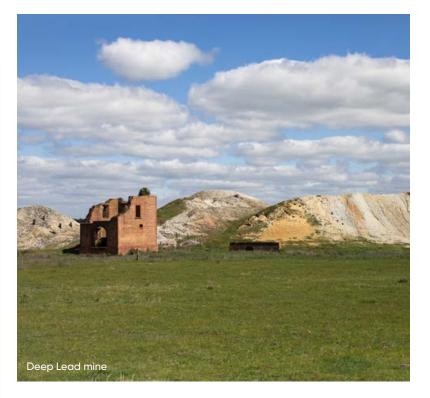Western Renewables Link

Historic heritage

Historic heritage in western Victoria is as rich as it is diverse, from archaeological remnants in and around Darley Military Camp to the ruins of the homes of early settlers who settled in the area in search of their fortunes during the Gold Rush. We have been conducting field surveys since 2021 to help us identify and protect historic heritage during the planning and design of the proposed Western Renewables Link.

Why are we conducting historic heritage field surveys and investigations?

Field surveys and investigations help us to identify and confirm the presence of historic heritage, as well as protect important sites in the planning and design of the proposed Western Renewables Link.

The Historic Heritage Impact Assessment, one of 20 technical reports being prepared for the project's Environment Effects Statement, will provide detailed information about historic heritage in the project area including existing historic heritage conditions, factors that influenced these histories, potential for project impacts on recorded and unrecorded heritage places and landscapes, and measures to avoid, mitigate or manage potential impacts on historic heritage.

Deep Lead mine

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What area is being assessed?

The study area for historic heritage extends 1km either side of the proposed route.

Heritage significance may be recognised at an international, federal, state or local government level and can be associated with aesthetic, archaeological, architectural, cultural, scientific or social attributes of a place.

How are the field surveys and investigations being conducted?

Desktop analysis is used to identify known historic places and archaeological sites, and previously unidentified places of possible historic heritage significance and areas of archaeological potential. Findings from previous heritage studies are used, as well as aerial imagery and historic heritage information provided by the community and project teams working in the field.

The technical specialists then conduct field surveys at potential heritage places to confirm if there are historic heritage values present that should be avoided or may be impacted.

✓ DESKTOP ANALYSIS

✓ PREVIOUS HERITAGE STUDIES

✓ AERIAL IMAGERY

✓ INFORMATION PROVIDED BY THE COMMUNITY AND PROJECT TEAMS

✓ FIELD SURVEYS

The former Darley Military Camp

The Darley Military Camp was established in 1940 as one of numerous Australian Imperial Forces training centres used by Australian and Allied Service personnel during World War II. Located about eight kilometres north-west of Bacchus Marsh, the camp had more than 360 buildings, including a hospital, post office and recreation huts.

The camp housed up to 4,200 personnel between 1940 and 1946. During this period, it was home to a variety of military units including the Militia, Training Battalions, the Australian Women's Army Service, the Australian Army Medical Women's Service, the Australian Army Nursing Service, the Royal Australian Army Medical Corps, U.S. Marines and colonial troops from the Dutch East Indies.

Currently, a portion of the Darley Military Camp is registered with the Victorian Heritage Inventory (VHI H7722-0080). Through the project's field surveys and investigations, we have identified that an unregistered portion of the camp's land meets the definition of an archaeological site under the *Heritage Act 2017* as it has significant remnants of the Second Australian Imperial Force and a high probability of occupational deposits, construction deposits, and subsurface features that are 75 or more years old.

The former Darley Military Camp was located near Darley.

Where have historic heritage places been identified?

The entire area surrounding the proposed route is dotted with historic heritage places, including archaeological sites such as former gold mines and diggings, buildings and structures such as historic homesteads and precincts, inns and hotels, churches and cemeteries, residences, mills, bridges, and dry-stone walls.

Due to the nature and location of economic activity in the area since European colonisation, the largest numbers of historic heritage places are at and around the townships of Creswick, Bacchus Marsh and Melton.

The technical specialists have found several heritage places and sites that have not previously been identified, including places that may have heritage significance. This includes 15 historic heritage locations which were found based on information provided by community members (social pinpoint data).

How is the information being used?

Field surveys and investigations are required to confirm the existing conditions and environmental sensitivities of the land and assess the potential impacts of the project. The findings of field surveys are helping us to identify the proposed route with the least overall impact and to identify indicative tower sites and access track locations in consultation with landholders.

What is historic heritage?

Historic heritage includes places, such as buildings, objects and monuments, gardens and landscapes, and archaeological sites relevant to Victoria's early colonial history.

More information

You can find the latest information about the project and historic heritage impacts on the project website's **Resources** page, and the latest project information on the project website's **News & Events** page.

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Information straight to your inbox

Sign up for information straight to your inbox at the Project website **westernrenewableslink.com.au**.

Need an interpreter?

👥 If English is not your first language or you need an interpreter, please call 13 14 50.

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If you have a query, a compliment or a complaint, you can let us know by using the online enquiry form on **westernrenewableslink.com.au**. Or you can let us know by:

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