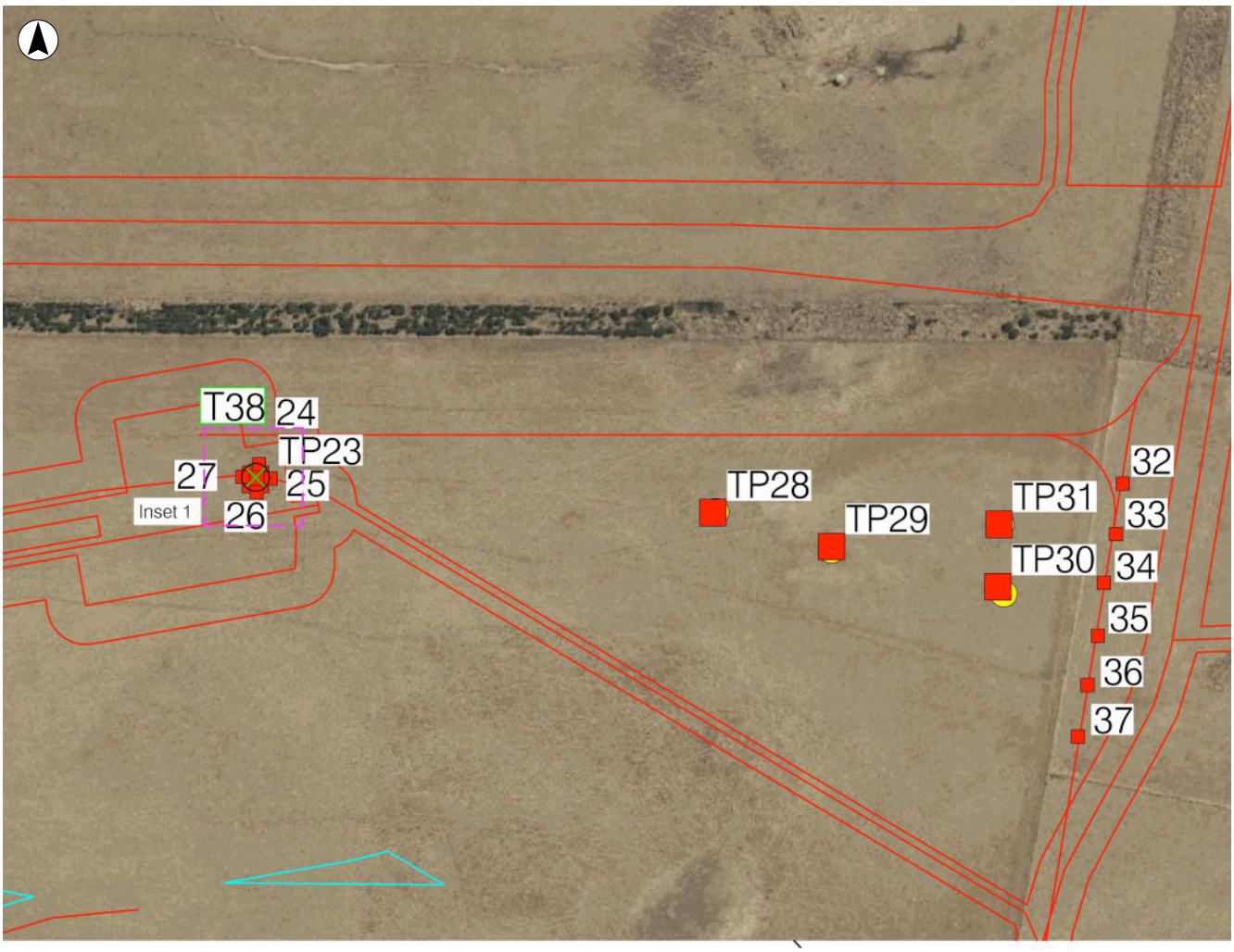
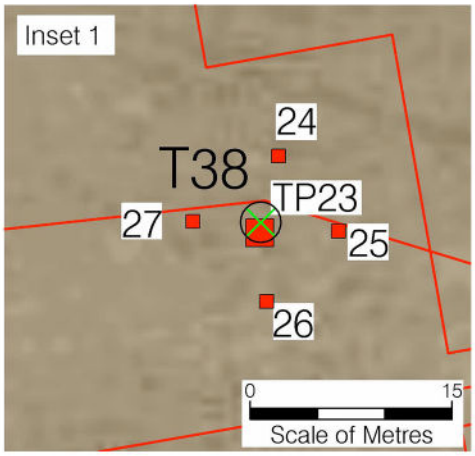
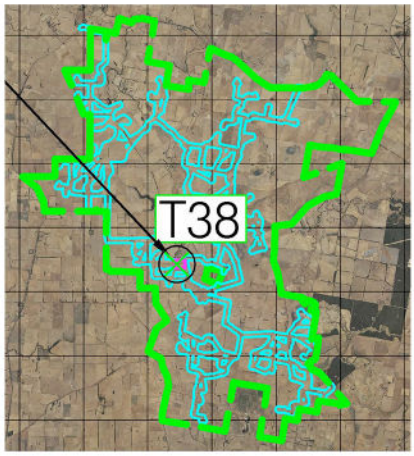


Figure 18.3 Excavations at Turbine T102







Legend

- Activity Area Boundary 16,103 hectares (approx)
- Area of Works (100m buffer)
- Infrastructure
- Rivers
- Turbine
- Possible Mound

- xx Test Pit 1mx1m: No Artefact xx= test pit number
- xx Test Pit 50x50cm: No Artefact xx= test pit number

Note: Test Pit Icons Not To Scale

Scale
0 25 50
Scale of Metres

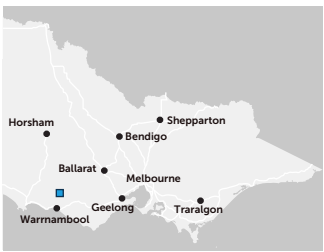
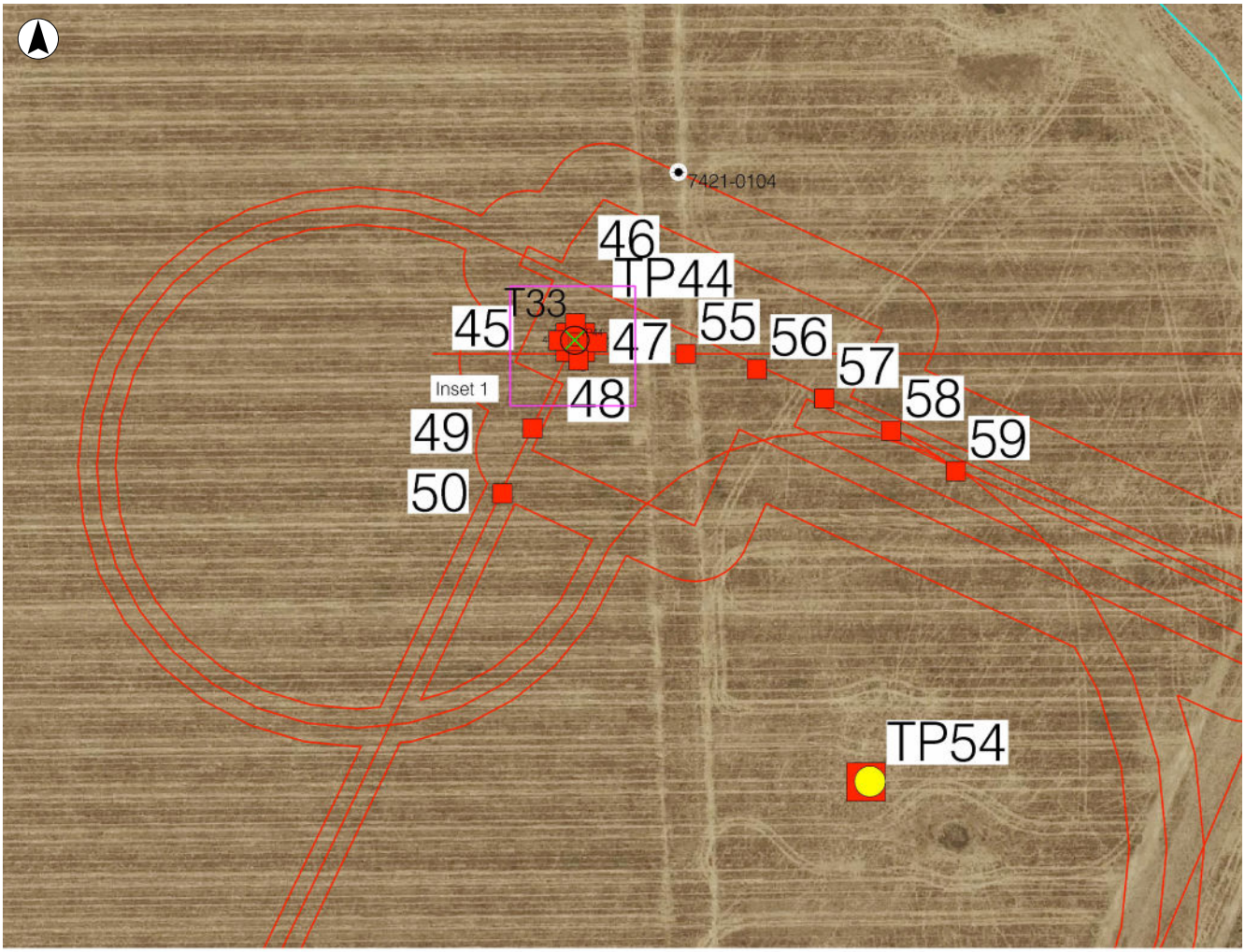
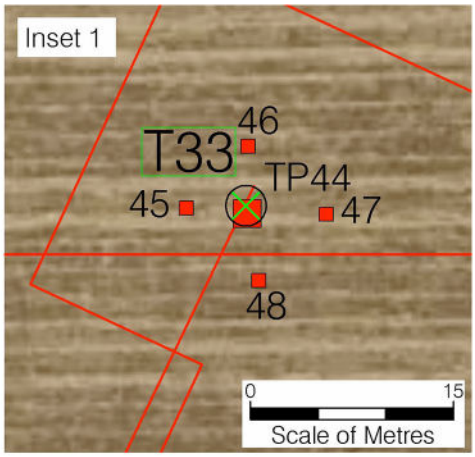
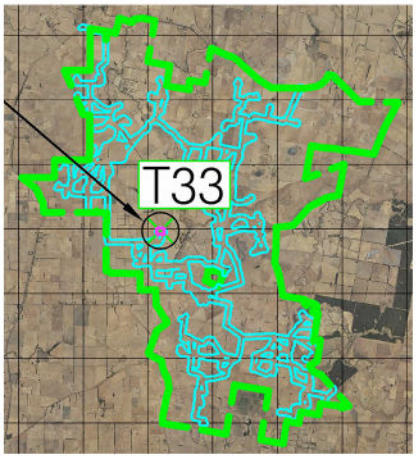


Figure 18.4 Excavations at Turbine T38







Legend

- Activity Area Boundary 16,103 hectares (approx)
- Area of Works (100m buffer)
- Infrastructure
- Rivers
- Turbine
- Possible Mound
- Earth Feature

x-y Test Pit 1mx1m: With Artefact
x= test pit number
y= number of artefacts

x-y Test Pit 50x50cm: With Artefact
x= test pit number
y= number of artefacts

xx Test Pit 1mx1m: No Artefact
xx= test pit number

xx Test Pit 50x50cm: No Artefact
xx= test pit number

Note: Test Pit Icons Not To Scale

Scale
0 20 40
Scale of Metres

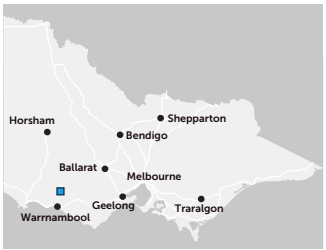
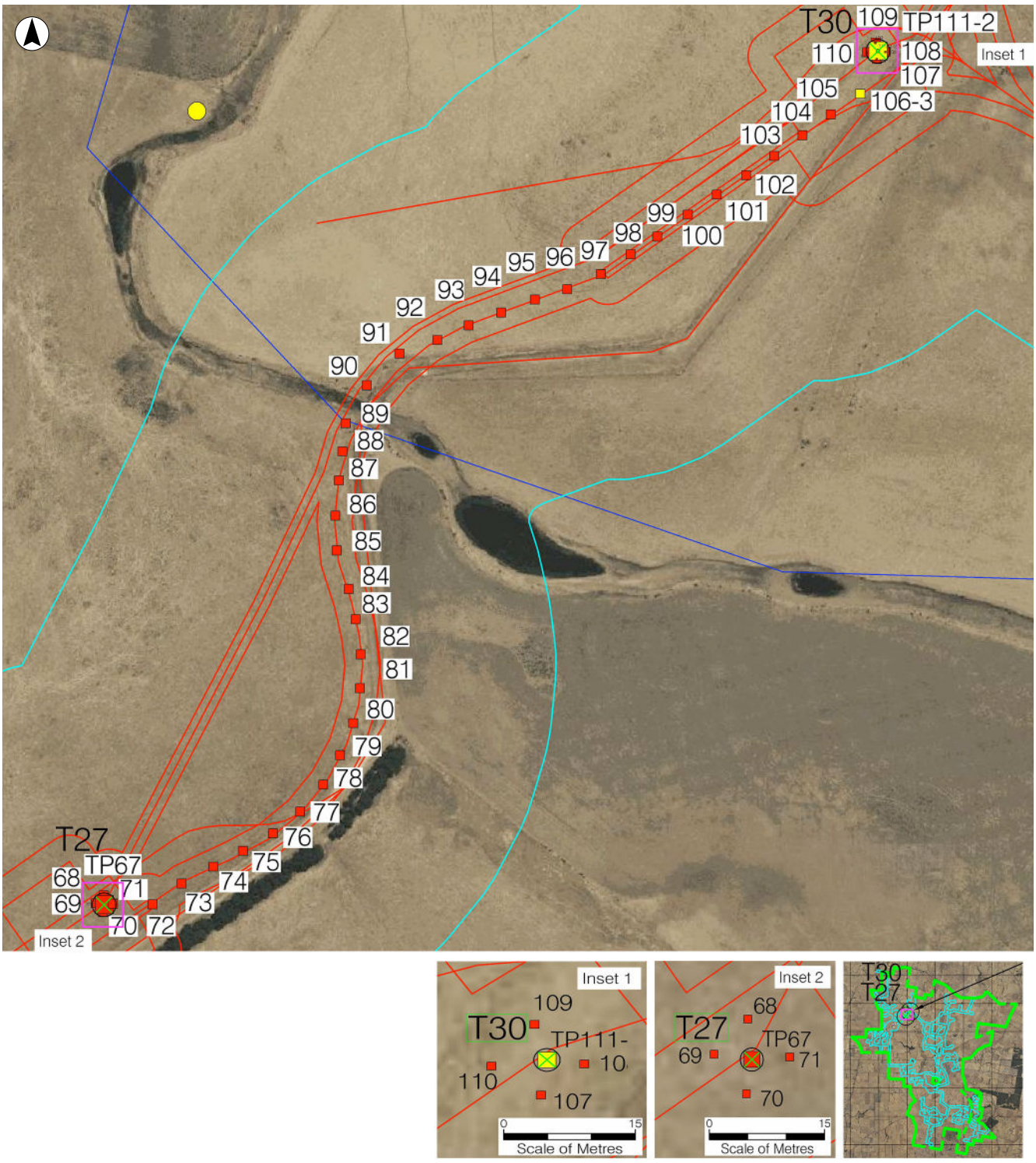


Figure 18.5 Excavations at Turbine T33



Legend

- Activity Area Boundary 16,103 hectares (approx)
- Area of Works (100m buffer)
- Infrastructure
- Rivers
- Turbine
- Possible Mound

x-y Test Pit 1mx1m: With Artefact
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y= number of artefacts

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x= test pit number
y= number of artefacts

xx Test Pit 1mx1m: No Artefact
xx= test pit number

xx Test Pit 50x50cm: No Artefact
xx= test pit number

Note: Test Pit Icons Not To Scale

Scale
0 25 50
Scale of Metres

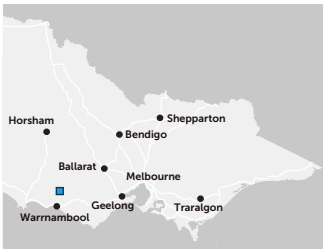


Figure 18.6 Excavations at Turbine T27 and T30

18.6.4 Intangible cultural heritage

The intangible Aboriginal cultural heritage values for the project were identified in consultation with the Eastern Maar Aboriginal Corporation and include the Wedge-tailed eagle, the Southern Bent-wing bat, culturally significant flora, hydrology and ephemeral wetlands. These will be managed through the EES and CHMP process. There are no intangible Aboriginal places registered on the VAHR in the activity area and none are currently in the process of registration. This means there is currently no intangible Aboriginal cultural heritage places to be managed through the CHMP process.

The desktop assessment identified significant Aboriginal cultural heritage within the investigation area. These values are discussed in the subsequent sections (18.7.4, 18.7.5, 18.7.6).

18.7 Existing Conditions

18.7.1 Regional context

The project site is located within the Victorian Volcanic Plain geological region, which is characterised by extensive flats (consisting of swamp and lake deposits), undulating basaltic plains, and stony rises.

18.7.2 Aboriginal context

Pre-contact strategic value for Aboriginal people

Strategic values for Aboriginal people include resources, such as drinking water, flora, fauna and stone sources, routes of movement such as along waterways or ridgelines, and vantage points such as prominent hills. The strategic values in the area likely influenced where Aboriginal groups would have chosen long term campsites, as well as locations for short term activities while travelling, hunting or gathering in the project site region.

Areas of high strategic value have a diverse abundance of vegetation and permanent drinking water sources. In the project site, the areas of high strategic value are along the main waterways and swamps, particularly at the confluence of various creeks and swamps. These areas are therefore more likely to have a high density of archaeological sites.

The plains areas are likely to contain low density stone artefacts that reflect day to day hunting and gathering expeditions rather than artefacts from campsite activities (such as for food preparation and cooking, and working of hide and wood).

Hydrology

The Hopkins River is the major waterway in the area. This river originates near Ararat and flows south, past the eastern boundary of the project site to Warrnambool where it enters Bass Strait. Mustons Creek is major tributary that flows south from Caramut and crosses the project site, then flows east where it joins the Hopkins River. There are several waterways in the project site that are tributaries of Mustons Creek including Station Creek, Tea Tree Creek and Limestone Creek, along with several unnamed drainage lines. In the south of the project site there are several unnamed drainage lines that flow south to join Youla Creek, which then joins Spring Creek to the west of the project site. Spring Creek flows north to south through Minjah and Woolsthorpe and eventually becomes part of the Merri River. Lyall Creek and Drysdale Creek, located in the south-east of the project site, flow in a south-easterly direction to join the Hopkins River south of Ellerslie.

Several large marshes and lakes, including Lake Connewarren and Mirraewuae Marsh (Black Swamp), are not within the project site but are in proximity to the project site. There are numerous low-lying areas on the plain and along waterways, which would have ponded during winter and formed freshwater meadows, marshes and swamps following rain.

Flora

There are several species of flora within the investigation area, especially near waterways, that would have been valued by Aboriginal groups.

The plains would have comprised Plains Grassland (EVC132), which consisted of treeless vegetation dominated by graminoid and herb life forms. There were significant areas of Plains Grassy Woodland (EVC55) closer to major waterways, which consisted of open eucalypt woodland up to 15 metres in height with an understory of sparse shrubs and a species-rich grassy and herbaceous ground layer. The plain is interspersed with Plains Grassy Wetland (EVC125), which is associated with seasonally inundated wetlands and may have included a sparse cover of River Red Gum or Swamp Gum. The characteristic ground cover was dominated by grasses, small sedges and herbs.

The floodplains and margins of the larger rivers, such as the Hopkins River, mainly comprised of a Floodplain Riparian Woodland (EVC56) / Plains Grassy Woodland (EVC55) mosaic or Floodplain Riparian Woodland. Floodplain Riparian Woodland consisted of open eucalypt woodland with a shrub understory and ground layer of herbs and sedges. Riparian Woodland (EVC641) dominated along the watercourse and floodplain of Mustons Creek, found on narrow alluvial deposits and comprised of eucalypt woodland up to 15 metres in height over a tussock grass, sedge and herb ground layer.

Fauna

Plentiful fauna was available to Aboriginal groups throughout the project site, especially on the margins of waterways. The fauna that inhabited the broader investigation area would have included a range of large and small land mammals, reptiles, amphibians, grubs, insects, fish, crayfish, mussels and birds. Kangaroos and wallabies would have been abundant on the plains and margins of waterways.

Stone Sources

Common stone sources in the region include greenstone and chert from the Mount Stavely Volcanics (located over 50 kilometres north of the project site), quartzite from Cambrian and Silurian sediments (over 10 kilometres north of the project site), silcrete from beneath basalt layers and hardened surface crusts (from within the project site), and quartz from hydrothermal veins in Palaeozoic sediments (over 10 kilometres north of the project site).

Routes of Movement

Hopkins River and Mustons Creek would have provided an abundance of drinking water and other resources as Aboriginal groups travelled from one long-term camp site to another across the western plains.

Vantage Points

There are no known strategic volcanic eruption points or hills in the project site that would have provided expansive 360-degree views across the investigation area. As the volcanic plans are relatively flat, substantial rises in the project site would have allowed good views across the local area.

18.7.3 Intangible Aboriginal cultural heritage

Intangible Aboriginal cultural heritage identified in consultation with the Eastern Maar Aboriginal Corporation in relation to the project site includes the Wedge-tailed Eagle and Southern Bent-wing Bat, and culturally significant flora, hydrology and ephemeral wetlands.

A survey of Wedge-tailed Eagle nests was undertaken by ecological consultants Nature Advisory, who identified 10 nests and three potential nests in the investigation area. The number of nests suggest that more than one pair uses the activity area for breeding. Bat surveys identified calls from nine species of bats, two of which are listed threatened bats: the Southern Bent-wing Bat and Yellow-bellied Sheathtail Bat.

Refer to Chapter 8 – ***Biodiversity and habitat,*** Chapter 9 – ***Bats,*** Appendix C2 – ***Bat Assessment*** and Appendix D – ***Biodiversity and habitat*** for further discussion of Wedge-tailed Eagle, bat and flora surveys and findings.

18.7.4 Aboriginal cultural heritage potential

Places where Aboriginal cultural heritage is likely to be found are called 'areas of Aboriginal cultural heritage potential'. These places include previously recorded Aboriginal heritage sites and areas with high cultural heritage value. These areas can be identified through a review of landforms, undisturbed areas and previous investigations relevant to the project site.

Aboriginal place types

Earth features: places where Aboriginal people lived over long periods of time (includes mounds, earth rings and hearths).

Artefact scatters: consist of more than one stone artefact related to activities such as stone tool production, hunting and gathering or domestic places associated with campsites. Isolated scatters refer to a single artefact.

Low density artefact distributions: Aboriginal place type that contains artefacts at concentrations of less than 10 artefacts in a 10 x 10 metre area.

Scarred trees: tree that has a 'scar' resulting from the removal of bark and wood by Aboriginal people for the creation of bark canoes, shelters, shields, etc.

Shell middens: accumulations of shell produced by Aboriginal people collecting, cooking and eating shellfish.

Quarries: sites where Aboriginal people collected stone from rocky outcrops to make stone tools for various purposes.

Stone arrangements: places where Aboriginal people have positioned stones to form shapes or patterns, likely related to ceremonial activities.

Previously recorded sites

There are 325 registered Aboriginal places in the investigation area (refer to Table 18.3). Most place types are mounds, followed by artefact scatters and scarred trees. Other types include Aboriginal ancestral remains, Aboriginal cultural places, hearths, earth deposits and object collections.

114 of the registered Aboriginal places are within the project site, comprising:

- 83 mounds
- 30 artefact scatters
- one soil deposit.

Table 18.3 Registered Aboriginal places within the investigation area

Place Type	Number
Mound	183
Hearth	1
Soil deposit	5
Artefact scatter	85
LDAD	9
Scarred Tree	38
Object collection	4
Aboriginal ancestral remains (burial)	1
Aboriginal cultural place	1
Stone Feature (stone arrangement)	1
Total	**326**

Registered Aboriginal places within the investigation area are shown in Figure 18.7.

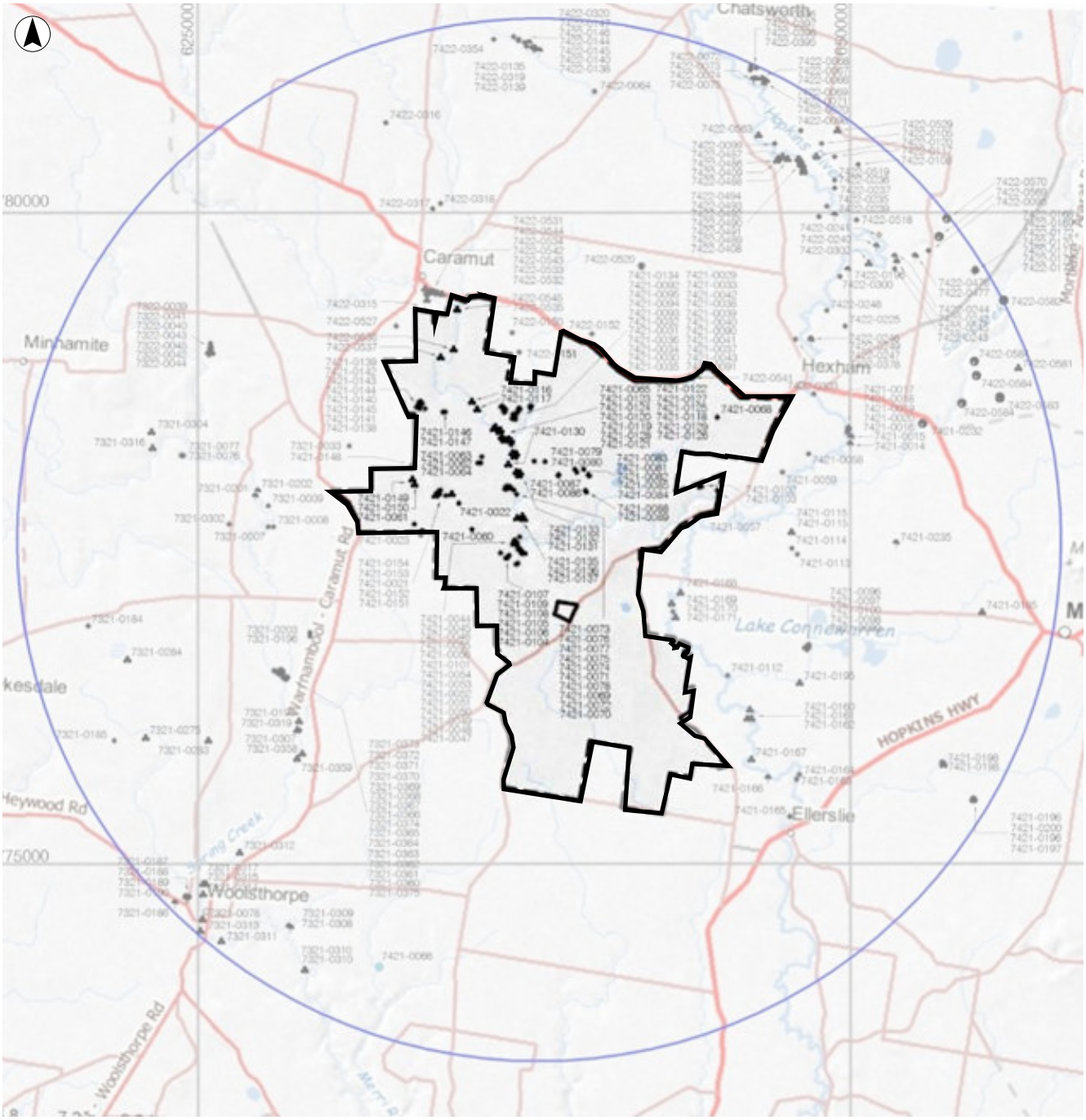


Figure 18.7 Place types within the investigation area

Previous investigations

A review of previous records identified that the Aboriginal archaeological site types most likely to occur within the investigation area are earth features, stone artefact scatters and isolated artefacts. Other site types that may occur are soil deposits, hearths, Aboriginal ancestral remains and cultural places, scarred trees, shell middens, quarries and stone arrangements. Most places were recorded in the 1970s and 1980s, and there has been very little investigation within the project site boundary since then. The most recent investigations are associated with nearby wind farm transmission lines and other power utilities.

Areas of archaeological potential

The previously registered Aboriginal sites were used to identify areas of archaeological potential within the project site. Aboriginal cultural heritage is expected to be concentrated along the margins of the Hopkins River and Mustons Creek, where there is likely to be a higher presence of mounds and artefact scatters. A lower density of mounds and artefact scatters is expected along ephemeral creeks, drainage lines and freshwater meadows, swamps and marshes. In the plains, it is likely that there would be a low density of stone artefacts from occasional toolkit maintenance and repair during hunting and gathering expeditions.

Based on this site prediction model from previously registered Aboriginal sites, the following areas of archaeological potential have been identified:

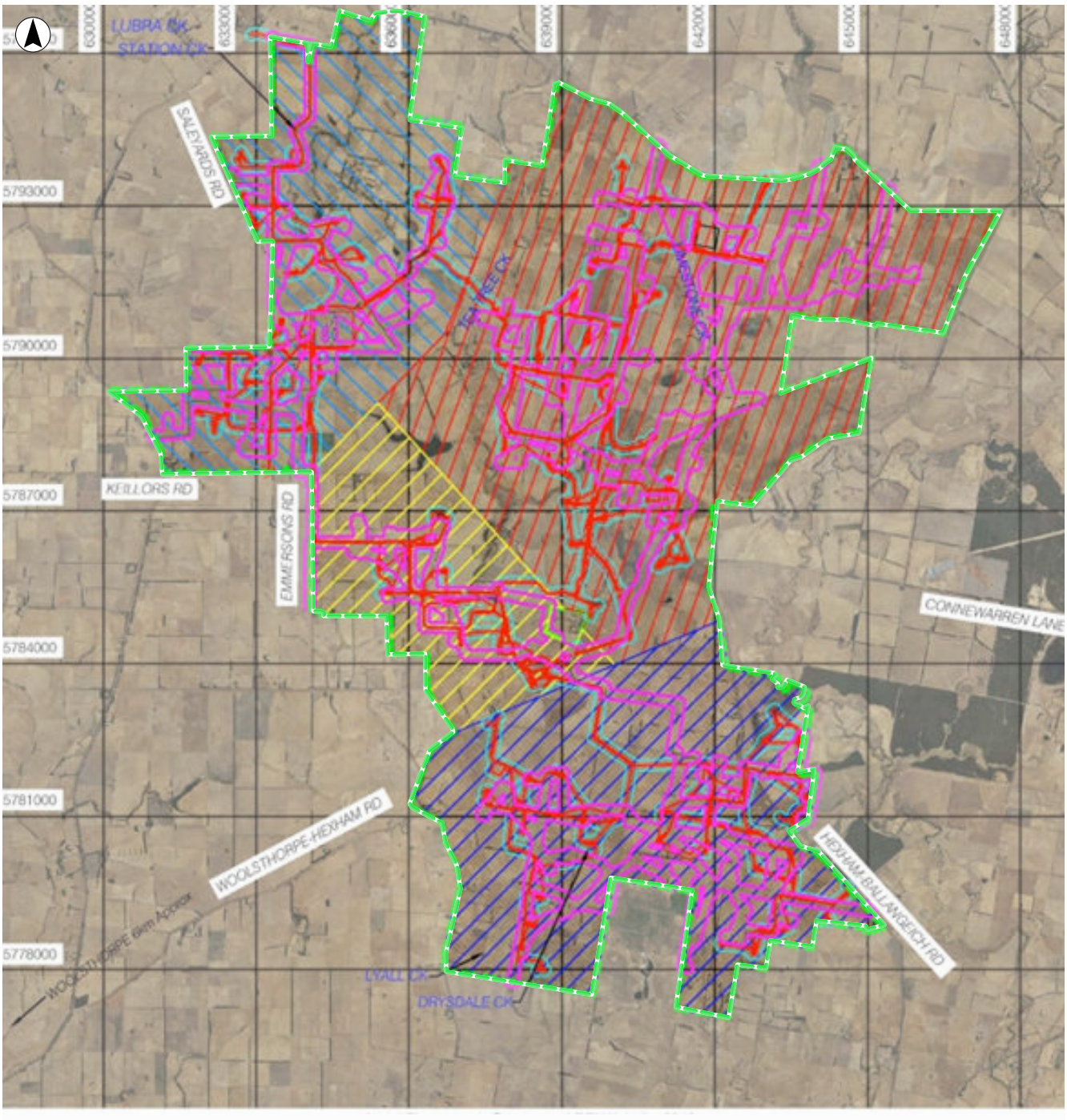
- Mounds: most were identified within 300 metres of waterways, located mostly on low rises and undulations. These are associated with charcoal, burnt stone and clay lumps. No mounds in the investigation area have had ancestral remains. The integrity of mounds may be significantly affected by decades of agricultural ploughing and animal pest management.
- Stone artefact scatters: most were found within 100 metres of waterways, however this result is skewed by the larger number of previous surveys along the margins of waterways rather than on the plains.
- Aboriginal scar trees: may be found on any mature indigenous trees that remain, in particular River Red Gums.

Aboriginal ancestral remains are possible, but considered unlikely, to be found on dunes, lunettes or sand sheets because none have been registered on ARCHIS in the geographic region on these landforms. Furthermore, the project construction and operation disturbance footprint does not traverse these landforms. Project infrastructure is located more than 400 metres from any dune, lunette or sand sheet landforms.

18.7.5 Assessment findings

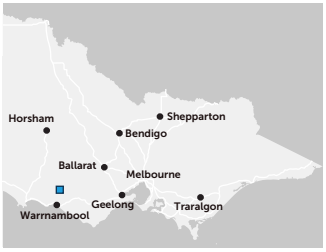
Standard assessment

The standard assessment surveyed four areas across the investigation area, as shown in Figure 18.8.



Legend

- Activity Area - Wind Farm 16,103 hectares (approx)
- 2019 Footprint
- 2025 Infrastructure
- Survey Unit 1
- Survey Unit 2
- Survey Unit 3
- Survey Unit 4



Scale

0 1 2 3

Scale of Kilometres

Data: State of Victoria (DECCA/Land Use Victoria), Commonwealth of Australia, Wind Prospect, and specialist studies/reports. Data is indicative only; accuracy and completeness are not guaranteed.

Figure 18.8 Survey Areas

Survey Area 1 – North-west of Mustons Creek

Survey area 1, assessed as part of Phase 1 standard assessment, comprised the volcanic plain along Mustons Creek in the north-western corner of the activity area. This survey area includes proposed wind farm infrastructure north of Mustons Creek and west of Tea Tree Creek. A previous survey undertaken for a different project had recorded artefact scatters and mounds along the margins of an unnamed drainage line that drains land west of Mustons Creek.

In sections the proposed project access tracks follow the western terrace of Mustons Creek and traverse slightly elevated areas with loose basalt rock. Typically, the elevated areas are low relief with few rocks, and therefore are not considered to be 'stony rises' (i.e., culturally sensitive areas that often contain Aboriginal artefacts).

Most of the ground surface has been ploughed at the mound cluster north and east of Saleyards Road. Limited unploughed areas with loose basalt remain. The registered location of this mound cluster was intensively surveyed but no evidence of the mounds was found.

A total of 41 locations identified by the LiDAR model were inspected as part of the Phase 2 standard assessment, as well as 14 new turbine locations (in the 2025 design), two meteorological mast locations, and the sites designated for one site compound, one concrete batching compound and the on-site quarry proposed for the project. Ground surface visibility ranged from fair to very good and was higher in pastured paddocks due to short vegetation cover maintained by livestock grazing and low rainfall, and also due to recent ploughing and seeding in crop paddocks.

Survey Area 2 – Centre of the Activity Area

The Phase 1 standard assessment of survey area 2 assessed land comprising the volcanic plain to the west and south of Mustons Creek in the central part of the activity area.

There are two unnamed creek lines that drain the plain northwards to Mustons Creek. There are no large or deep former freshwater meadows, marshes or swamps in this survey area and the plain is typically flat.

Ground surface visibility during the survey varied from fair to very good, with areas along formed tracks and in ploughed fields providing excellent ground surface visibility. Surface disturbance is typical of paddock improvement, which has included the removal of loose basalt rocks and ploughing.

The Phase 2 standard assessment survey assessed seven of the features identified in the LiDAR data, as well as four new proposed turbine locations, and the proposed locations for a concrete batching compound, site compound, battery energy storage system and substation. Ground surface visibility varied from poor to excellent, with excellent visibility found along formed tracks and in recently ploughed fields. The fields showed evidence of extensive disturbance as identified in the Phase 1 survey.

Survey Area 3 – South of the Activity Area

The Phase 1 standard assessment of survey area 3 comprised the volcanic plain in the south of the activity area. Hopkins River runs along part of the eastern boundary of the project site, with the closest wind turbine proposed approximately 500 metres to the west. The headwaters of Lyall Creek and Drysdale Creek drain the plain to the south and out of the activity area.

Ground surface visibility was typically poor with occasional patches of good to excellent ground surface visibility in ploughed paddocks and along access tracks.

The Phase 2 survey of this area assessed locations of a proposed concrete batching compound, site compound, 21 wind turbines and two meteorological masts, as well as six features identified in the LiDAR data. Ground surface visibility was generally good to very good, with areas of poor visibility located in the marshes adjacent to the Hopkins River.

Survey Area 4 – Northeast of the Activity Area

The Phase 1 standard assessment of survey area 4 identified that a large proportion of ground surface had been modified, specifically the low-lying land where former freshwater meadows, marshes or swamps have been drained. Paddocks have removed loose basalt rocks and been ploughed for crops including animal fodder. Ground surface visibility was generally poor due to the presence of grass and crops in paddocks. Good to excellent ground surface visibility was encountered where paddocks were recently ploughed or crops were not fully grown.

The Phase 2 survey of this area assessed the proposed locations of 23 wind turbines, one site compound and one meteorological mast, as well as the location of 17 specific features identified in the LiDAR. Ground surface visibility during the Phase 2 survey was considered fair due to below-average rainfall.

Standard Assessment Conclusions

No new items or places of Aboriginal cultural heritage significance were identified in the Phase 1 standard assessment. Ground surface visibility was generally poor across the entire activity area, with patches of excellent visibility in disturbed areas. These areas included recently ploughed paddocks, exposed ground along existing access tracks and areas exposed by stock trampling.

The assessment found that mounds and stone artefact sites were the most likely Aboriginal place type to be present. All mature indigenous trees were inspected for Aboriginal cultural scars, however no cultural scars were identified. There was no evidence of stone features and dunes for Aboriginal burial, freshwater middens, stone quarries or rock art.

The Phase 2 standard assessment did not identify any new Aboriginal cultural heritage items or places. Ground surface visibility was generally very good due to extended periods of drought, ploughing and livestock grazing.

Agricultural activity has transformed the floodplains of Mustons Creek, Station Creek, Tea Tree Creek and Hopkins River, which has likely impacted the integrity and distribution of any potential surface archaeology.

Of the 41 features identified in the LiDAR data, ground-truthing revealed that one location, encompassing two mound features, appeared to satisfy the attributes of a cultural mound. The remaining features identified in the LiDAR data were not likely cultural mounds but instead considered to be natural formations such as stony rises or low-profile basalt exposures, or the result of extensive agricultural earth-moving activities or rock dumps.

The lack of any newly identified surface artefacts in the project site is likely a result of several factors, including the long history of intensive land use and agricultural disturbance, particularly ploughing and irrigation practices. While the potential for subsurface material remains, the consistent churning of the topsoil has effectively blurred the boundaries of any potential archaeological features and dispersed any surface artefacts that may have once been present.

Areas of archaeological potential were identified to comprise of the following:

Previously recorded stone artefact scatters

- Previously recorded cultural mounds
- Terraces and any associated stony rises along Hopkins River, Mustons Creek, Station Creek, Tea Tree Creek, Lyall Creek and Drysdale Creek
- Elevated land, such as ridgelines, stony rises and stony outcrops.

Complex assessment

Five stone artefacts were recovered from TP54 (two artefacts), STP106 (one artefact) and TP111 (two artefacts) in a total area of 2.25 square metres. The three stone artefacts found in STP106 and TP111 were found on the slope of the northern terrace of Mustons Creek. The two stone artefacts found in TP54 were found on the stony outcrop / area of loose basalt rocks at a location identified in the LiDAR investigation as being a likely mound.

Stone artefact densities are very low with an average of 2.22 per square metre. All stone artefacts were recovered from a depth of 10 to 15 centimetres in brown to yellowish brown silty clay.

Two of the stone artefacts are silcrete and three are quartz. Four of the artefacts are primarily flakes and one is a blade. No formal tools were identified.

Mounds

To validate the results of the LiDAR investigation, excavations were conducted at several locations where the possible mounds were identified near the project site (refer to Section 18.5.4).

No evidence for mounds was identified. Although a stone artefact was recovered from TP54, it was associated with a generic stone outcrop or loose basalt with no evidence to suggest a cultural mound at that location.

18.7.6 Standard and complex assessment conclusions

Based on the findings of the standard and complex assessments, it is unlikely that high density stone artefact sites will be impacted by the project, however potential impacts to low density stone artefact sites may occur. These stone artefact sites are considered to have low archaeological significance.

No mounds were found during the standard and complex assessments, and it is considered highly unlikely that relatively undisturbed and intact mounds are present within the project site. Should mounds be encountered during the construction of the project, they will likely be highly degraded due to ploughing from historic land use. These mounds are considered to have low archaeological significance.

No scar trees, human burials or remains, shell middens, quarries, stone arrangements, rock art, grinding grooves or any other site type were identified.

18.8 Impact assessment

18.8.1 Impact pathways

The primary impact pathway for Aboriginal cultural heritage relates to uncovering or damaging known or unknown Aboriginal places and heritage values during project construction, operation and decommissioning.

Pre-construction

During the pre-construction stage, there is potential that tangible Aboriginal cultural heritage is harmed by field assessments and activities that involve ground disturbance, such as geotechnical investigations using boring or trenching.

Any excavation may harm surface and subsurface stone artefacts and mound sites, and the risk is elevated if excavation occurs in areas identified in the CHMP assessment as having a moderate to high archaeological potential or within 50 metres of previously registered Aboriginal places. If Aboriginal cultural heritage is likely to be present within any area that may be harmed by pre-construction activities, these activities cannot be undertaken without prior authorisation under the *Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006*.

There are no known activities in the pre-construction activities phase that are considered likely to harm intangible Aboriginal cultural heritage values.

Construction

There is potential that earthworks during construction will harm tangible Aboriginal places and intangible Aboriginal heritage values.

The impact on tangible Aboriginal cultural heritage will be managed in accordance with the conditions of the approved CHMP. These conditions will prescribe how harm to registered Aboriginal places must be avoided, or where harm is unable to be avoided, how harm can be minimised or managed (e.g., salvage requirements). The approved CHMP will also include conditions requiring all relevant personnel to have completed a cultural heritage induction. Earthworks may also impact unknown or unregistered Aboriginal places, for example, previously unrecorded subsurface stone artefacts. The approved CHMP will include a Contingency Plan to manage the discovery of Aboriginal cultural heritage during construction.

Intangible Aboriginal cultural heritage will be managed in consultation with the Eastern Maar Aboriginal Corporation (see Section 18.8.3). There are no known activities in the construction phase that are considered likely to harm intangible Aboriginal cultural heritage values.

Operation

The operation of the project is unlikely to require works that would impact registered or unidentified tangible Aboriginal places. The intangible Aboriginal cultural heritage values will be managed in consultation with the Eastern Maar Aboriginal Corporation.

Decommissioning

There is potential that decommissioning works will harm tangible Aboriginal places and intangible Aboriginal heritage values during the removal of above ground equipment, restoration of areas associated with the project and revegetation.

The decommissioning phase of the project is unlikely to involve works that will require disturbing ground in areas previously undisturbed by the construction, and operation and maintenance phases of the project. As such, decommissioning works are unlikely to impact registered or unidentified tangible Aboriginal places. The intangible Aboriginal cultural heritage values will be managed in consultation with the Eastern Maar Aboriginal Corporation.

18.8.2 Cumulative impacts

The cumulative impact of potential harm to Aboriginal places in the project site considers the estimated impacts on Aboriginal places in the broader investigation area as well as the impact of the project on Aboriginal places within the project site.

In the investigation area, CHMPs are predominately associated with utilities including power stations, wind farms and transmission lines, and most Aboriginal places in the investigation area have not been impacted by project development. The cumulative impact associated with the project is expected to be low. Further detail on the potential for cumulative impacts to Aboriginal cultural heritage is presented in Chapter 26 – ***Cumulative effects.***

18.8.3 Design mitigation

Avoidance by design has been the primary means to limit impacts to Aboriginal cultural heritage places. The construction disturbance area and operational footprint avoids registered Aboriginal places and minimises encroachment on legislated areas of Aboriginal cultural heritage sensitivity.

Impacts to identified Aboriginal places, including previously registered mound sites and possible mound sites identified in the LiDAR investigation, have been avoided through design modifications including micro-siting of turbines, cabling, tracks and other associated infrastructure. All recorded Aboriginal heritage places that were identified were included within the project constraints mapping and actively avoided through implementation of appropriate buffers.

Consultation has occurred with Eastern Maar Aboriginal Corporation during the project design process in relation to intangible Aboriginal cultural heritage values in the activity area. To avoid impacts to these intangible values, the following design measures have been applied:

Wedge-tailed Eagle

Design mitigation measures implemented to avoid or minimise impacts to Wedge-tailed Eagle are:

- Applying a 500-metre buffer from wind turbine blade tips, overhead powerline infrastructure and project-related buildings around identified nest sites
- Protecting existing nests to limit encroachments of young or neighbouring pairs more susceptible to collision strikes.

Southern Bent-wing Bat

Design mitigation measures implemented to avoid or minimise impacts to the Southern Bent-wing Bat are:

- Designing wind turbine blades to be at least 40 metres above the ground. Preliminary analysis by Nature Advisory of existing monitoring data from post-commissioning monitoring conducted at operational wind farms to investigate the influence of turbine model specifications on mortality rates for Australian bat species identified a trend of decreasing mortality rate with an increase of the minimum Rotor Swept Area height above 40 metres above ground level.
- Micro-siting of wind turbines to avoid high-quality habitat within 269 metres of a proposed wind turbine (i.e., the distance from the edge of the Rotor Swept Area to the edge of the nearest habitat feature, in this case presumed to be a 30-metre tall tree).

Native vegetation and hydrology

Design mitigation measures implemented to avoid or minimise impacts to native vegetation and hydrology include:

- Applying a 100-metre buffer around all DEECA-mapped wetlands to exclude wind turbine infrastructure
- Applying a 100-metre buffer around watercourses including Mustons Creek, Drysdale Creek and smaller drainages
- Applying a 30-metre buffer to ephemeral drainage lines
- Minimising watercourse crossings through the siting of the accessways
- Micro-siting of infrastructure to avoid most of the mapped native vegetation, Grassy Eucalypt Woodland of the Victorian Volcanic Plain and Natural Temperate Grassland of the Victorian Volcanic Plain within the construction disturbance area.

18.8.4 Environmental management measures

Management measures are proposed to further manage potential impacts to Aboriginal cultural heritage during project construction, operation and decommissioning, as far as is practicable. These measures are outlined in Table 18.4.

Table 18.4 Aboriginal cultural heritage management measures

Aboriginal cultural heritage impact	Project phase	Management measures	Number
Potential for the project to cause damage to identified Aboriginal cultural heritage	Construction	**Cultural heritage site induction*** 1. Prior to the commencement of construction, key personnel will undergo a cultural heritage induction to ensure they are aware of the boundaries of known Aboriginal heritage sites to avoid impacts. 2. The induction process will occur within a month of an employee beginning work on the project. All on-site personnel, including contractors, would be made aware of fenced and protected areas.	AH01
		Wedge-tailed Eagle 1. During construction, the following measures will be implemented to manage impacts to Wedge-tailed Eagle (*Neophema chrysostoma*): a. monitoring surveys of known and incidentally recorded nests will be undertaken prior to and early during the breeding season to determine whether nests are active b. where possible, construction activities will be modified to reduce or avoid disturbance within 500 m of active nests until any chicks have fledged.	BH05
		Construction Environmental Management Plan – Compliance with the Cultural Heritage Management Plan 1. The Construction Environmental Management Plan (EMM01) will include the following measure to ensure compliance with the approved CHMP: a. A review of the Cultural Heritage Management Plan (CHMP) compliance checklist will be documented every two months and signed off by the relevant site manager and be available to any Authorised Officer or Aboriginal Heritage Officer as authorised under section 165A and section 181(1)(b) of the *Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006*, or any other representative of Eastern Maar Aboriginal Corporation or First Peoples – State Relations.	AH02
	Pre-construction Construction Operation	**Intangible values** 1. Develop a process with Eastern Maar Aboriginal Corporation that enables participation of "on Country Guardians" in the monitoring of impacts to Biocultural values such as Wedge-tailed Eagles and Southern Bent-wind Bat. 2. On Country Guardians will be responsible for ongoing monitoring of the impact of the project on intangible Aboriginal cultural heritage values.	AH03

Aboriginal cultural heritage impact	Project phase	Management measures	Number

	Operation	**Bat and Avifauna Management Plan**
		
		1. A Bat and Avifauna Management Plan has been prepared for the project in accordance with the following guidelines and will be implemented prior to the commencement of operation to minimise impacts to bat and avifauna species:
		   a. Onshore Wind Farm Guidance – interim guidance on bird and bat management (Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment, 2022)
		   b. Onshore Wind Farm Guidance: Best practice approaches when seeking approval under Australia's national environment law (Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water, 2024a).
		2. The Bat and Avifauna Management Plan outlines monitoring protocols and responsibilities, impact triggers for listed and non-listed bird and bat species, and operational procedures following occurrence of impact triggers including reporting requirements. Adaptive management measures to reduce impacts will be considered as part of the Bat and Avifauna Management Plan.
		3. The Bat and Avifauna Management Plan include species-specific management strategies for the following species of concern to focus management efforts and improve mitigation effectiveness in response to impact triggers:
		   a. Blue-winged Parrot (*Neophema chrysostoma*)
		   b. White-throated Needletail **(***Hirundapus caudacutus***)**
		   c. Fork-tailed Swift **(***Apus pacificus***)**
		   d. Brolga **(***Grus rubicunda***)**
		   e. Black Falcon **(***Falco subniger*)
		   f. Wedge-tailed Eagle (*Aquila audax*)
		   g. Grey-headed Flying-fox (*Pteropus poliocephalus*)
		   h. Southern Bent-wing Bat (*Miniopterus orianae bassanii*)
		   i. Yellow-bellied Sheath-tailed Bat (*Saccolaimus flaviventris*)
		4. The Bat and Avifauna Management Plan outlines committed financial compensatory measures that would be implemented in response to a significant impact (above the relevant defined impact threshold) to species listed under the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* during project operation.
		5. Key measures of Bat and Avifauna Management Plan are outlined in EMM BA01-1 through BA01-7.
		6. The Bat and Avifauna Management Plan will be a sub-plan to the Operations Environmental Management Plan (EMM09).
			BA01

Aboriginal cultural heritage impact	Project phase	Management measures	Number
Potential for the project to cause damage to unidentified Aboriginal cultural heritage	Pre-construction	**Layout and design modification** 1. Should the continuing assessment for CHMP 19602 identify new Aboriginal places, the wind farm layout will be modified to avoid harm to these Aboriginal places. 2. If critical infrastructure is unable to be moved, CHMP Conditions will be formulated in consultation with the Eastern Maar Aboriginal Corporation to minimise or manage harm.	AH04
	Construction Operation	**Discovery of unknown Aboriginal cultural heritage*** 1. All activities that may harm the discovery of new heritage will cease and a Heritage Advisor will be engaged to assess the discovered heritage. 2. If any suspected human remains are found, works will cease, and the Victoria Police and the State Coroner's Office will be notified immediately. If there are reasonable grounds to believe the remains are Aboriginal, the Coronial Admissions and Enquiries hotline must be contacted immediately.	AH05
		Contingency plans (unexpected finds) – Aboriginal cultural heritage places* 1. In accordance with Clause 13(1) Schedule 2 of the Aboriginal Heritage Regulations 2018, the project CHMP (no. 19602) contains contingency plans for: a. unexpected finds of Aboriginal cultural heritage during project construction, operation and decommission b. disputes, delays and other obstacles that may affect the project c. the notification and reporting procedure for the discovery of Aboriginal cultural heritage and the management of finds d. reviewing compliance with the CHMP.	AH06
		Contingency plans – Intangible Aboriginal cultural heritage 1. In the unexpected event that intangible Aboriginal cultural heritage is harmed, the following management measures will be undertaken: a. an incident report will be prepared. b. consultation with Eastern Maar Aboriginal Corporation, including formulating measures to minimise the event happening in the future.	AH07

* Measure will be included within the approved CHMP

18.8.5 Residual impacts

The Aboriginal cultural heritage assessment identified Aboriginal places within the project site. With the implementation of design mitigation measures and management controls, harm to these identified Aboriginal places will be avoided, and no harm minimisation measures are required. If critical infrastructure is unable to be moved, CHMP conditions will bes formulated in consultation with the Eastern Maar Aboriginal Corporation to minimise or manage harm.

The operation of the project is unlikely to require works that will impact registered or unidentified Aboriginal places. Decommissioning works are also unlikely to involve works that will require ground disturbance in areas that were previously undisturbed by the construction and operation phases of the project, and therefore unlikely to impact Aboriginal cultural heritage. No additional management measures are required for the decommissioning phase.

The residual impacts on identified Aboriginal cultural heritage associated with the construction, operation and decommissioning of the project is assessed as negligible.

While there is potential that ground disturbance activities may encounter currently unidentified Aboriginal cultural heritage places, the likelihood that these places exist in locations where the project infrastructure is planned was assessed to be low. With management measures, including implementing an unexpected finds procedure, the impact of the project on unknown Aboriginal cultural heritage places was assessed as low.

18.8.6 Impact assessment summary

Following the development of design measures to avoid Aboriginal cultural heritage and with the implementation of proposed management controls, the residual effects and impacts from the construction, operation and eventual decommissioning of the project are assessed as negligible. A summary of the Aboriginal cultural heritage impact assessment is shown in Table 18.5, with the full assessment presented in Appendix J – ***Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Impact Assessment***.

Table 18.5 Aboriginal cultural heritage impact assessment summary

Aboriginal cultural heritage impact	Project phase	Management measures	Likely impact (magnitude, extent and duration)	Impact rating and justification
Potential for the project to cause damage to identified Aboriginal cultural heritage	Construction	Cultural heritage site induction [EMM AH01] Wedge-tailed Eagle nest monitoring [EMM BH05] Review of the CHMP compliance [EMM AH02] "On Country Guardians" [EMM AH03] Pest management will also be undertaken as described in Chapter 8 – ***Biodiversity and habitat*** [EMM BH01].	Very low potential for direct impact by construction activities.	**Negligible** Heritage values have been mitigated by design measures and management controls Impacts will be in compliance with the CHMP.
	Operation	Bat Avifauna Management Plan, including blade feathering requirements, mortality monitoring and post-commissioning acoustic bat surveys [EMM BA01].	Very low potential for direct impact by operation and maintenance activities.	**Negligible** Operation activities are unlikely to directly harm Aboriginal cultural heritage.
	Decommissioning	No relevant management measures.	No impact.	**Negligible** Decommissioning activities are considered unlikely to directly harm Aboriginal cultural heritage.
Potential for the project to cause damage to unidentified Aboriginal cultural heritage	Construction and operation	Protocol for discovery of unknown Aboriginal cultural heritage [EMM AH05] Contingency plans (unexpected finds) for Aboriginal cultural heritage places [EMM AH06] Contingency plans for Intangible Aboriginal cultural heritage [EMM AH07].	Very low potential for direct impact by operation and maintenance activities.	**Low** Impacts will be in compliance with the CHMP. Operation activities are unlikely to directly harm unidentified Aboriginal cultural heritage.
	Decommissioning	No relevant management measures.	No impact.	**Low** Decommissioning activities are considered unlikely to directly harm unidentified Aboriginal cultural heritage.

18.9 Conclusions

The primary impact pathway for Aboriginal cultural heritage relates to uncovering or damaging identified or unidentified Aboriginal cultural heritage during project construction, operation and decommissioning.

Through the implementation of design mitigations and management controls, the project avoids areas of known Aboriginal cultural heritage places and areas likely to contain Aboriginal cultural heritage. The likelihood of impacts to these identified places during project construction, operation and decommissioning is considered low.

Five stone artefacts were found within the investigation area during the Aboriginal cultural heritage field assessments. Based on the site types identified within the project site, should project works encounter cultural heritage, the impacted sites would likely be stone artefact sites with low numbers and densities of stone artefacts. These stone artefact sites are considered to have low archaeological significance. It is considered unlikely that large, high density stone artefact sites will be impacted by the project.

The results of the assessment indicate that mounds are unlikely to be impacted by the project, and that relatively undisturbed and intact mounds are unlikely to be present within the project site. Should mounds be encountered, they are likely to be degraded as a result of agricultural activity and would have low archaeological significance. No other site types were found in the activity area or are considered likely to be present.

In addition to the tangible stone artefacts found, the project site contains significant Aboriginal intangible cultural heritage values including the Wedge-tailed Eagle, and Southern Bent-wing bat, and culturally significant flora, hydrology and ephemeral wetlands. These values can be effectively managed with the implementation of design mitigation and additional management measures in consultation with the Eastern Maar Aboriginal Corporation.