



Department of Transport and Planning

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Ms Sarah Carlisle
Chair (Lead)
Victorian Murray Floodplain Restoration Project Standing Inquiry and Advisory Committee
Planning Panels Victoria
via email: vmfrp.siac@delwp.vic.gov.au

Dear Ms Carlisle

VICTORIAN MURRAY FLOODPLAIN RESTORATION PROJECT – ENVIRONMENT REPORT CENTRAL FOR THE VINIFERA FLOODPLAIN RESTORATION, NYAH FLOODPLAIN RESTORATION AND BURRA CREEK FLOODPLAIN RESTORATION PROJECTS

I refer to the environment report (ER) and accompanying draft planning scheme amendment for the Vinifera, Nyah, and Burra Creek Floodplain Restoration Projects. The projects are three of nine projects forming the Victorian Murray Floodplain Restoration Project (VMFRP) and together form the assessment package referred to as ER Central. Swan Hill Rural City Council is the relevant municipality for each of the projects.

The ER Central projects are located in an area where Traditional Owners and Aboriginal parties and/or organisations have not yet been formally recognised under relevant legislation (i.e. as a Registered Aboriginal Party (RAP) under the *Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006*, or by a determination under the *Native Title Act 1993 (Commonwealth)*, or a Recognition Settlement Agreement under the *Traditional Owner Settlement Act 2010*).

The proponent identified Wamba Wamba, Barapa Barapa and Wadi Wadi Peoples as the Traditional Owner groups for the three projects. The First Peoples of the Milewa-Mallee Aboriginal Corporation (FPMMAC) also sat on the technical reference group (TRG) for the project, as a single TRG was formed to cover all nine VMFRP projects. As part of the TRG they were engaged on ER Central matters. However, FPMMAC did not provide formal review or advice on ER Central documentation. They are not a RAP for the project areas relevant to ER Central.

As ER Central is now authorised for public exhibition, I am referring the matter to the Victorian Murray Floodplain Restoration Project Standing Inquiry and Advisory Committee (SIAC) for advice and recommendations as outlined in the SIAC terms of reference.

The nominated exhibition period will commence on 30 January 2023 and cease at 11.59pm on 10 March 2023.

I can confirm that the proposed inquiry process for this ER is a roundtable forum, as set out in the SIAC terms of reference. However, as provided for in clause 35 of the SIAC terms of reference I encourage the SIAC to review the suitability of this format in consultation with the Impact Assessment Unit, upon review of submissions received for ER Central.



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The proposed roundtable for this matter is anticipated to commence in either the week commencing Monday 10 April or Monday 17 April 2023 and run for approximately one to two weeks.

The Department's review of the ER Central documents has not identified any additional issues to those identified in the SIAC terms of reference, therefore expertise most critical for the inquiry process are:

- floodplain ecology (terrestrial and aquatic);
- environmental hydrology;
- Aboriginal cultural heritage; and
- land use and planning.

If you have any questions about the assessment processes for this project please contact [REDACTED] [REDACTED]. Your staff are also most welcome to continue direct engagement with [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] via email [REDACTED] and [REDACTED].

Yours sincerely

[REDACTED]

Dr Bruce Abernethy
Executive Director Planning Facilitation

25/01/2023