

western outer ring main.

a project of



Working towards a more efficient gas supply network for Victoria.

Who is APA?

APA is a leading Australian energy infrastructure business, operating and maintaining networks that connect around 1.4 million Australian homes and businesses to the benefits of natural gas. Our 15,000 kilometres of natural gas pipelines connect sources of supply and markets across Australia.

What are we doing?

APA proposes to construct a high pressure gas pipeline between Plumpton and Wollert in Victoria, which will present a number of benefits, including:

- Increasing the amount of natural gas that can be stored for times of peak demand.
- Improved network performance and reliability.
- Opportunity for natural gas supply to new growth areas in the northwest, including Sunbury South, Lindum Vale, Merrifield and Kalkallo.
- Addressing gas shortages as forecast by the Australian Energy Market Operator.

The proposed Western Outer Ring Main Project will include the construction of:

- A buried pipeline, approximately 51 kilometres long.
- An additional Compressor and Regulating Station at the existing Wollert Compressor Station, owned by APA.
- Three main line valves and associated above ground components.
- Connections into our existing APA infrastructure at Plumpton and Wollert.

Project rationale

Refilling rates for the Iona Underground Storage (UGS) are currently limited as gas is required to be transferred through the low pressure pipeline network in Melbourne.

This limits the amount of gas that can be moved across the network in Victoria to Iona UGS.

The Western Outer Ring Main pipeline will enable gas to be sent at high pressure directly to Port Campbell (to support Iona UGS refilling) which will support peak demand supply during winter periods in Victoria.

By completing this missing link in Victoria's high-pressure gas transmission network it would allow gas to be transferred across the state with greater efficiency by allowing increased transfer capacity from one side of Victoria to the other.

Project update

In December 2019, the Victorian Minister for Planning determined that an Environment Effects Statement (EES) is required for the Western Outer Ring Main Project.

In February 2020, the Commonwealth Department for Agriculture, Water and Environment (DAWE) issued a decision that the Project is a 'controlled action' under the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999 (EPBC Act) and that the Project will be assessed under the assessment bilateral agreement with Victoria.

The EES will assess the potential environmental, economic and social impacts of the Western Outer Ring Main Project during the construction and operational phases and describe how any impacts would be managed. The EES process will address both Commonwealth and Victorian requirements.

To learn about how the EES process works, visit the link: <https://www.planning.vic.gov.au/environment-assessment/what-is-the-ees-process-in-victoria>.

EES Scoping Requirements

The Draft Scoping Requirements were exhibited for public comment during July 2020. The EES Scoping Requirements have been approved by the Minister for Planning in August 2020.

The Draft Scoping Requirements can be found on the DELWP webpage using the link: <https://www.planning.vic.gov.au/environment-assessment/browse-projects/projects/western-outer-ring-main-gas-pipeline#overview>.

Note: timeline provided is indicative only and will be subject to further discussions and agreement with state and federal governments.

Proposed Project EES timeline

Stakeholder engagement

2020 – 2022

- Consultation with government agencies, local councils and other stakeholders.
- Ongoing consultation with landowners where the pipeline is proposed to be located on their property.
- Consultation with the wider community.

EES process and regulatory approvals

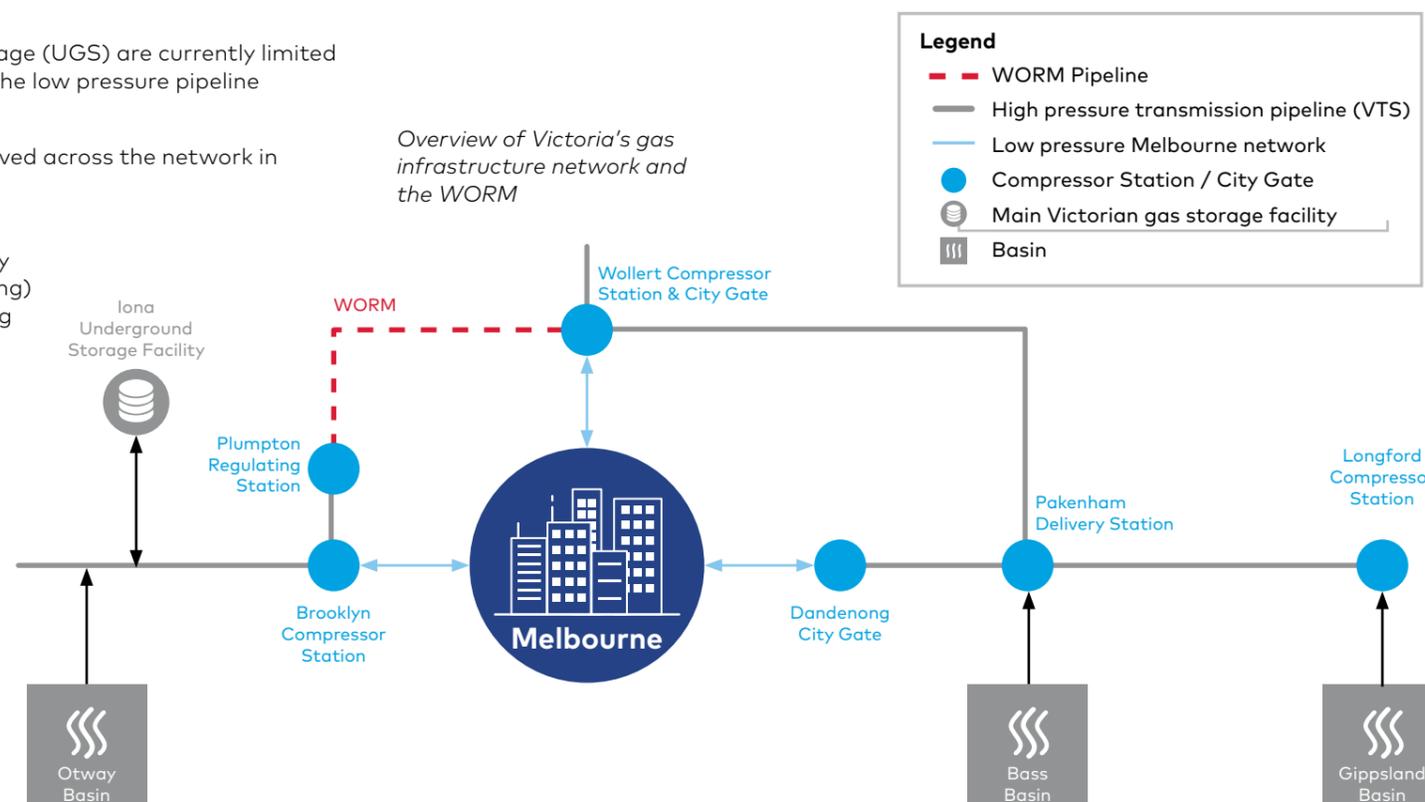
2020 – 2021

- EES Scoping Requirements issued by the Victorian Minister for Planning.
- Undertake EES technical studies.
- Prepare and exhibit EES documentation.
- Victorian Minister for Planning provides an assessment.
- Commonwealth Minister for the Environment provides a decision on EPBC Act approval.
- All other relevant Project approvals obtained.

Project construction

Late-2021 – Mid-2022

Construction of the pipeline and compressor station at Wollert.



Pipeline stats

length	Approximately 51 kilometres
material	Epoxy coated high strength steel line pipe.
diameter	500 millimetres
minimum cover	750 millimetres
	(final depth determined as an outcome of the Safety Management Study)
design principles	Strictly in accordance with the latest version of Australian Standard (AS) AS2885 Pipelines Gas and Liquid Petroleum.
temporary construction corridor	Generally 30 metres, plus ancillary areas to facilitate safe construction.
easement width	15 metres

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What does an Environment Effects Statement (EES) mean for the Project?

APA is required to prepare EES documentation which responds to the Scoping Requirements to understand the potential environmental effects of the Project. APA is currently at the stage of scoping and preparing the EES technical reports and EES chapters. The documentation will be reviewed by an inter-agency Technical Reference Group (TRG) convened by the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP), who comment on the scoping and adequacy of the EES studies and documentation. Once complete, the EES will go on public exhibition, which will enable public comment on the project documentation.

What is APA's engagement commitment during the Environment Effects Statement (EES) process?

During the EES process, APA will liaise with various local councils and government stakeholders, to seek input into project risks and statutory requirements that apply to the Project.

A tailored EES Consultation Plan has been progressed and describes how APA will engage with stakeholders during the EES process. The Consultation Plan details how communities potentially impacted will be informed and outlines opportunities for the public to submit any queries and provide relevant feedback for consideration during the EES process.

What are we currently doing along the pipeline alignment?

APA is completing a range of comprehensive assessments in relation to the existing values along the proposed pipeline alignment, which inform the EES for the Project. The proposed alignment will maximise the use of existing APA pipeline easements wherever possible.

Further investigations:

Further investigations are being undertaken to assess potential impacts from the Project, which include the following areas:

- Waterways and groundwater.
- Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal cultural heritage.
- Land stability and erosion.
- Ecology (flora and fauna).
- Noise and vibration.
- Air quality.
- Greenhouse gas.
- Land use.
- Social and community.
- Safety and hazard.
- Contamination.
- Landscape and visual.

Further information:

project hotline: 1800 951 444

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For questions about the EES process, please contact:

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Project map

