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# Submission to the Victorian Planning Authority

Proposed Amendment – Bendigo Regional Employment Precinct  
City of Greater Bendigo

## 1. Introduction

We are the owners and occupiers of a working farm located [REDACTED] [REDACTED] the proposed Bendigo Regional Employment Park. Whilst we do not object to the amendment, we wish to raise several key matters that require careful consideration by the Victorian Planning Authority and the City of Greater Bendigo due to the potential direct and ongoing impacts on our agricultural and residential use.

Given the scale and long-term nature of the proposed employment park, it is important that these matters are addressed clearly within the amendment framework and reflected in appropriate future controls and conditions.

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## 2. Overland Water Flow and Catchment Function

Existing **overland water flows** across the site are critical to the operation of our farm. These flows contribute to:

- The filling and replenishment of our on-farm dams, and
- Downstream flows into **Dry Creek**.

The amendment must ensure that natural drainage patterns are maintained and that development does not reduce, increase, intercept or redirect overland water in a way that diminishes downstream availability. Detailed drainage and hydrological planning should be required to demonstrate no net loss to existing flows.

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## 3. Protection of Water Quality

Water quality is of equal importance to water quantity. Industrial development introduces an increased risk of contaminated runoff, including sediments, hydrocarbons and other pollutants.

The amendment should ensure that:

- Best-practice **water-sensitive urban design** measures are embedded from the outset
  - Long-term management and maintenance of drainage infrastructure is secured
  - Downstream agricultural uses are protected from any deterioration in water quality
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#### 4. Wilsons Hill Water Channel

The **Wilsons Hill water channel**, which runs through the proposed employment park site, is our **primary source of water for both stock and domestic use**.

This channel is essential infrastructure for delivering water to our farm and must be:

- Fully protected from disturbance or contamination
- Buffered appropriately from industrial development
- Maintained with secure access and guaranteed ongoing functionality

Any change that compromises the reliability or quality of this water source would have serious consequences for our farming and residential use.

Alternatively, a piped network to replace the aging open channel would be acceptable if water quality and volume are maintained.

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#### 5. Traffic Impacts and Wimmera Highway

The proposed amendment will increase traffic volumes, including heavy vehicles, accessing the BREP from the **Wimmera Highway**.

To ensure safety and long-term functionality:

- **Dedicated protected turning lanes** should be provided to manage industrial access
- The existing farm access off the Highway must be maintained.

To facilitate the intersection works, shoulder widening and sealing, table drain maintenance and future road widening a minimum of 10 metres should be reserved along the entire western side of the site for additional road reserve. These upgrades should be planned for and safeguarded as part of the amendment.

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#### 6. Protection of Established Trees and Habitat

The established **old growth trees** along the **Wimmera Highway and McCreddons Road** provide:

- Important habitat for native fauna
- Significant landscape and visual screening value
- A strong contribution to rural character along key road corridors

These trees should be retained and protected wherever possible, with appropriate buffers and controls incorporated into the amendment to avoid their loss.

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## 7. Setback from Wimmera Highway

A meaningful **setback of development from the Wimmera Highway** is important to:

- Maintain the rural character of the highway approach
- Reduce visual dominance of large industrial buildings
- Allow space for vegetation retention, landscaping and future road upgrades

The amendment should clearly articulate minimum setbacks and design expectations.

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## 8. Noise, Lighting and Night-Time Operations

To protect the **residential amenity** of our dwelling and farm, controls on **night-time operations** are required.

In particular, consideration should be given to:

- Restrictions on operating hours where appropriate
- Limits on noise-generating activities during night periods
- Management of lighting spill from buildings and external areas

These matters are critical to ensuring compatibility between industrial uses and nearby rural residences.

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## 9. Conclusion

The matters outlined above are fundamental to the continued operation of our farm and our residential amenity. While we acknowledge the strategic importance of the Bendigo Regional Employment Precinct, it is essential that the amendment framework fully recognises and responds to these impacts.

We respectfully request that these issues be carefully considered and addressed through the amendment and any associated planning controls, guidelines or future permit requirements.