

9 September 2022

Australian Energy Market Operator
VNI West RIT-T Project

By email: vniwestritt@aemo.com.au

Dear Project Team,

Submission on the VNI West PADR

Thank you for the opportunity to submit our comments on the Victoria to New South Wales Interconnector West Project Assessment Draft Report.

Pacific Hydro would like to congratulate AEMO Victorian Planning (AVP) and TransGrid on the progress of VNI-West project and commend the efforts to bring the project ahead.

We would like to warmly welcome this project as the strategic and critical infrastructure investment needed to reduce congestion and improve interconnection and energy transfers between Victoria and New South Wales. More so with the future projection of retiring coal fired plants and shift of generation connection in the network, this project will allow well targeted and timely investment of generators to aim for areas of strong renewable resource in and around this project permitting further benefits to economy and local communities.

Pacific Hydro Australia (“PHA”), founded in 1992, was one of the pioneers of renewable energy development in the country and proudly still has 100% renewable green generation assets. PHA operates a high quality, diversified portfolio of wind, solar and hydro renewable assets in Australia, and a significant pipeline of firm capacity and renewable projects under development. Furthermore, PHA also operates a growing electricity and gas retail business, Tango Energy, with over 150,000 customers. Over half of PHA’s headcount is dedicated to renewable energy, with the balance forming part of PHA’s retail arm, Tango Energy.

PHA has over 30 years of project development experience in Australia, including, but not limited to:

- **Operational assets** - development and construction of 17 hydro, wind and solar projects totalling 665 MW of installed capacity which are now operational assets in PHA’s portfolio (Figure 1); and
- **Pipeline projects** - More than ten solar, wind, battery storage and pumped hydro projects with a total capacity of over 1GW currently being progressed in our development pipeline across Queensland, New South Wales, Victoria and South Australia.



Figure 1 PHA renewable assets in Australia

PHA has recently acquired number of major development approvals in renewables.

Prairie Solar Farm (PSF), 240MW development with a battery energy storage system received its Development Approval through Loddon Shire Regional Council, Victoria in January 2019. The location of the site is 2 km West of Mitiamo, Northern Victoria. PSF is proposed to connect into the existing Kerang to Bendigo 220kV transmission line. The single line diagram and location map of the site are attached to this letter.

The region is of considerable interest for renewables (wind and solar), and there are many new projects in the area, both committed and proposed which are expected to drive network congestion unless a significant new major network augmentation is implemented.

PHA recently assessed the potential risk of curtailment if PSF is connected to the current transmission infrastructure. It was found that the likely level of constraints for the proposed 240MW plant under the future generation scenario would be in the order of 25-30% without any significant transmission investment in the area.

We believe that VNI-West development will greatly relieve the current and likely future capacity constraints on the 220kV network in Victoria. This would allow PHA to develop its Prairie Solar Farm with a grid-forming BESS solution in the region to supply clean renewable energy to assist the state and national renewable energy targets. Accordingly, we would like to encourage bringing the project forward as we have a strong desire to align the advancements on Prairie Solar Farm with proposed timelines of VNI-West.



Thank you for the opportunity to make a submission into this PADR process. We would be pleased to share further details of our project with AEMO to inform future strategic planning.

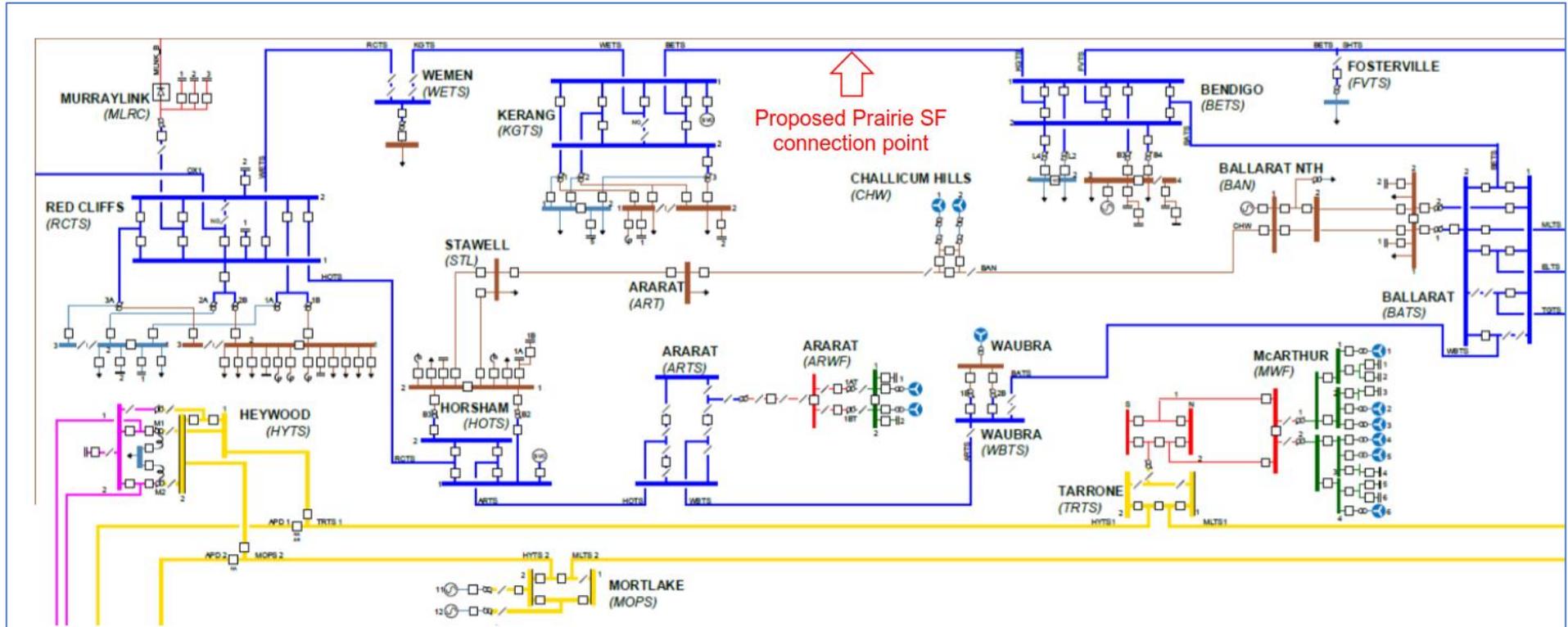
Yours sincerely

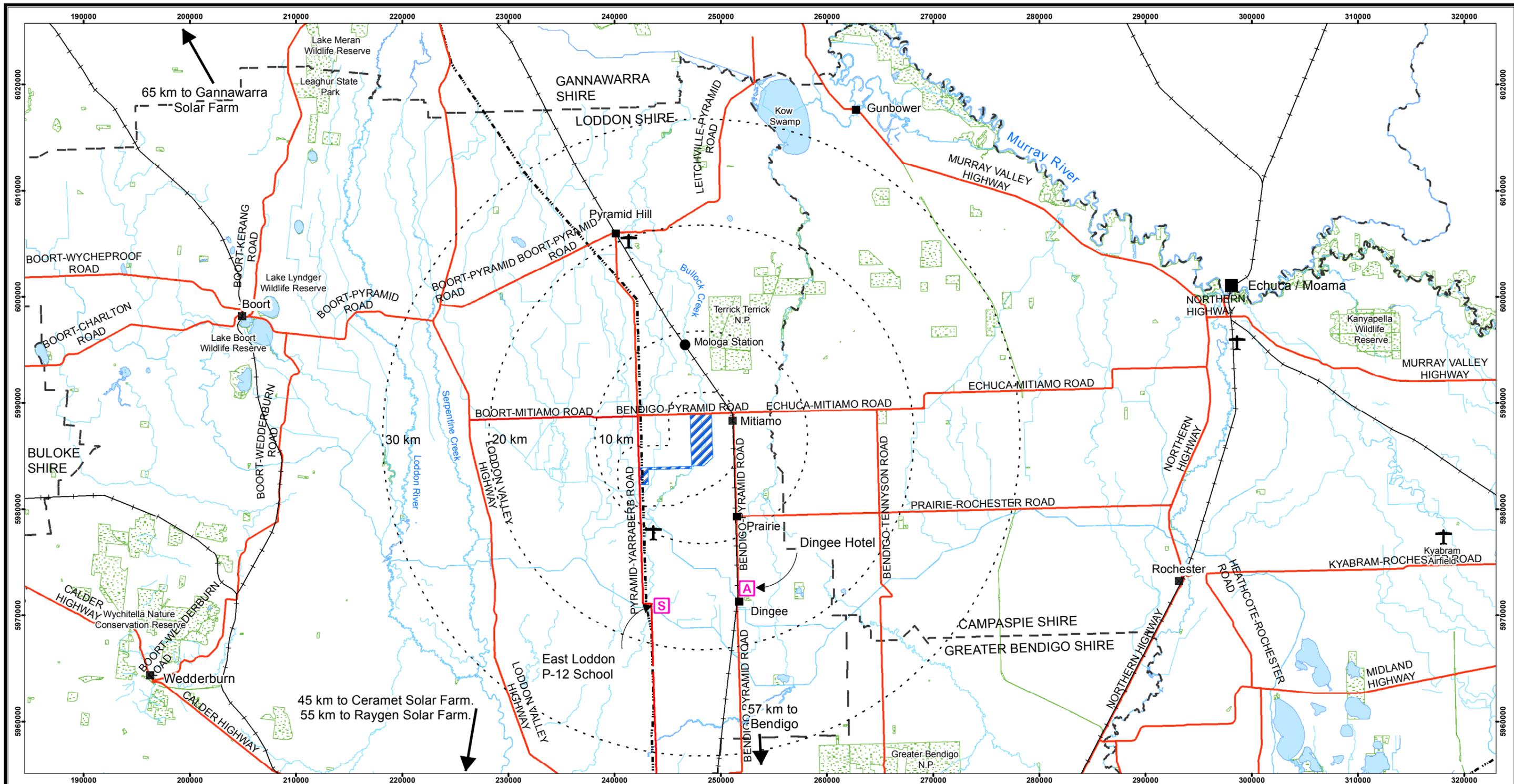
Preeti Arora
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Attachment 1: Western Victoria transmission system single line diagram

Proposed Prairie Solar Farm Connection Point





- Project Area
- Transmission Line Bendigo - Kerang (220kV)
- Distance from Project (km)
- Major Population Centre
- Minor Population Centre
- Airport/Airfield
- Railway Station
- School /Educational
- Accommodation
- Rail Line
- Major Road / Highway
- Local Government Boundary
- Conservation Park / Reserve
- Watercourse
- Waterbody



PROJECT Prairie, Australia	
TITLE Figure 1: Locality Plan	
FOR EXTERNAL DISTRIBUTION	
<small>Maps marked "Internal Use Only" contain information that is of a private and confidential nature. These maps may only be distributed to, and viewed by, current Pacific Hydro Employees.</small>	
CREATED M. Yee	CLEARED M. Stafford
APPROVED D. Walsh	
DATE 18/06/18	
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