

GOLDEN PLAINS PLANNING SCHEME

AMENDMENT C100gpla

EXPLANATORY REPORT

Who is the planning authority?

This amendment has been prepared by the Minister for Planning, who is the planning authority for this amendment.

The amendment has been prepared at the request of Golden Plains Wind Farm Management Pty Ltd.

Land affected by the amendment

The amendment applies to approximately 16,739-hectares of land located to the west, south and south-east of Rokewood, as indicated in Figure 1 below and as described in Appendix 1 in the incorporated document titled 'Golden Plains Wind Farm Incorporated Document (May 2022)'.

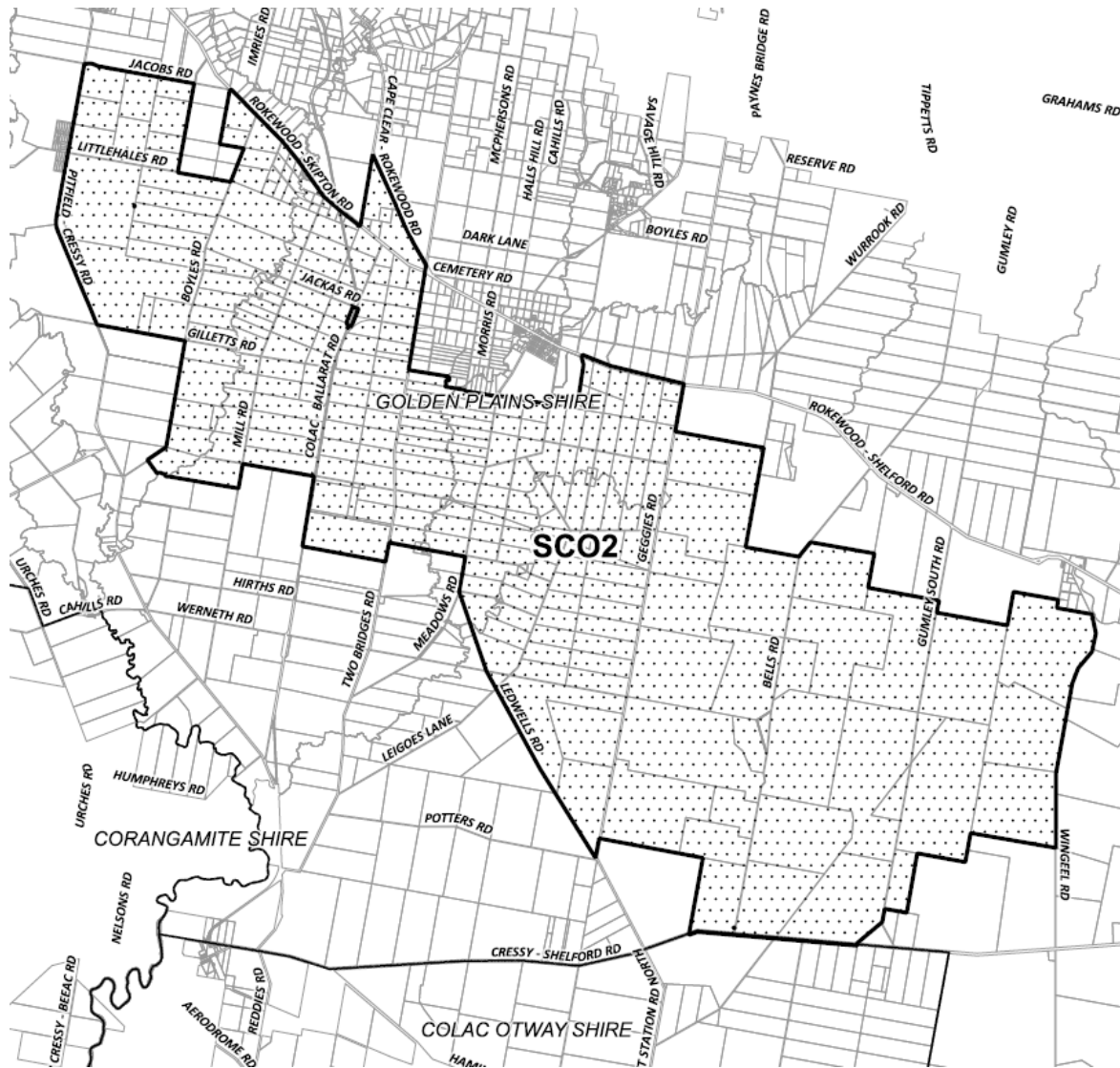


Figure 1 Project area

What the amendment does

The amendment applies the Specific Controls Overlay – Schedule 2 (SCO2) to the land identified in Figure 1 and inserts a new incorporated document titled ‘Golden Plains Wind Farm Incorporated Document (May 2022)’ (the Incorporated Document) into the Golden Plains Planning Scheme. The Incorporated Document facilitates the timely use and development of the Golden Plains Wind Farm in the form determined to be appropriate under Amended Planning Permit PA1700266-3.

Specifically, the amendment makes the following changes to the Golden Plains Planning Scheme:

- Introduces Planning Scheme Map 13SCO, 15SCO, 16SCO, 22SCO and 23SCO and applies SCO2 to the land.
- Amends the Schedule to Clause 45.12 (Specific Controls Overlay) and Schedule to Clause 72.04 (Documents Incorporated in this Planning Scheme) to include the ‘Golden Plains Wind Farm Incorporated Document (May 2022)’.
- Amends the Schedule to Clause 72.03 (What does this Scheme Consist of?) to introduce Planning Scheme Map 13SCO, 15SCO, 16SCO, 22SCO and 23SCO.

Strategic assessment of the amendment

Why is the amendment required?

Amendment C100gpla applies the SCO2 to the land to facilitate the use and development of the Golden Plains Wind Farm and associated permissions, including the removal of native vegetation, in the form determined appropriate under Amended Planning Permit PA1700266-3.

In 2018, Planning Permit PA1700266 was issued by the Minister for Planning for the Golden Plains Wind Farm following a combined Environment Effects Statement (EES) Inquiry and planning panel hearing. In 2021, the merits of the wind farm were further considered in an application to amend the planning permit and Amended Planning Permit (PA1700266-3) was issued in November 2021.

The project has been subject to previous unsuccessful legal challenges and the Amended Planning Permit (PA1700266-3) is now the subject of further legal challenge. This latest legal challenge will further delay the project and this amendment is required to allow this significant renewable energy project to progress.

The amendment will significantly contribute to the Victorian Government’s renewable energy transition and help meet the targets set within the *Renewable Energy (Jobs and Investment) Amendment Bill 2019* and will:

- Contribute to a reliable and affordable National Energy Market (NEM) as the generation mix transitions towards renewable energy;
- Support the Victorian Renewable Energy Target (VRET), which establishes renewable energy generation targets of 25% by 2020 and 40% by 2025;
- Support initiatives within the Victorian Climate Change Act 2017 to help achieve a long-term emissions reduction target of net zero by 2050 and
- Assist the Commonwealth Government’s commitment to achieve its 2030 Climate Change Target, to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 26% to 28% of 2005 levels by 2030.

How does the amendment implement the objectives of planning in Victoria?

The amendment implements the objectives of planning in Victoria as set out in Section 4 of the *Planning and Environment Act 1987* (P&E Act). The following objectives are particularly relevant to the amendment:

- *Section 4(1)(a), (b), (e), (f) and (g); and*
- *Section 4(2)(c), (d), (e), (g), (h), (i), and (j) of the P&E Act*

The amendment will provide for the fair, orderly, economic and sustainable use and development of the land by facilitating the use and development of the Golden Plains Wind Farm in an expedient manner ensuring that the benefits of the project are realised in the short term.

The project will contribute to the Victorian Government's renewable energy transition and contribute to the state achieving its net zero emissions target for 2050, whilst also providing the economic benefits of jobs both in the construction and operation of the facility.

The amendment will enable approvals of the facility to be coordinated by the Minister for Planning.

How does the amendment address any environmental, social and economic effects?

The amendment addresses environmental, social and economic effects and will have a net community benefit for Victoria

Environmental and Social Effects

By facilitating the Golden Plains Wind Farm the amendment will make a significant contribution toward achieving government emissions reduction targets and renewable energy targets. The Golden Plains Wind Farm will fulfil a vital role in transitioning the Victorian economy toward net zero emissions, whilst securing a renewable, affordable and reliable energy system by:

- Producing enough electricity to power approximately 750,000 homes (on completion).
- Having an installed capacity of over 1100-1200MW.
- Having an Annual Energy Production (AEP) of 4,000 GWh per annum which equates to:
 - approximately 9% of Victoria's total electricity demand; or
 - approximately 1/3 of Victoria's 2025 renewable energy target of 25% of electricity from renewable sources; or
 - approximately 1/5 of Victoria's 2040 renewable energy target of 40% electricity from renewable sources.
- Abating more than 4.2 million tonnes of carbon dioxide per annum.

The amendment will also have a positive social impact on the local community by providing local jobs both during the construction and operation of the facility.

Economic Effects

The amendment will provide rapid and urgently needed economic and social benefits to Victoria via investment and increased job opportunities by:

- Providing significant economic investment into the Victorian economy - circa \$2 billion.
- Increasing demand for local goods, accommodation and materials during the construction phase which will contribute to the local economy.
- Contributing to economic development and generation of employment in the region by creating approximately 750 jobs during construction and 40 jobs during operation.

Does the amendment address relevant bushfire risk?

The amendment facilitates the Golden Plains Wind Farm which was subject to the preparation of an EES which assessed the relevant bushfire risk.

The subject land is not within the Bushfire Management Overlay (BMO) however, is designated as Bushfire Prone Areas under the Building Regulations 2018.

The conditions of Amended Planning Permit PA1700266-3 approving the Golden Plains Wind Farm require the preparation of an Emergency Response Plan. These conditions will be replicated within the Incorporated Document.

Does the amendment comply with the requirements of any Minister’s Direction applicable to the amendment?

The amendment is consistent with the Ministerial Direction Form and Content of Planning Schemes under section 7(5) of the Act and has been considered against Ministerial Direction No. 11 – Strategic Assessment of Amendments.

Ministerial Direction No. 19 on the Preparation and Content of Amendments that may Significantly Impact the Environment, Amenity and Human Health under sections 12(2)(a) and 12(1)(f) of the P&E Act. Ministerial Direction 19 relates to amendments that may allow the use or development of land that could result in water, noise, air or land pollution impacts on the environment, amenity or human health. The views of public authorities, including the Environmental Protection Authority (EPA), have been sought in relation to the GPWF. The planning panel report for the Planning Permit records that the EPA had no objection to the EES or planning permit application as proposed. The EPA did not provide a written submission in response to the Permit Amendment Application (PA1700266-3) in 2021. Based on previous consultation with the EPA, the Minister has granted an exemption for the amendment from the need to comply with Ministerial Direction No. 19 under Clause 4 of the Direction, and further written advice from the EPA is not required.

How does the amendment support or implement the Planning Policy Framework and any adopted State policy?

The amendment supports and implements the Planning Policy Framework as follows:

Biodiversity

Clause 12.01-1S (Protection of Biodiversity) supports protection and conservation of Victoria’s biodiversity. The potential impacts of the Golden Plains Wind Farm on biodiversity have been the subject of impact assessment and consideration via the EES Inquiry and approval under the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999 (Cth)*. The amendment supports the protection and conservation of Victoria’s biodiversity by facilitating the development of renewable energy which will reduce the effects of climate change on biodiversity. The amendment further supports the protection and conservation on Victoria’s biodiversity via conditions in the Incorporated Document to manage potential impacts.

Waterways and wetlands

Clause 12.03-1S (River corridors, waterways, lakes and wetlands) seeks to protect and enhance river corridors, waterways, lakes and wetlands. The amendment supports this through the conditions of the Incorporated Document including conditions from the Corangamite Catchment Management Authority to protect waterways and manage potential impacts.

Energy, energy supply, renewable energy

Clause 15.02-1S (Energy and resource efficiency) encourages land use and development that is energy and resource efficient, supports a cooler environment and minimises greenhouse gas emissions. The amendment supports achievement of this policy by providing for use and development of the GPWF which will abate more than 4.2-million tonnes of carbon dioxide per annum.

Clause 19.01-1S (Energy supply) seeks to facilitate appropriate development of energy supply infrastructure. The amendment will facilitate the development of the GPWF which will support Victoria’s transition to a low-carbon economy with renewable energy and greenhouse gas reductions

Clause 19.01-2s (Renewable energy) promotes the provision of renewable energy in a manner that ensures appropriate siting and design considerations are met and seeks to facilitate renewable energy development in appropriate locations. The amendment supports achievement of this policy because it facilitates timely use and development of the GPWF in the form determined to be appropriate under the Amended Planning Permit (PA1700266-3).

Economic development

Clauses 17 and 17.01-1S (Diversified economy) seek to strengthen the economy and identify planning's role in providing strong and innovative economies, contributing to the economic wellbeing of the state and facilitating decisions. This includes encouraging sustainability as a key consideration in economic development and employment creation. The GPWF will generate enough electricity to meet approximately 9 per cent of Victoria's total electricity demand; whilst creating approximately 750 jobs during construction and 40 jobs during operation.

Wind Energy Facility

Clause 52.32 Wind Energy Facility applies to land to be used and developed for a wind energy facility. The GPWF has been the subject of assessment against the provisions of this clause and of the Policy and Planning Guidelines for Development of Wind Energy Facilities in Victoria (November 2021). The amendment supports achievement of the policy outcome required by Clause 52.32 and the Guidelines because it facilitates timely use and development of the GPWF in the form determined to be appropriate under the Amended Planning Permit (PA1700266-3).

How does the amendment support or implement the Local Planning Policy Framework, and specifically the Municipal Strategic Statement?

The amendment is consistent with the Planning Policy Framework and the Municipal Strategic Statement of the Golden Plains Planning Scheme as outlined within this document.

Does the amendment make proper use of the Victoria Planning Provisions?

The amendment makes proper use of the Victoria Planning Provisions by applying the SCO2 and accompanying Incorporated Document to the site. The purpose of Clause 45.12 is to apply specific controls to achieve a particular use and development. Amending the planning scheme to apply the SCO2 and Incorporated Document is the most appropriate method of expediting the planning process and securing the economic, social and environmental benefits offered by the development.

How does the amendment address the views of any relevant agency?

The views of public agencies were obtained through the planning permit application process which included a combined EES Inquiry and planning panel in 2018. In 2021, further consultation was undertaken on the Permit Amendment Application in particular with Golden Plains Shire Council, Corangamite Catchment Management Authority, Department of Transport, DELWP Environment Portfolio and AusNet Transmission Group. The views of relevant agencies are reflected in the conditions of the Amended Planning Permit (PA1700266-3). The amendment addresses the views of relevant agencies by retaining these as conditions of the Incorporated Document.

Does the amendment address relevant requirements of the Transport Integration Act 2010?

The amendment is not likely to have a 'significant impact on the transport system' for the purposes of the Transport Integration Act 2010. The amendment addresses transport matters appropriately through replicating the conditions of the Amended Planning Permit (PA1700266-3) in the Incorporated Document.

Resource and administrative costs

- **What impact will the new planning provisions have on the resource and administrative costs of the responsible authority?**

The amendment provides new planning controls in the Golden Plains Planning Scheme to guide the use and development of the site for the Golden Plains Wind Farm. The amendment identifies the Minister for Planning as the responsible authority for the approvals (endorsement of incorporated plans)

required under the conditions of the Incorporated Document. Therefore, it is not anticipated the amendment will have a significant administrative impact on the Golden Plains Shire Council, as streamlined planning controls for the site will be introduced.

Where you may inspect this amendment

The amendment can be inspected free of charge at the Golden Plains Shire Council website at <https://www.goldenplains.vic.gov.au>; or

The amendment is available for public inspection, free of charge, during office hours at the following places:

2 Pope Street, Bannockburn VIC 3331

The amendment can also be inspected free of charge at the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning website at www.planning.vic.gov.au/public-inspection or by contacting 1800 789 386 to arrange a time to view the amendment documentation.