



Australian Government

Department of Climate Change, Energy,
the Environment and Water

MC22-005165

Mr Matt Ruchel
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
VICTORIAN NATIONAL PARKS ASSOCIATION
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Dear Mr Ruchel and Mr Marshall,

Thank you for your correspondence to the Minister for the Environment and Water, the Hon Tanya Plibersek MP dated 17 June 2022, concerning the Strategic Assessment of Melbourne's Urban Growth Boundary (**Melbourne Strategic Assessment**). The Minister has asked me to thank you and to reply on her behalf.

The Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water's (**the department**) responsibilities in relation to projects such as this focus on the protection of certain matters of national environmental significance such as threatened species and ecological communities, among others.

Any activity that is likely to have a significant impact on a matter of national environmental significance requires approval under the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (**EPBC Act**) before it can proceed. This is in addition to the assessment and approval process administered by state and local governments

I note you request for the department to complete a thorough audit and investigation to ensure the thirty-five (35) conservation areas have appropriate legal protections and are being effectively managed. You also request the provision of an urgent ecological audit to ensure the approval holder is aware of their responsibilities under the Melbourne Strategic Assessment.

The department has an active monitoring program that includes conducting inspections and audits to ensure approval holders are complying with conditions of approval attached to EPBC Act approvals.

The department is currently making enquiries into the matter in Truganina, Victoria. As the matter is ongoing, the department will not provide further comment in relation to this.

Thank you again for bringing your concerns to the Government's attention.

Yours sincerely

Dr Richard Chadwick
Assistant Secretary
Environment Compliance Branch

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