

12 September 2025

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Dear Michael

## **Avonbank watermain Native Vegetation Assessment**

**Our ref: Matter 42960**

WIM Resource Pty Ltd (WIM Resource) engaged Biosis Pty Ltd (Biosis) to assess the status of, and potential disturbance to, native vegetation as a result of the installation of an approximately 8.5 kilometre watermain. The watermain is proposed from the Goulburn Murray Water (GMW) pump station on Longerenong Road north to the future Avonbank Mineral Sands facility south of the Wimmera Highway, east of Horsham, Victoria.

The Avonbank Mineral Sands Project was assessed under the *Environment Effects Act 1978* (EE Act) via an Environmental Effects Statement (EES). This EES was positively assessed by the Victorian Minister for Planning in November 2024. The EES process is accredited to assess impacts on Matters of National Environmental Significance (MNES) listed under the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (EPBC Act) through the Bilateral Assessment Agreement between the Commonwealth and the State of Victoria. As a result, the EES Scoping Requirements (DELWP, 2020) also address the EPBC Act assessment requirements. The watermain alignment and location was included in the EES Project Description (Chapter 2).

The intent of this Native Vegetation Assessment (NVA) was to determine the presence of native vegetation within the watermain alignment. Where native vegetation was determined to be present, avoidance options were implemented to ensure that no native vegetation would be disturbed as a result of the installation and operation of the watermain.

To confirm the presence of native vegetation and to recommend any avoidance measures that may be required, Ewan Kelly (Associate Ecologist) and Sarah Hilliar (Senior Botanist) inspected the watermain alignment with Jarrod Pye (Principal Mining Engineer) of WIM Resource on 25 June 2025.

Native vegetation was assessed in accordance with the *Planning and Environment Act 1987* (P&E Act), the *Flora and fauna guarantee Act 1988* (FFG Act) and the EPBC Act, where applicable.

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The proposed watermain alignment occurs predominantly in broadacre cropping land or improved pasture. These areas did not contain native vegetation as defined in the Victoria Planning Provisions (Clause 73.01) and do not meet the definition of a patch of native vegetation as defined in *The Guidelines for the removal, destruction or lopping of native vegetation* (Guidelines) (Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning 2017) (Photo 1 and 2). Furthermore, the cropping or improvement of paddocks occurred to the property boundary fence and to a depth of over 15 centimetres.

In some instances, the watermain alignment was moved closer to property boundaries to avoid the dripline and the Tree Protection Zones (TPZs) of native trees retained within paddocks (photo 3). Vegetation adjacent to property boundaries (outside of the watermain construction footprint) includes derived and native grasslands (Figure 1, Photo 4). As the root structures of the native grasses do not spread into the adjacent cropped paddocks and the soil seed bank is considered disturbed, the proximity of the watermain to native grasslands is not considered a constraint. Construction controls and safeguards will be implemented to ensure native vegetation adjacent to the proposed watermain alignment is not disturbed during construction.

The proposed watermain alignment crosses several road reserves which contain native vegetation of varying type and condition (Photo 5 and 6). All roads will be underbored and entry and exit pits are to be restricted to adjacent cropping or farmland.

As a result of the above avoidance measures, the proposed construction and installation of the watermain will not result in disturbance of native vegetation or fauna habitats. Therefore, no further assessment or approvals relating to native vegetation or fauna habitat are required.

We trust that above advice and information is of assistance, please contact me if you have any queries or would like any clarification.

Yours sincerely,



Matt Gibson  
Senior Associate Ecologist  
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**Photos**



**Photo 1**

**Predominantly Introduced Vegetation adjacent to Longerenong Road, facing south, photo taken 25 June 2025.**



**Photo 2**

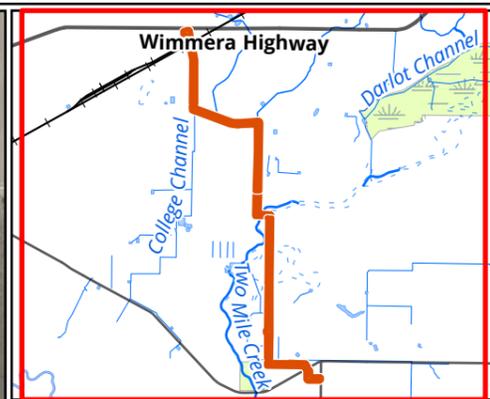
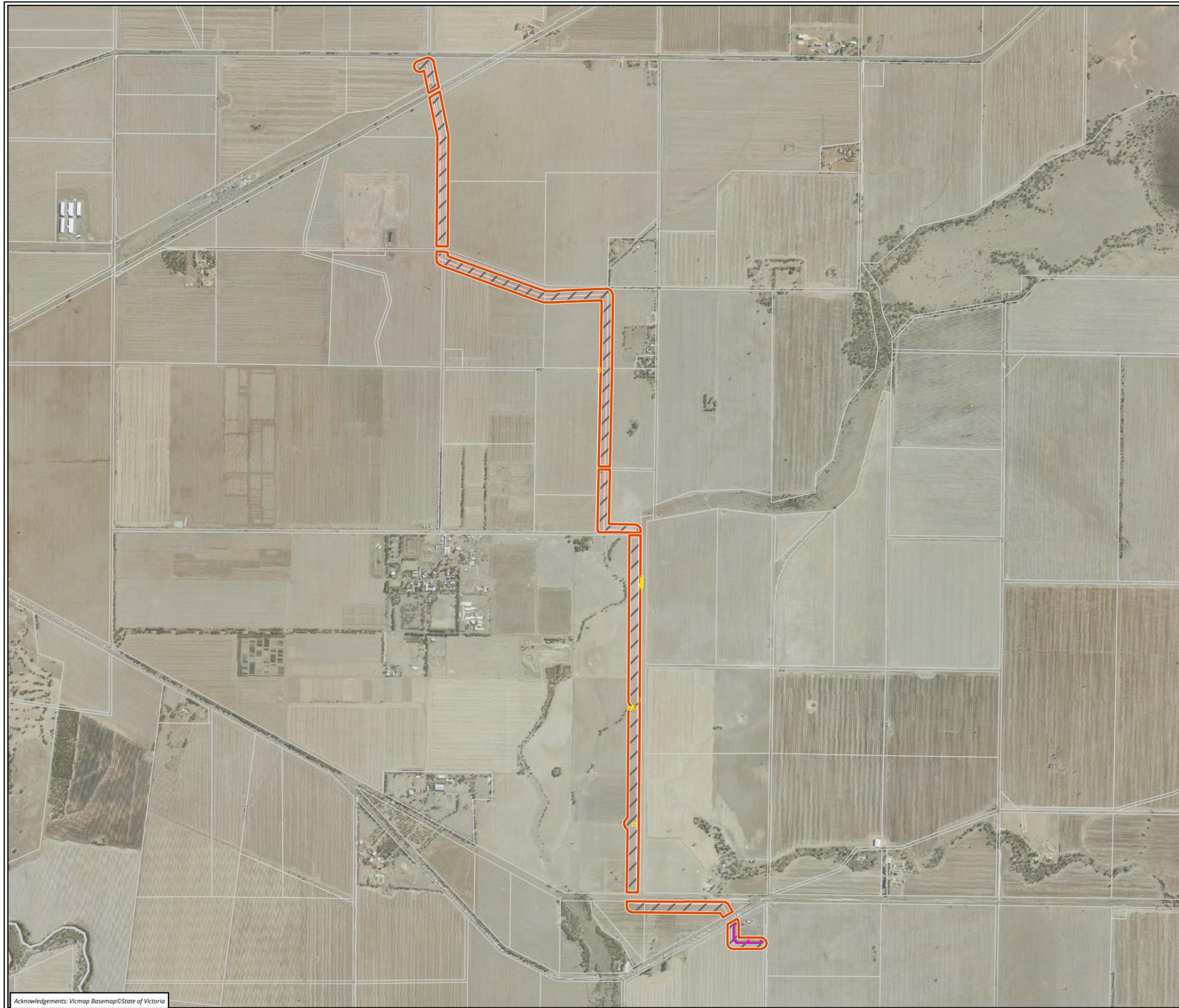
**Predominantly Introduced Vegetation adjacent to Molyneaux Road, facing north, photo taken 25 June 2025.**



**Photo 3** Retained tree in paddock, with fence line outside of TPZ, facing north, photo taken 25 June 2025.



**Photo 4** Reserve containing native vegetation east of fence line and cropped land to west, facing south, photo taken 25 June 2025.



- Legend**
- Study area
  - Current parcel boundary
  - Construction Disturbance Area
  - Cropped/non-native
  - EVC 103\_62 Northern Wimmera Riverine Chenopod Woodland (derived/cultivated)
  - Tree protection zone (TPZ)

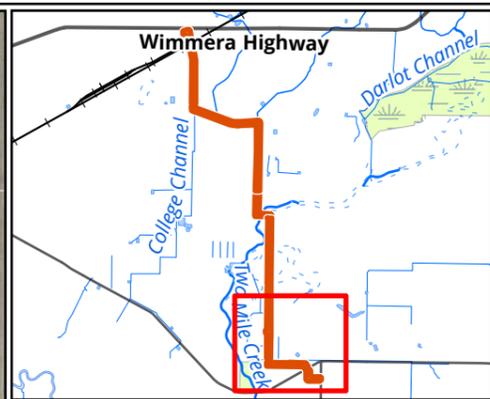
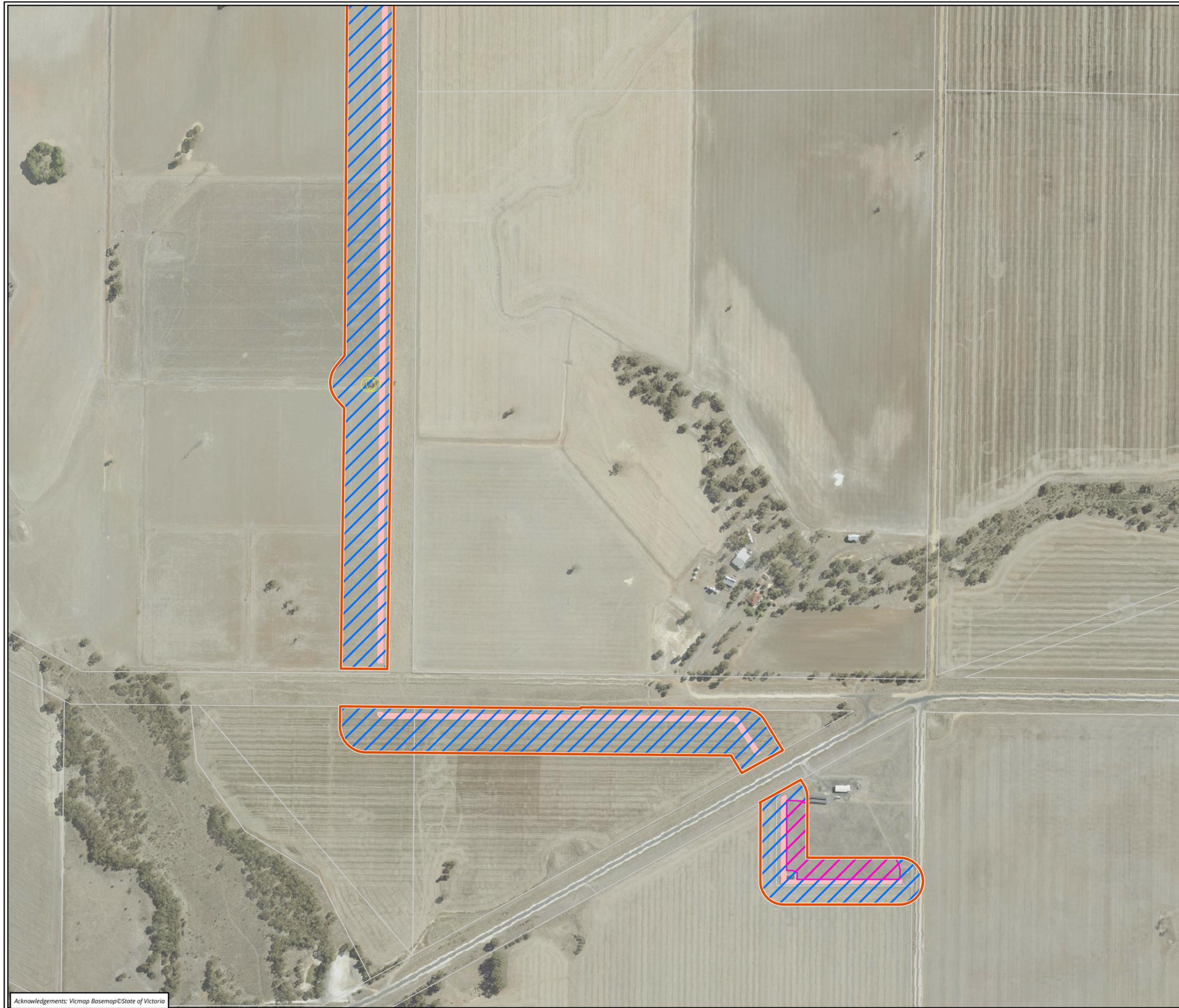
**Figure 1.1 Ecological features of the study area**

0 200 400 600 800 1,000  
 Metres  
 Scale: 1:25,000 @ A3  
 Coordinate System: GDA2020 MGA Zone 54



Matter: 42960,  
 Date: 15 August 2025,  
 Prepared for: EK, Prepared by: JPT, Last edited by: jturner  
 Layout: 42960\_F1\_EcoFeatures  
 Project: P:\42900s\42960\Mapping\42960\_Avonbank\_Pipeline\_Prelim.aprx

Acknowledgements: Vicmap Basemap © State of Victoria



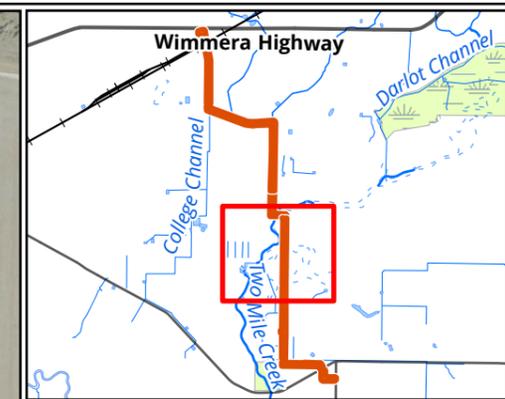
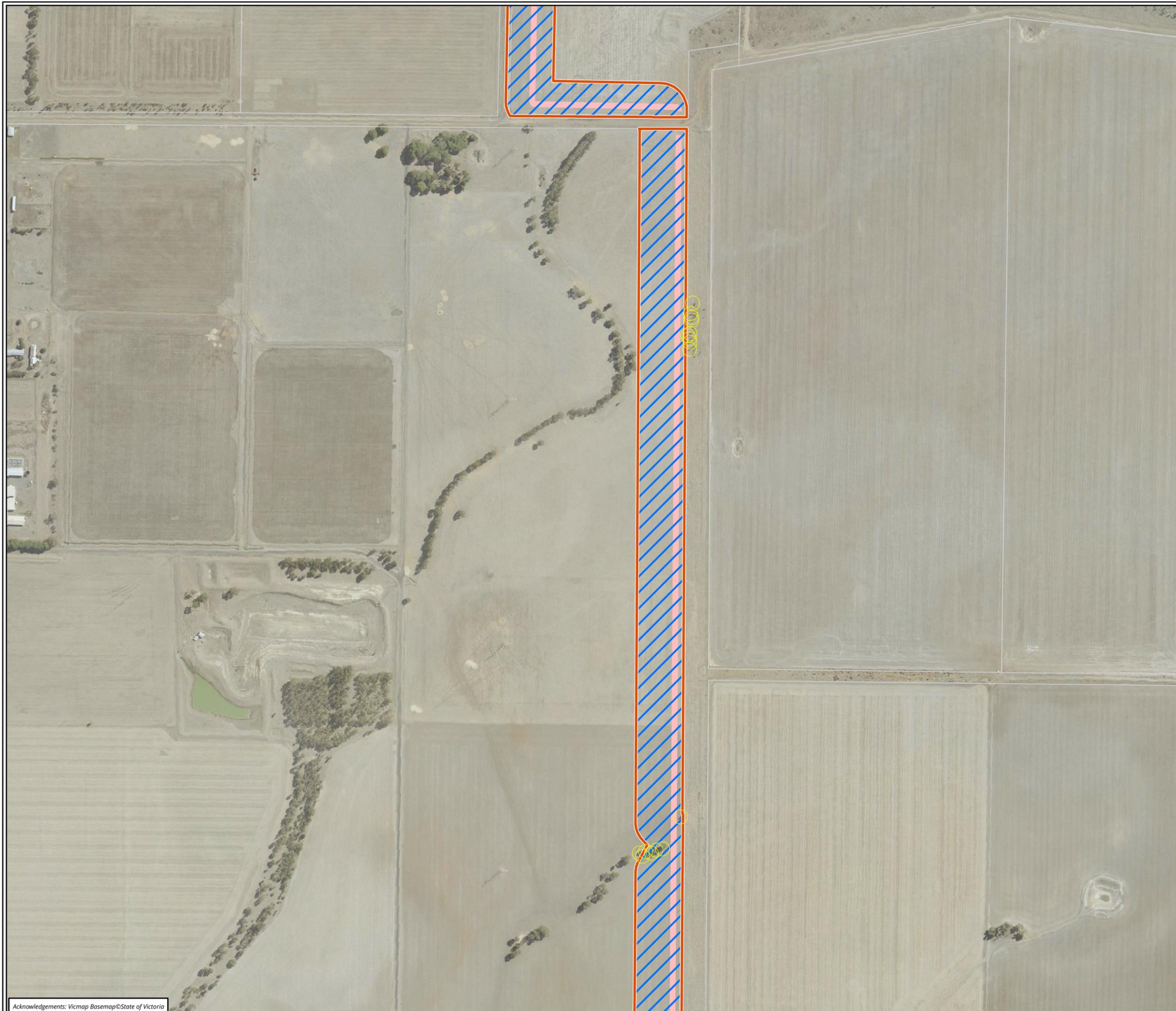
- Legend**
- Study area
  - Current parcel boundary
  - Construction Disturbance Area
  - Cropped/non-native
  - EVC 103\_62 Northern Wimmera Riverine Chenopod Woodland (derived/cultivated)
  - Tree protection zone (TPZ)

**Figure 1.2 Ecological features of the study area**

0 200  
 Metres  
 Scale: 1:6,000 @ A3  
 Coordinate System: GDA2020 MGA Zone 54



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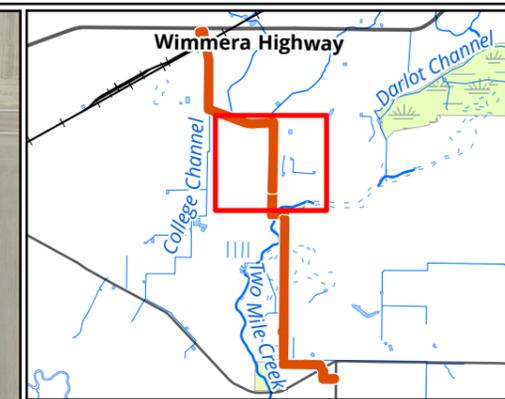
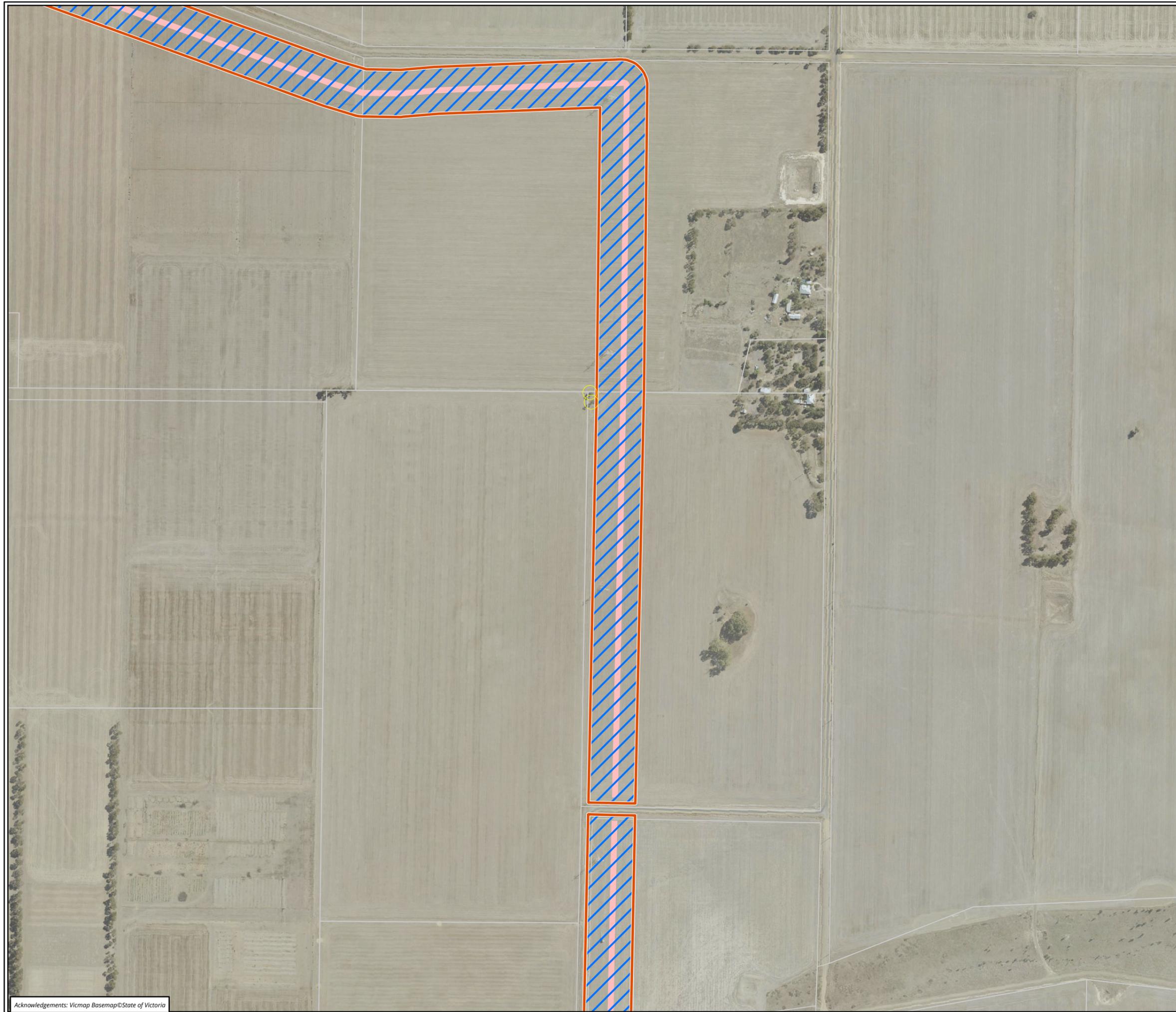
- Legend**
-  Study area
  -  Current parcel boundary
  -  Construction Disturbance Area
  -  Cropped/non-native
  -  Tree protection zone (TPZ)

**Figure 1.3 Ecological features of the study area**

0 200  
Metres  
Scale: 1:6,000 @ A3  
Coordinate System: GDA2020 MGA Zone 54

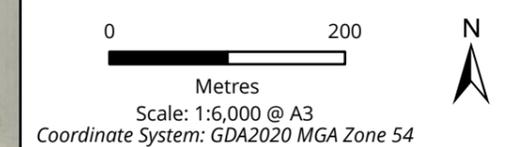


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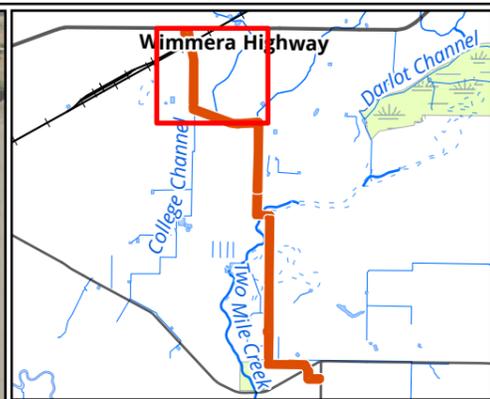
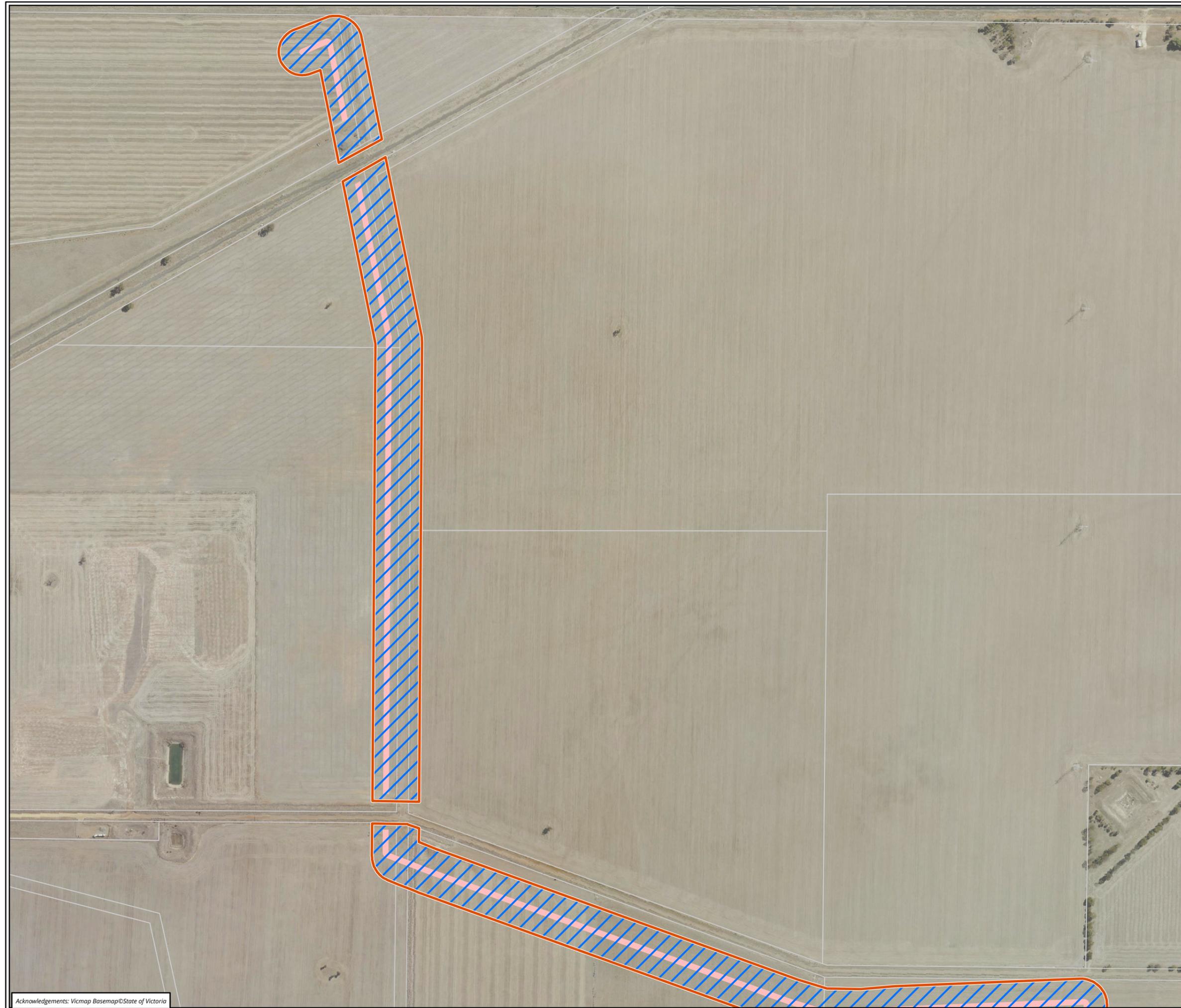
- Legend**
- Study area
  - Current parcel boundary
  - Construction Disturbance Area
  - Cropped/non-native
  - Tree protection zone (TPZ)

**Figure 1.4 Ecological features of the study area**



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- Legend**
-  Study area
  -  Current parcel boundary
  -  Construction Disturbance Area
  -  Cropped/non-native
  -  Tree protection zone (TPZ)

**Figure 1.5 Ecological features of the study area**

0 200  
Metres  
Scale: 1:6,000 @ A3  
Coordinate System: GDA2020 MGA Zone 54



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