

Yass Valley *Wind Farm*


Preferred Project Report | November 2012



Table of Contents

1	Introduction	4
1.1	Purpose of this Report	4
1.2	Summary of the Proposal	4
1.3	Project Benefits	4
2	Consideration of Submissions	11
2.1	Public Exhibition	11
2.2	Submissions and Assessment of Submissions	11
2.3	Changes to the proposed wind farm infrastructure	13
3	Response to Community Submissions	19
3.1	Visual Impact Issues	19
3.2	Operational Noise Issues	19
3.3	Flora and Fauna Impacts	20
3.4	Heritage Impacts	20
3.5	Estimate of Greenhouse Gas Savings	20
3.6	Community Consultation	21
3.7	Property Value Impacts	21
3.8	Health Impacts	22
3.9	Safety Impacts	22
3.10	Fire Hazards	22
3.11	Communications Impacts	23
3.12	Traffic Impacts	23
3.13	Resources Impacts	23
3.14	Soil Erosion Impacts	23
3.15	Tourism Impacts	24
3.16	Decommissioning	24
4	Response to Government Authority Submissions	25
4.1	Industry & Investment NSW	25
4.2	Harden Shire Council	25
4.3	NSW Office of Water	26
4.4	Australian Department of Defence	26
4.5	Department of Environment & Conservation (Now OEH)	26

4.6	NSW Roads and Traffic Authority	27
4.7	Yass Valley Council	27
5	Conclusion	29
	Attachment 1 – Supplementary Ecology Report	30
	Attachment 2 – Supplementary Archaeological & Heritage Assessment	31
	Attachment 3 – Supplementary Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment	32
	Attachment 4 – Turbine Coordinates	33



1 Introduction

The Yass Valley Wind Farm proposal is for the development of a wind farm in the Southern Tablelands region of NSW, approximately 30 km west of Yass and around 300 km west of Sydney.

An application for the proposal was lodged with the NSW Department of Planning on 2 December 2008 and Director General's Requirements were issued to the proponent on 12 January 2009 to guide the work required in assessing the proposed wind farm. The final revision of the Environmental Assessment for the Yass Valley Wind Farm, which addressed the issues raised in the Director General's Requirements, was lodged in November of 2009 and placed on exhibition by the department from 13 November 2009 to 14 December 2009. Twenty two submissions were received in response to the exhibition of the Environmental Assessment of the wind farm, seven of which were from government agencies.

1.1 Purpose of this Report

The Department of Planning provided copies of the submissions from members of the public and government agencies and asked the proponent to respond to the issues in accordance with Section 75H of the NSW Environmental and Planning Assessment Act 1979. This Preferred Project Report considers and responds to the issues raised in the submissions on the Yass Valley Wind Farm Environmental Assessment.

1.2 Summary of the Proposal

As presented in the Environmental Assessment, the Yass Valley Wind Farm proposal would involve the construction and operation of a wind farm. The proposal includes:

- Up to 152 wind turbines across the Coppabella and Marilba precincts;
- Internal site access tracks and minor upgrades to existing public roads required for the installation and maintenance of the wind turbines;
- Electrical connection between the turbines and on-site substations using a combination of underground and overhead power lines;
- Overhead power lines connecting the on-site substations to the nearby TransGrid transmission lines; and
- An onsite operation and maintenance facility

Additional temporary construction activities and infrastructure such as a temporary construction compound, concrete batching plant and storage areas would be required during the construction and refurbishment phases.

1.3 Project Benefits

The Yass Valley Wind Farm would provide the following primary benefits:

- In full operation, it would generate more than 1,200,000 MWh of electricity per year - sufficient for the average consumption of around 140,000 homes.
- It would improve the security of electricity supply through diversification of generation locations.
- It would reduce greenhouse gas emissions by approximately 1,140,000 tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent (CO₂e) per annum
- It would contribute to the State and Federal Governments' target of providing 20% of consumed energy from renewable sources by 2020.
- It would contribute to the NSW Government's target of reducing greenhouse gas emissions by 60% by the year 2050.

- It would create local employment opportunities (up to 167 jobs during construction and 34 operations and maintenance jobs) and inject funds of up to \$334 million into the Australian economy and \$75 million into the local economy.

In addition to these primary benefits there are also secondary benefits and opportunities for improvement in infrastructure, tourism and ecology.

Figure 1-1 Coppabella Precinct Site Layout (EA November 2009)

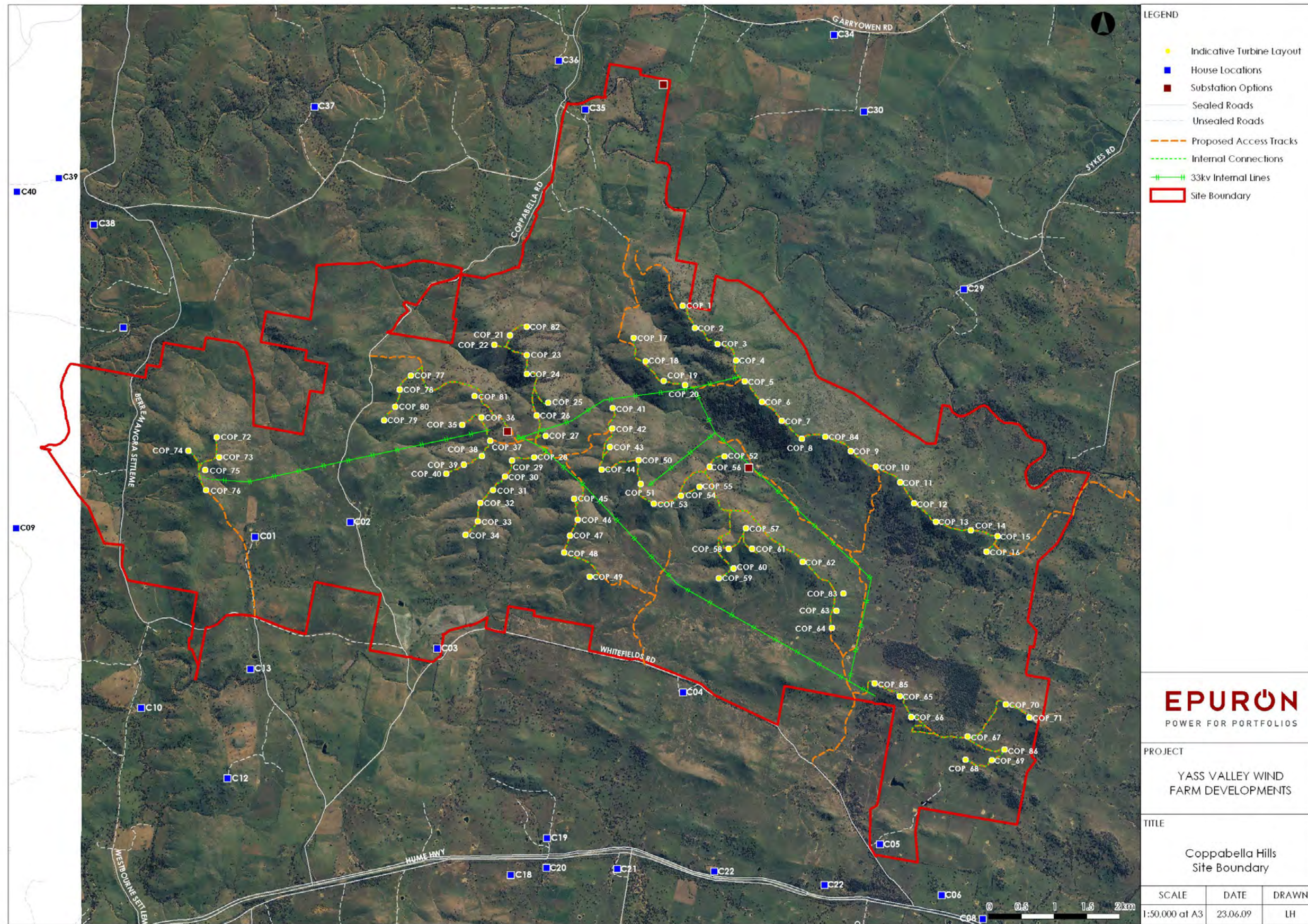


Figure 1-2 Marilba Precinct Site Layout (EA November 2009)

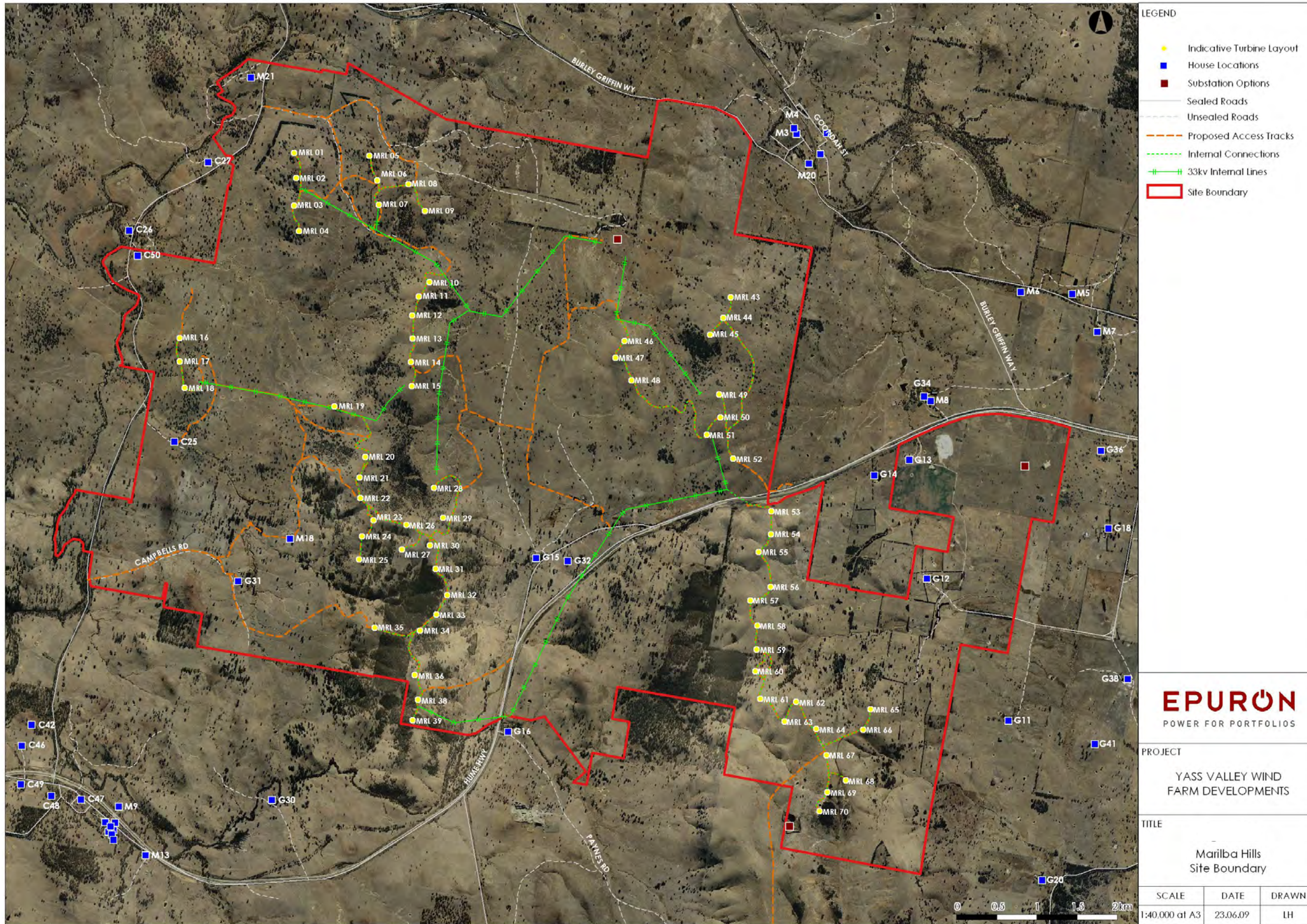


Figure 1-3 Revised Yass Valley Wind Farm Site Layout

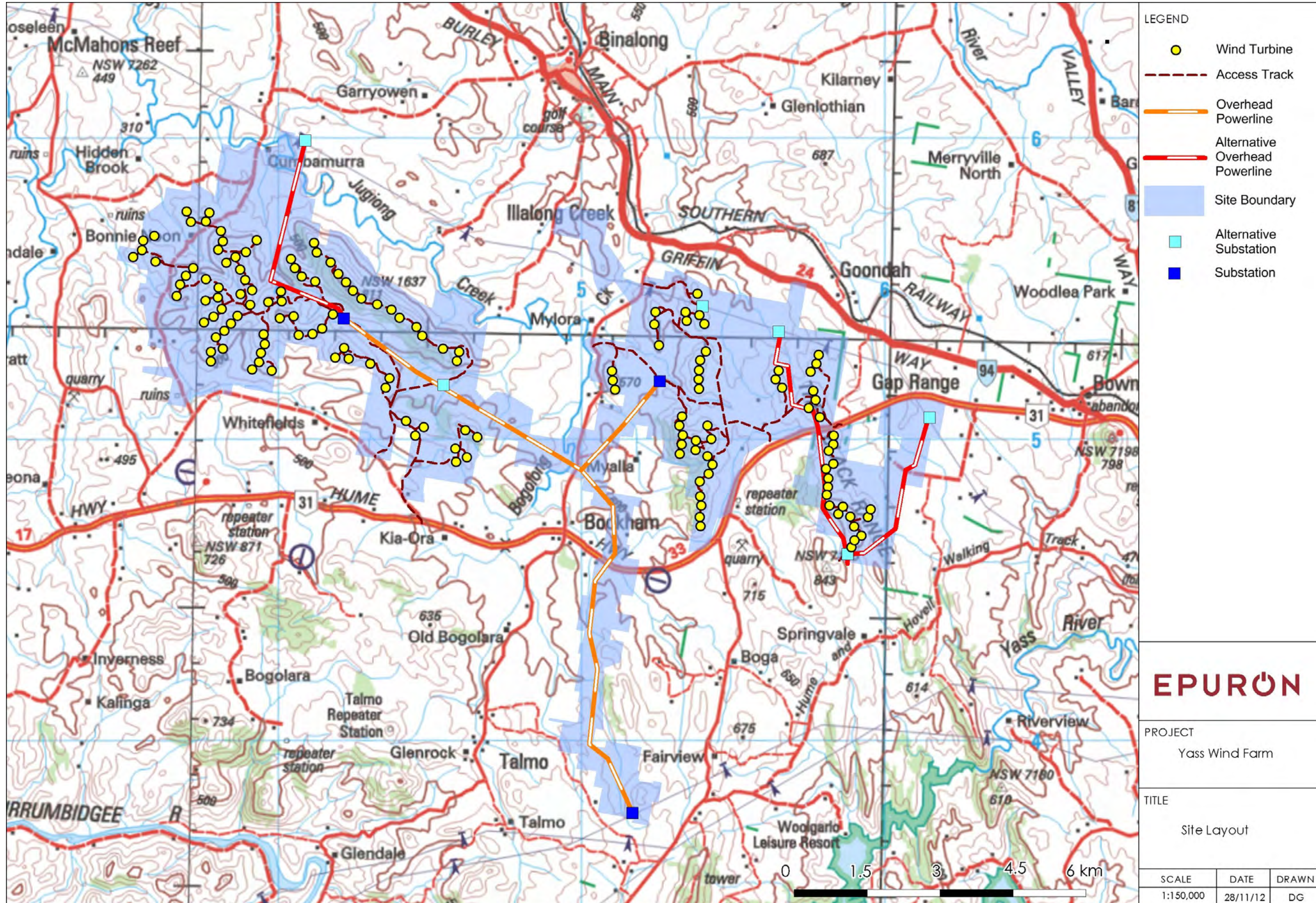


Figure 1-4 Revised Coppabella Precinct Infrastructure Layout

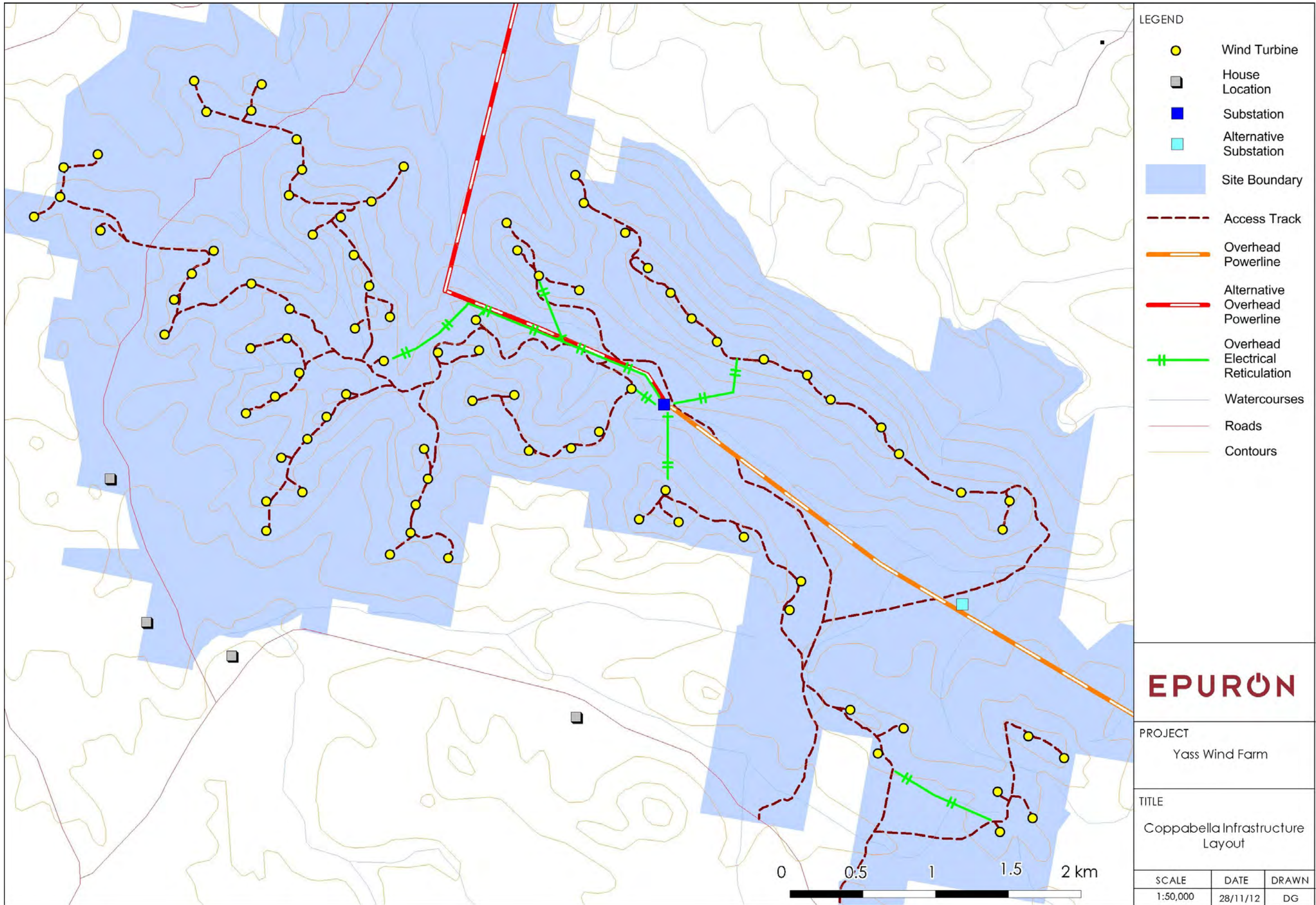
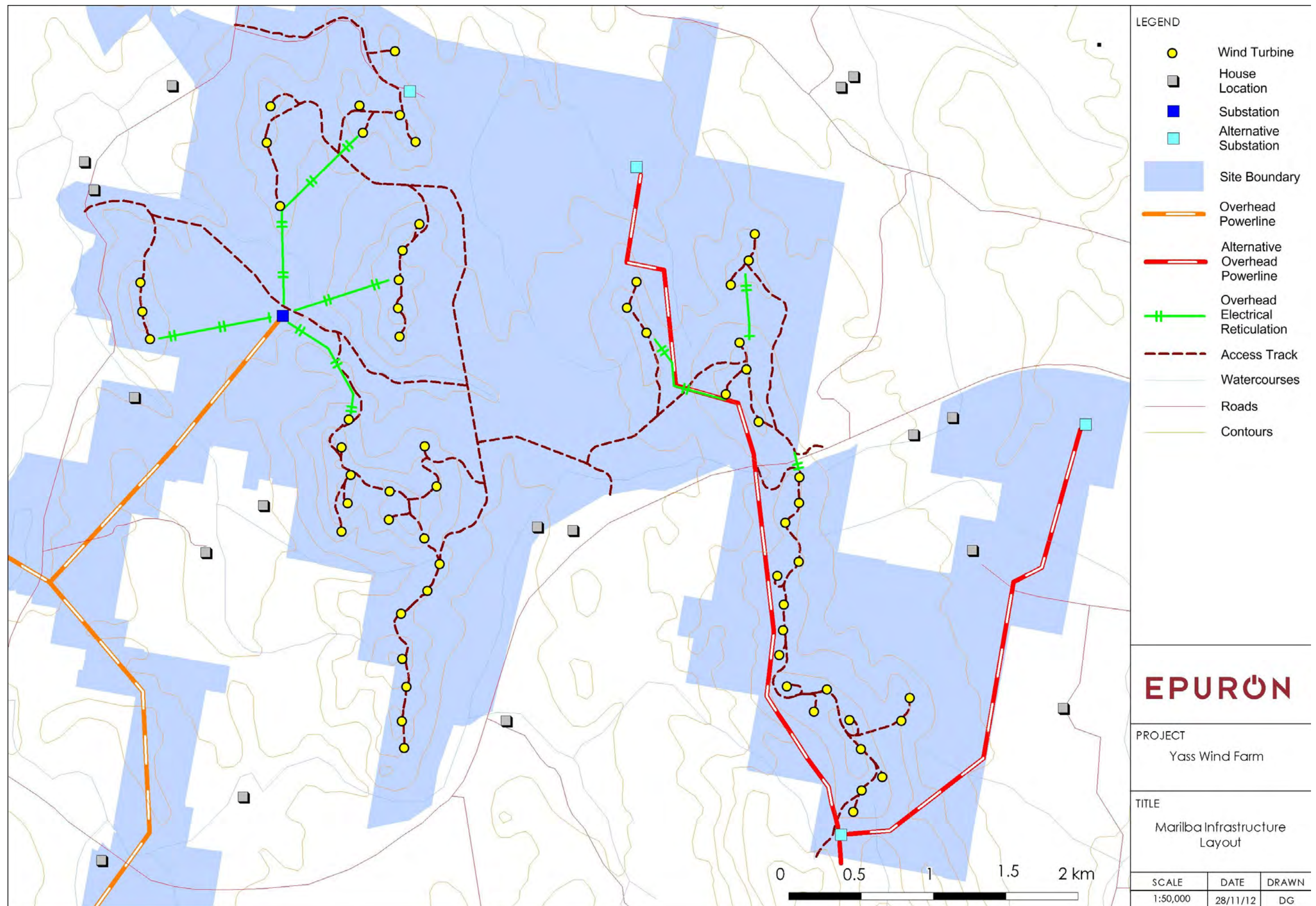


Figure 1-5 Revised Marilba Precinct Infrastructure Layout



2 Consideration of Submissions

2.1 Public Exhibition

The Yass Valley Wind Farm Environmental Assessment was on public exhibition from 13 November 2009 to 14 December 2009 at the following locations:

- NSW Department of Planning, 23-33 Bridge St, Sydney;
- Nature Conservation Council, 301 Kent St, Sydney;
- Yass Valley Council office, Yass;
- Harden Shire Council office, Harden;
- Binalong Post Office, Binalong; and
- On the NSW Department of Planning website

Local residents were notified of the exhibition period through advertisements placed in the local newspapers by the Department of Planning and a newsletter was sent to residents in the vicinity of the project site by the proponent.

2.2 Submissions and Assessment of Submissions

The Department of Planning received a total of 22 submissions. Of the 22 submissions, 7 were from government agencies and the remaining 15 submissions were from individuals or private organisations. One of the individual submissions was in support of the wind farm and the other 14 submissions were opposed to the project.

In accordance with section 75H of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979, this Preferred Project Report provides considered responses to the issues raised in submissions received in relation to the EA for the proposed Yass Valley Wind Farm.

The government authority submissions have been addressed individually for each submission as they reflect specific issues related to the particular technical expertise of the authority. The individual submissions have been addressed by issues raised, rather than by submission as there were many issues that were common across all the individual submissions.

The issues raised in each submission were summarized and tabulated in Figure 2-1 on the following page to identify the most frequently and infrequently raised issues.

Figure 2-1 Summary of Submissions Received

Submission Number	Visual Impacts	Operational Noise	Biodiversity Impacts	Heritage Impacts	Consultation/ community	Property Value Impact	Health Impacts	Safety Impacts	Fire Hazards	Aviation Impacts	Communications Impacts	Traffic Impacts	Resource Impacts	Soil Erosion	Tourism Impacts	Decommissioning
1	■	■	■		■	■	■									■
2	■	■														
3	■				■									■		
4	■														■	
5				■									■			
6	■	■	■			■	■									
7	■		■								■					■
8																
9	■	■	■		■	■	■									
10	■	■	■			■	■		■							
11	■				■	■			■							■
12	■															
13													■			■
14					■	■	■									
15	■		■		■							■			■	
16													■			
17										■						
18				■									■	■		
19			■	■												
20												■				
21					■							■				
22		■					■									
	Indicates government agency submission															

2.3 Changes to the proposed wind farm infrastructure

As a result of the submissions received and following optimisation of the wind farm electrical reticulation a number of changes were made to the proposed wind farm infrastructure. The overall number of wind turbines has been reduced from 152 to 148.

	EA (November 2009)	Revised Proposal
Coppabella precinct	86	87
Marilba precinct	66	61
Total number of turbines	152	148

The details of the changes are provided in the table below and in the maps on the following pages:

Item	Reason for redesign
Deletion of turbines 72, 73, 74, 75 & 76 (COP Cluster 1)	Visual impact concerns from involved landowners - Refer Figure 2-2
Additional turbines (COP Cluster 2)	Additional viable wind turbine locations identified - Refer Figure 2-2
Deletion of turbine 13 (COP Cluster 7b)	High vegetation constraint – Refer Figure 2-3
Deletion of turbine 67	Turbine layout optimisation – Refer figure 2-4
Relocation of access track between COP Cluster 10 and Cluster 11	High vegetation constraint – Refer figure 2-4
Deletion of turbine 01 & 05 (MRL Cluster 2)	At the involved landowner's request – Refer Figure 2-5
Deletion of turbine 30 (MRL Cluster 4a)	Turbine layout optimisation & vegetation constraint – Refer Figure 2-6
Deletion of turbine 35 (MRL Cluster 4b)	High vegetation constraint for access track to turbine location – Refer Figure 2-6
Revised overhead powerline route to TransGrid's existing 330kV transmission line	The revised overhead powerline route to connect the wind farm to the electricity grid runs south from the wind farm site for approximately 12km. Connection to the 330kV transmission line is expected to be slightly more expensive, but is expected to provide less constraint to the output of the wind farm when compared with the alternative connection to the 132kV transmission line to the north of the wind farm site. Refer Figure 1-3.

Figure 2-2 Wind turbine location changes Coppabella Cluster 1 & 2

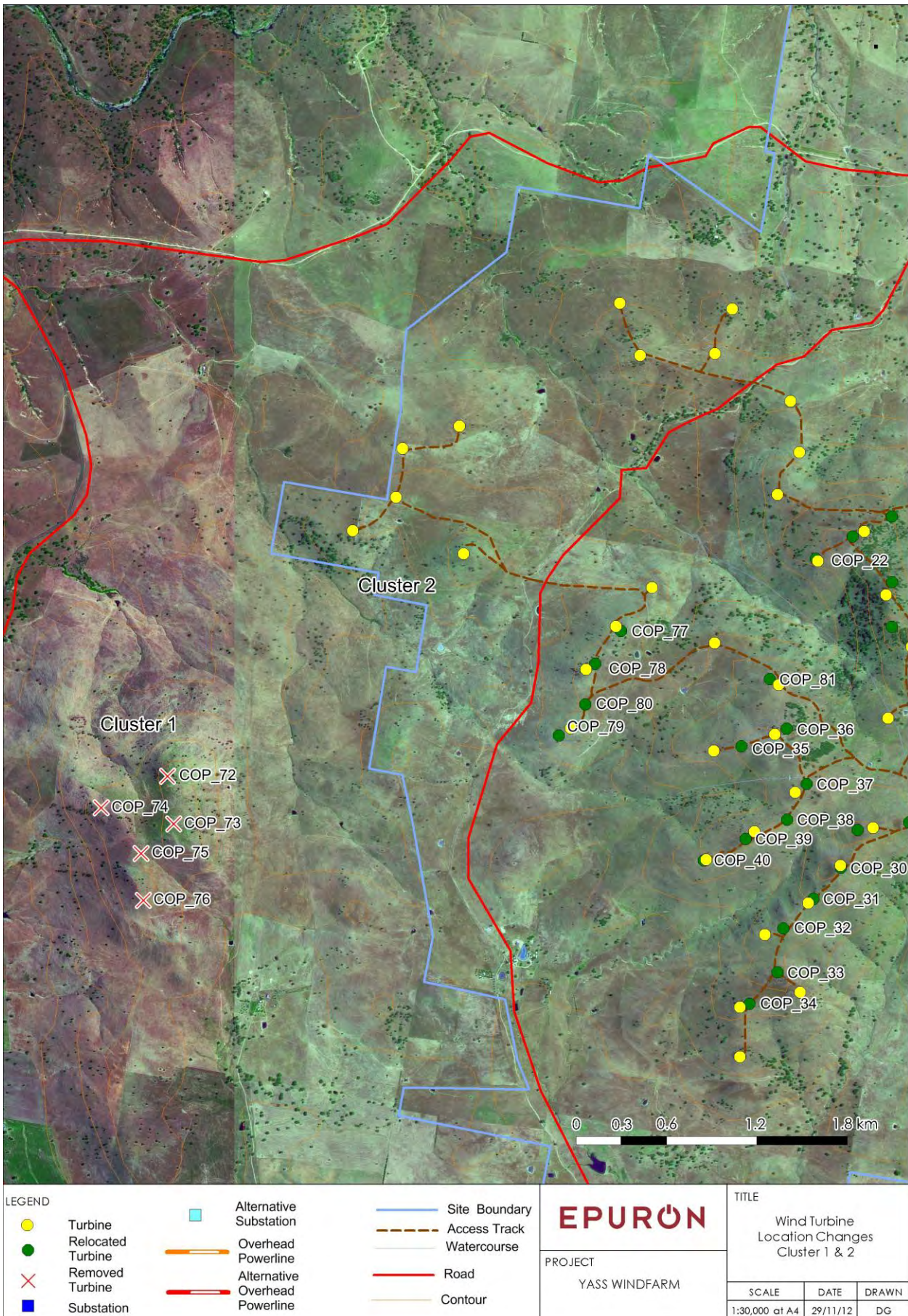


Figure 2-3 Wind turbine location changes Coppabella Cluster 7b

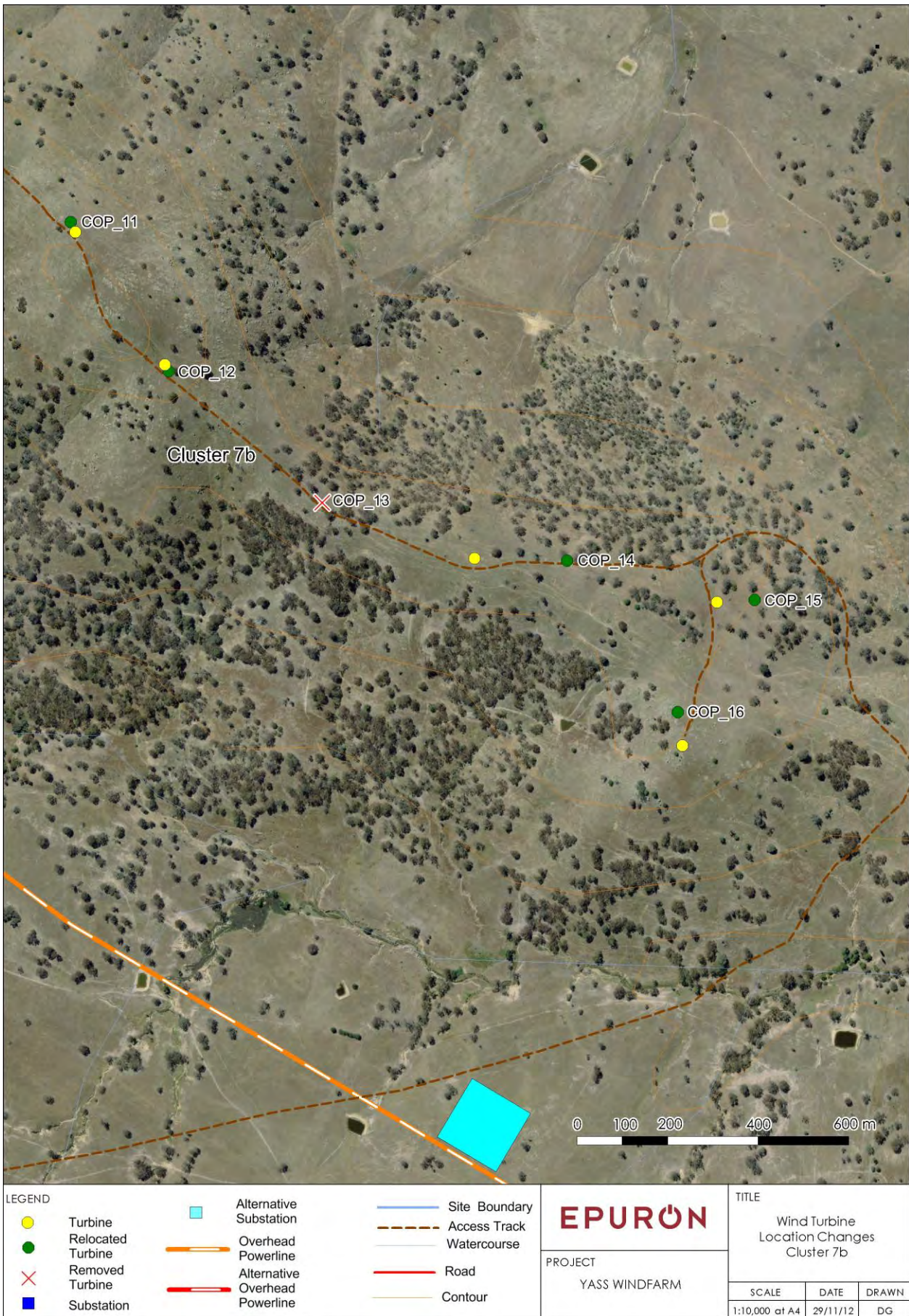


Figure 2-4 Wind turbine location changes Coppabella Cluster 10 & 11

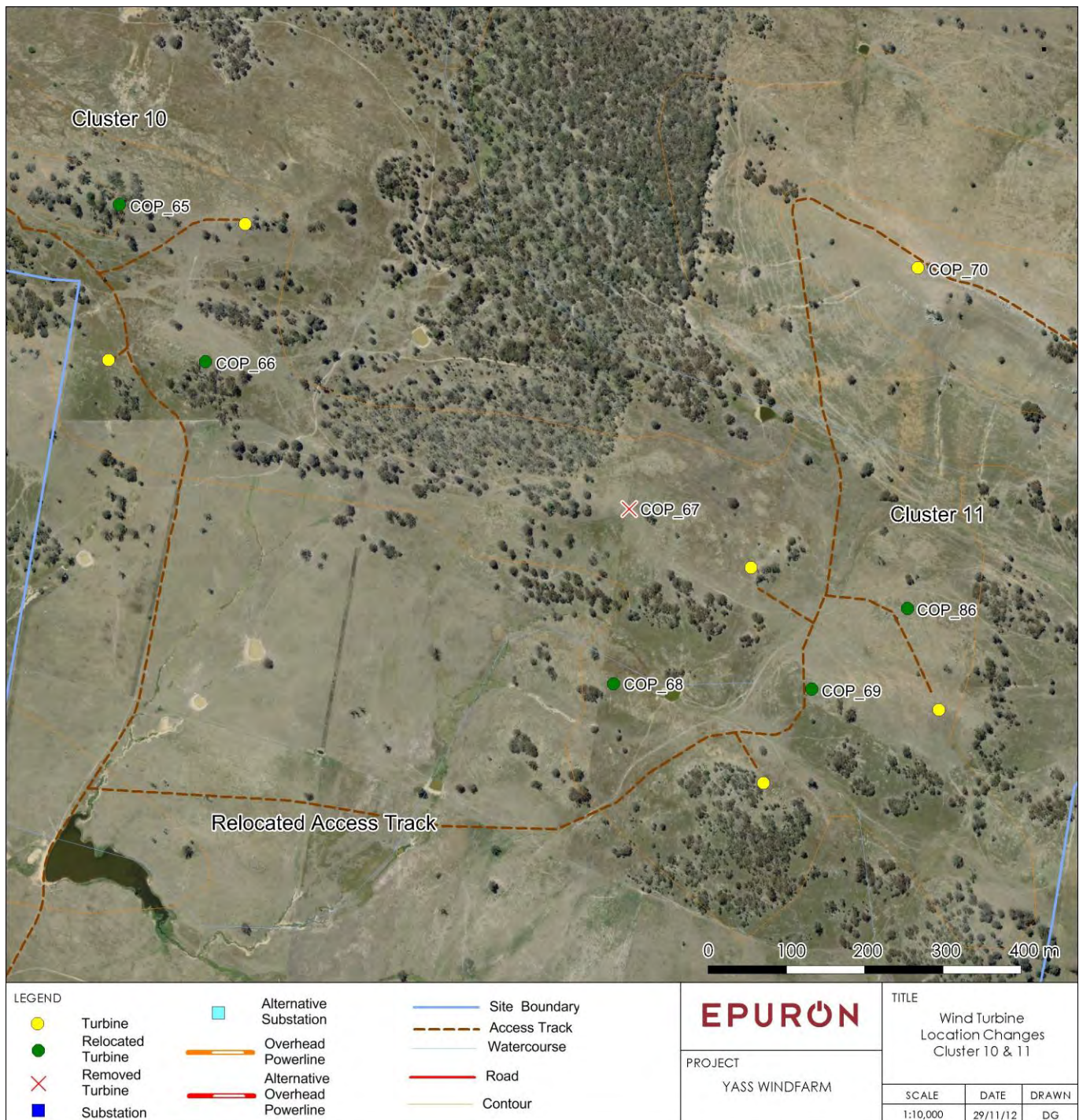


Figure 2-5 Wind turbine location changes Marilba Cluster 2

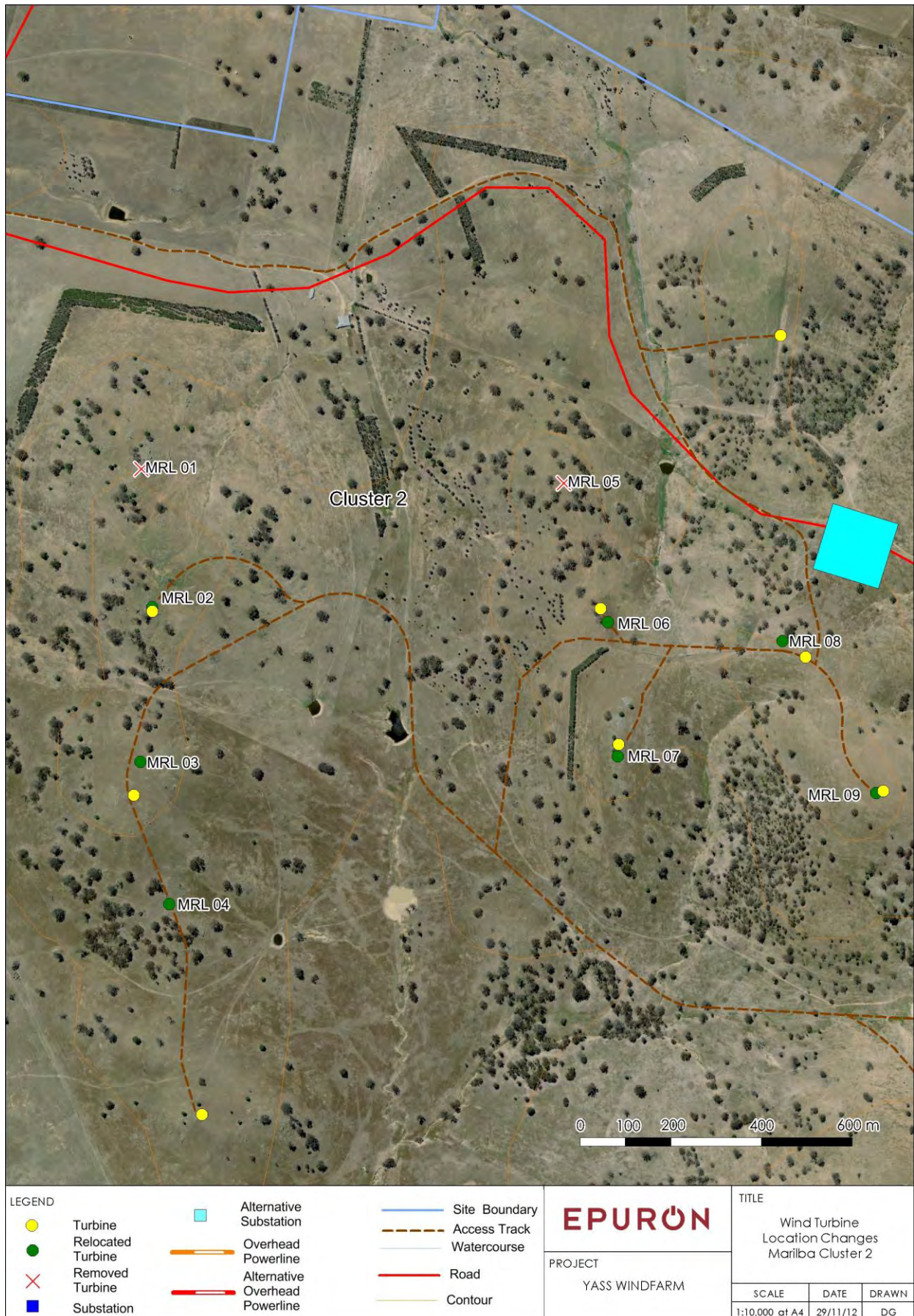
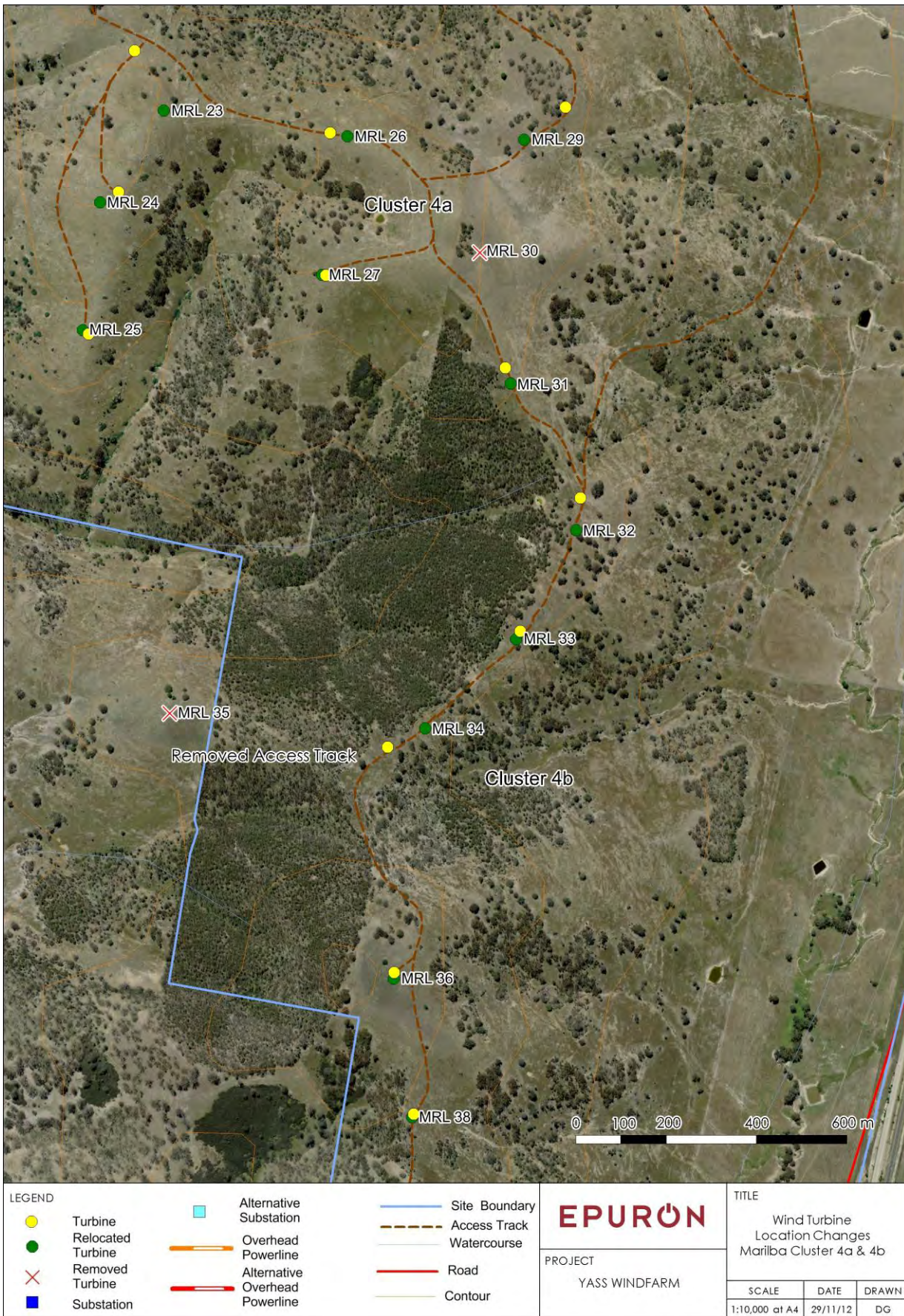


Figure 2-6 Wind turbine location changes Marilba Cluster 4a & 4b



3 Response to Community Submissions

3.1 Visual Impact Issues

The visual impact issues were addressed in section 7.2 of the EA and supported by a specialist report: Appendix 1 – Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment. The assessment concluded that *“the proposed Yass Valley Wind Farm will have a generally low visual impact on its surrounds, and the site is a suitable landscape for the construction of a wind farm.”*

A supplementary Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment has been completed and included as Attachment 3 to this Submissions Report to accommodate the changes made to the wind turbine layout as a result of the submissions received. The supplementary report supports the original conclusion.

Issue	Response
Obstacle lighting	The installation of obstacle lighting is not currently proposed for the wind farm. The CASA Advisory Circular AC 139-18 in relation to Obstacle Marking and Lighting of Wind Farms has been withdrawn and wind farms that have previously operated red flashing obstacle lighting have now turned these off permanently.
Photomontage methodology	<p>The methodology used in the visual assessment was based on the <i>Policy and Planning Guidelines for Development of Wind Energy Facilities in Victoria (May 2003)</i>. This methodology has been widely used for wind farms in NSW. Further details on the methodology used for the preparation of photomontages can be found in section 1.2 and Annexure B of the Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment report that formed part of the EA.</p> <p>It is recognised within the EA Application that <i>“the small images used within the report are only for referencing comments made within the text. While technically correct, they do not accurately portray a perceptually accurate image to assess the visual impact. For this reason larger (A3) images are appended to this report (Annexure D) however while these are better, a proper assessment of the visual impact can be made when the images are produced at A0 sizes and held at arm’s length.”</i> (EA Application, LVIA page 3)</p>

3.2 Operational Noise Issues

Operational noise issues were addressed in section 7.3 of the EA and supported by a specialist report: Appendix 2 – Noise Assessment. The results of the assessment demonstrated full compliance of the proposed turbine layout to the nominated criteria (Wind Farms Environmental Noise Guidelines, South Australian Environmental Protection Agency, 2003 (SA EPA Guidelines)).

Issue	Response
Low frequency noise and atmospheric stability	<p>The Noise Impact Assessment (section 6.8 on page 26) explores low frequency noise and meteorological conditions including atmospheric stability and wind profile, the Van Den Berg effect and temperature inversions.</p> <p>A healthy young adult’s range of hearing is often quoted as extending from 20Hz to 20,000Hz although the sensitivity of the ear varies significantly with frequency and is most sensitive to sounds with frequencies between around 500Hz and 4000Hz. The majority of information in speech signals is contained in this smaller range and above and below this, the ear becomes decreasingly sensitive and is</p>

Issue	Response
	<p>very in-sensitive at very low frequencies.</p> <p>'Low frequency noise' is the term used to describe sound energy in the region below about 200Hz. The rumble of thunder and the throb of a diesel engine are both examples of sounds with most of their energy in this low frequency range and they both have very high sound levels for such sounds to be perceived. Wind turbines are not a significant source of low frequency noise.</p> <p>The relevance of atmospheric stability to wind farms is that a change in the stability of the atmosphere leads to a change in wind profile and therefore a change in the relationship between background noise level at receiver locations and wind speeds measured at the site of the wind farm. The noise assessment takes into account the wind profile of the area and wind speed measurements during long-term background noise monitoring cover all stability conditions.</p>

3.3 Flora and Fauna Impacts

Flora and fauna issues were addressed in section 7.4 of the EA and supported by a specialist report: Appendix 3 – Biodiversity Assessment. Please also refer to section 3.5 and Attachment 1 of this Submissions Report for the response to specific flora and fauna issues raised by NSW OEH.

3.4 Heritage Impacts

Heritage issues were addressed in section 7.4 of the EA and supported by a specialist report: Appendix 4 – Archaeology Assessment. Please also refer to section 3.5 and Attachment 2 of this Submissions Report for the response to specific heritage issues raised by NSW OEH.

3.5 Estimate of Greenhouse Gas Savings

The estimates in the EA of annual wind farm energy output and emissions avoided were calculated using the CO₂ intensity per unit of energy generated from Greenhouse Benchmark Rule website www.greenhousegas.nsw.gov.au. For comparison, the table below shows a similar result using the more recent NSW government online tool available at www.environment.nsw.gov.au/climatechange/greenhousegassavingstool.htm

	Epuron estimate in EA 2009	NSW Wind Farm Greenhouse Gas Savings Tool
Number of Turbines	152	148
Turbine Capacity (MW)	2.5	2.5
Wind Farm Capacity (MW)	380	370
Capacity Factor	0.36	n/a
Wind Farm Energy Output (MWh)	1,198,368	1,163,000
Emissions avoided per annum (t CO ₂ -e)	1,143,243	996,857
Equivalent average number of households	142,905	159,400

3.6 Community Consultation

Issue	Response
Inadequate community consultation	<p>Epuron has contacted and continues to consult with the neighbouring landowners as noted in section 6.2 and set out in the consultation plan in Attachment 6 to 9 of the EA. The consultation program includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Telephone contact • Individual meetings with landowners • Newsletters – distributed to landowners, neighbours and the broader community • Open House information day held on 10 December 2008 <p>During the early stage of the project representatives from Epuron made telephone calls to all neighbours in the vicinity of the project and this was followed in most cases with a face to face meeting to provide any further information required and answer individual questions.</p> <p>Since Epuron re-acquired the project from Origin Energy in July 2012 it has:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Issued a project newsletter • Established a project website • Established an Epuron community consultation framework • Called for nominations to establish a Community Consultation Committee

3.7 Property Value Impacts

Issue	Response
Decrease in value in neighbouring properties	<p>A number of studies in Australia and overseas have shown that wind farms do not generally have any negative impact on the value of surrounding land. The main finding in a report prepared for the NSW Valuer General in August 2009 was that “wind farms do not appear to have negatively affected property values in most cases.</p> <p>Forty (40) of the 45 sales investigated did not show any reductions in value. Five (5) properties were found to have lower than expected sale prices (based on statistical analysis). While these small number of price reductions correlate with the construction of a wind farm further work is needed to confirm the extent to which these were due to the wind farm or if other factors may have been involved.”</p> <p>The Study’s results also suggest that “...no reductions in sale price were evident for rural properties or residential properties located in nearby townships with views of the wind farm.”</p>

3.8 Health Impacts

Issue	Response
Human health impacts	<p>The impact of electromagnetic fields from wind farm infrastructure (powerlines, substation and turbines) was considered in section 10.3 of the EA. The assessment concluded that the wind farm would not impose any threat to the public, workers or property owners.</p> <p>Shadow flicker from turbine blades was assessed in section 10.4 of the EA and was found not to represent a risk to local residents in relation to flicker vertigo or photosensitive epilepsy.</p> <p>There are tens of thousands of wind turbines installed worldwide and no independent study has demonstrated any harm to people living in close proximity to wind farms despite a number of attempts to find evidence of such harm.</p> <p>The recent Australian report by the National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) concluded that "there is currently no published scientific evidence to positively link wind turbines with adverse health effects."</p> <p>A further study - 'Wind Turbine Sound and Health Effects, an Expert Panel Review*', concludes "There is no reason to believe, based on the levels and frequencies of the sounds and the panel's experience with sound exposures in occupational settings, that the sounds from wind turbines could plausibly have direct adverse health consequences." This report astutely notes that:</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>"the large volume of media coverage devoted to alleged adverse health effects of wind turbines understandably creates an anticipatory fear in some that they will experience adverse effects from wind turbines. Every person is suggestible to some degree".</i></p> <p>*http://www.cleanenergycouncil.org.au/cec/technologies/wind/turbinefactsheets/mainColumnParagraphs/0/text_files/file3/AWEA_CanWEA_SoundWhitePaper_12-11-09.pdf</p>

3.9 Safety Impacts

Issue	Response
Turbine blade failure	The design and construction of modern wind turbines is tightly controlled to internationally recognised IEC standards. Although there have been very limited instances where turbine blades have failed in the past, the likelihood of a blade failure is very low and the overall risk is low.

3.10 Fire Hazards

Issue	Response
Bush fire risks	<p>The bush fire risks associated with the construction and operation of the wind farm have been addressed in section 10.5 of the EA. The assessment concluded that although there would be an increased risk of bush fire from the wind farm, the cleared nature of the land and the improvements to access across the site would mitigate the risks of bush fire. Other recommended mitigation measures which will be implemented include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Providing asset protection zones consistent with RFS guidelines

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preparing a Bushfire Management Plan as part of the Construction Environment Management Plan • Holding appropriate fire fighting equipment on site during the construction phase when the fire danger is very high
--	---

3.11 Communications Impacts

Issue	Response
Impact on television reception	Epuron has committed (Statement of Commitment 30) to undertake a monitoring program of houses within 5km of the wind farm and if any television reception interference is caused by the wind farm to rectify this.

3.12 Traffic Impacts

Issue	Response
Traffic safety on Hume Highway and Burley Griffin Way	<p>As noted in section 2.1, obstacle lighting is not proposed for the wind farm will not be a potential hazard for traffic on roads adjacent to the wind farm site.</p> <p>The Traffic Impact Study (EA Appendix 6) adequately addressed the potential traffic impacts of the proposal as well as identifying a number of safeguards to mitigate the potential traffic impacts from the proposal.</p>

3.13 Resources Impacts

Issue	Response
Depletion of surface and subsurface water for construction purposes	The EA (section 8.1 on page 193) identified the water requirements for the construction of the wind farm as well as potential sources of water to meet these requirements. Epuron has committed to liaise with the relevant authorities as part of finalising the supply of water for construction purposes.

3.14 Soil Erosion Impacts

Issue	Response
Soil erosion from construction of wind farm infrastructure	The infrastructure will be located on the ridges which are predominantly on basalt rock and are less prone to erosion risks. Areas disturbed during construction will be protected by the installation and maintenance of standard erosion and sediment control measures to avoid contributing to any soil and landform degradation.

3.15 Tourism Impacts

Issue	Response
Potential impact on tourist attractions near Yass from shadow flicker and obstacle lighting	<p>The potential impact of shadow flicker was addressed in section 8.10.3 (page 242) of the EA. The shadow flicker effect cannot be noticed beyond 500 – 1,000m from a wind turbine and will not have an impact on any tourist attractions around Yass.</p> <p>As noted in section 2.1, obstacle lighting is not planned to be installed on the wind farm.</p>
Potential to reduce tourism to the Yass Shire	<p>Potential impacts to tourism from the wind farm construction and operation were assessed in section 8.8 (page 235) of the EA. The wind farm is not expected to reduce tourism to the area and mitigation measures have been proposed to minimise any disruption during the construction phase.</p>

3.16 Decommissioning

Issue	Response
Decommissioning and rehabilitation at the end of wind farm life	<p>Decommissioning of the wind farm at the end of its economic life will involve the dismantling and removal of the wind turbines and all other above ground infrastructure. Underground footings and cables would remain in place with the ground surface restored and rehabilitated as required.</p>
Responsibility for decommissioning and rehabilitation	<p>Decommissioning the wind farm at the end of its commercial life is the proponent's obligation and cost. This is expected to be a condition of any project approval.</p>

4 Response to Government Authority Submissions

4.1 Industry & Investment NSW

Industry & Investment provided a coordinated response from the Minerals Resources, Agriculture and Fisheries divisions of the former Department of Primary Industries. No particular issues were raised, but the following recommendations were provided:

Issue	Recommendation
Fisheries mitigation measures	<p>The proposed safeguards and mitigation measures in relation to surface water and ground water should be included in any project approval.</p> <p>The design and construction of any waterway crossings to be carried out in accordance with Industry & Investment guidelines.</p>
Agriculture mitigation measures	<p>A qualified geotechnical engineer should be engaged if any groundwater is required for use on site.</p> <p>A weed management plan should be developed and implemented for all areas that will be subject to surface disturbance.</p>
Minerals mitigation measures	Continue liaison with the holders of Exploration Licences on the wind farm site.

4.2 Harden Shire Council

Issue	Response
Potential impact of wind farm water use during construction on availability of water for agricultural and potable water supplies	<p>The water usage over a two year construction period has been estimated to be around 16.2 ML (EA section 8.1.2 on page 197). A number of potential water sources have been identified including Jugiong Creek, Lake Burrinjuck, Goldenfields Water County Council pipeline, Yass Dam and a number of ground water bores.</p> <p>None of these potential water sources would be used for the wind farm to the extent that they placed any restrictions on existing agricultural and potable water usage.</p>
Planning conditions to ensure that adequate decommissioning of wind turbines & rehabilitation of land	<p>Section 3.5.4 (page 76) of the EA describes the proposed wind turbine decommissioning activities including the commitment that all above ground infrastructure would be removed and that the scrap value of the turbines and other equipment is expected to be sufficient to cover the majority of the costs of their site dismantling and site restoration.</p> <p>In addition, the agreements with the landowners include an obligation to establish a decommissioning fund 5 years prior to the end of the operation of the wind farm to fund the difference (if any) between the expected decommissioning costs and the scrap value of the wind farm equipment.</p>

Lack of details on community fund	As part of the ongoing consultation with all stakeholders in the vicinity of the planned wind farm we welcome any suggestions for possible community projects to be funded by the wind farm.
-----------------------------------	--

4.3 NSW Office of Water

Issue	Response
Potential options for water supply	Access to surface water from existing dams and creeks or sourcing groundwater from bores may require additional permits or licences.
Watercourse crossings	Any watercourse crossings should be designed in accordance with NOW guidelines
Potential impacts from blasting	If blasting is required an assessment of the potential impact on groundwater resource and existing users should be carried out.

4.4 Australian Department of Defence

The Department of Defence has no concerns regarding the proposed wind farm.

Issue	Response
Tall structures and potential flight safety hazard	Supply final design documentation before construction commences

4.5 Department of Environment & Conservation (Now OEH)

Issue	Response
Aboriginal Cultural Heritage for transmission line easements needs to be assessed	<p>Please refer to the additional Archaeological and Heritage Assessment in Attachment 2 of this report. An archaeological field survey and assessment was carried out on the proposed powerline route which connects the Coppabella and Marilba precincts to the existing TransGrid 330kV transmission line to the south of the site.</p> <p>The field survey results are in keeping with the patterns of site distribution identified during the earlier 2008 assessment. The recorded sites do not pose a constraint to the proposal, however a number of management and mitigation measures are proposed.</p>
Turbines and associated infrastructure be reduced and/or realigned to decrease impact on Box Gum Woodland EEC	Turbines and associated infrastructure have been deleted and relocated to decrease the impact on Box Gum Woodland EEC. Please refer to section 2.3 and the maps in Figure 1-5, 1-6 & 1-7 (page 13 -15) for more details.
Calculation of impact areas and offsets	Please refer to Appendix B in the Supplementary Ecology Report (Attachment 1 to this report) for the revised impact area calculations.

	<p>Epuron accepts that where overhead powerline easements pass through forested areas that clearance of trees will be required to achieve technical and safety clearance requirements. The clearance will not need to be for the full easement width. For example, the maximum conductor clearance for an overhead 132kV powerline is 7.5m. The impact of overhead powerlines in areas of pasture is limited to the footings for the power poles which are spaced between 200 and 250m apart and have a foot print of less than 1m x 1m. The revised impact area calculations now include these provisions.</p> <p>An Offset Strategy for the project has been developed to provide more certainty on how offset areas will be identified, secured and managed. Please refer to Appendix H in the supplementary Ecology Report in Attachment 1 for further details. The Offset Strategy sets out a methodology to calculate, manage and secure an offset site to offset the impacts of the construction of the wind farm. There is ample land of suitable type within the project boundaries to demonstrate that offsets are achievable. The plan provides clear incentives, in the form of pre-set ratios that relate to existing mapping, for the proponent to further minimise impacts and thereby reduce the offset requirement for the proposal.</p>
Additional survey and commitment to survey	<p>Some of the additional surveys including for Hollow Bearing Trees, Bush Stone Curlew, Squirrel Glider, Barking Owl and Burrinjuck Orchid have now been completed and included in the Supplementary Ecology Assessment.</p> <p>To assist with micrositing of infrastructure and offsetting of unavoidable impacts the Statement of Commitments have been revised to include additional surveys required including for Hollow Bearing Trees, Bush Stone Curlew, Squirrel Glider, Barking Owl and Eastern Bentwing Bat.</p> <p>The ecology Statement of Commitments have been revised to include all measures required to manage the biodiversity impacts of the project to an acceptable level. Please refer to section 4 of the Supplementary Ecology Assessment in Attachment 1.</p>
Biodiversity assessment of powerline easements	<p>A biodiversity assessment of the powerline easements has been included in the Supplementary Ecology Assessment in Attachment 1.</p>

4.6 NSW Roads and Traffic Authority

Issue	Recommendations
Proposed conditions to be included in any approval	The proposed mitigation measures have been noted and will be incorporated into the detailed Traffic Management Plan to be prepared by the transport contractor in consultation with the RTA prior to the commencement of construction of the project.

4.7 Yass Valley Council

Issue	Response
Traffic and access arrangements for council roads	A more detailed Traffic Impact Study will be completed in consultation with the relevant authorities prior to commencement of construction to ensure all potential impacts are adequately assessed. A road dilapidation report will be completed in consultation with council prior to the commencement of

Issue	Response
	construction and again after construction is complete (see Statement of Commitment 39) to ensure that any reinstatement or repair is appropriately implemented at the proponent's cost.
Lack of community enhancement fund	As part of the ongoing consultation with all stakeholders in the vicinity of the planned wind farm we welcome any suggestions for possible community projects to be funded by the wind farm.
Community and Council communication	We are in the process of establishing a Community Consultation Committee for the project. The Council has been invited to provide nominations to be a part of the Community Consultation Committee.

5 Conclusion

Epuron believes that this Preferred Project Report has adequately addressed all of the issues raised in the twenty two submissions received to enable the Department of Planning & Infrastructure to complete its assessment and determination of the Proposal.

The net changes to the wind turbine and associated infrastructure layout as a result of the issues raised in the submissions have resulted in a reduced environmental impact for the project.

The Statement of Commitments in section 10.2 of the Environmental Assessment, together with the commitments contained in the responses in this Preferred Project Report will ensure that the proposed Yass Valley Wind Farm can be constructed while minimising any residual impacts to the existing environment.

Attachment 1 – Supplementary Ecology Report



Attachment 2 – Supplementary Archaeological & Heritage Assessment



Attachment 3 – Supplementary Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment

