

The Melbourne Energy & Resource Centre: Site Selection

Waste-to-energy projects in Victoria

By 2053 Victoria is forecast to send an estimated 8.9 million tonnes of waste to landfill each year. Victoria needs a number of facilities across the State to support waste disposal each and every day. That's enough to fill almost 5,000 Olympic sized swimming pools or 9.5 MCGs, every year.

The *Victorian Recycling Infrastructure Plan 2024* warns that our current landfill capacity is not sufficient to meet this growing volume.

We now face a critical choice: keep sending most residual waste to landfill, or reserve valuable landfill space for materials with no other treatment options. Cleanaway's proposed Melbourne Energy & Resource Centre (MERC) in Wollert is about increasing waste treatment options and reducing waste disposed to landfill.

MERC will help Victoria move towards a more sustainable, circular economy by recovering value from waste that cannot be recycled. Instead of going to landfill, this residual waste will recover energy and other useful resources, reducing the environmental footprint of waste management while supporting the state's growing needs. The *Recycling Victoria: A new economy policy (2020)* aims to reduce the amount of waste going to landfill by 80% by 2030.

The Victorian Government is supporting a mix of strategies, including waste-to-energy facilities, to manage residual waste that cannot be reused or recycled. One of the proposals under consideration is the Melbourne Energy & Resource Centre (MERC) in Wollert.

Locating waste-to-energy facilities near population areas that produce waste, like residential communities and businesses, reduces the need for long-distance waste transport and allows the resources (such as energy) recovered from waste to be used locally.

How the MERC site was chosen

The MERC will be located at 510 Summerhill Road Wollert.

The site in Wollert was chosen because it met several important criteria:

1 Planning policy support

Since 2012, plans have identified parts of Wollert as suitable for employment and utility development. As shown in the Victorian Planning Authority's (VPA) 10-year plan for Melbourne's greenfield areas, the zoning of 510 Summerhill Road aligns with the intended industrial use for MERC. The Whittlesea Planning Scheme also places this site within the *Northern Quarries Investigation Area*, which is meant for employment-focused developments.

2 Distance from residences

Most nearby homes, schools, and future residential areas are located greater than 1 km away from the proposed MERC site, with only one dwelling closer than this. This distance helps reduce impacts to local residents.

3 Connection to local industry

The proposed site is located close to developing industrial areas, like the area identified within the *Craigieburn North Precinct Structure Plan*, where businesses might benefit from using the energy, steam, or leftover materials generated from the MERC process. Additionally, established industrial facilities in nearby areas, such as Campbellfield, could also provide services that the MERC will need when operational.

4 Freight and road access

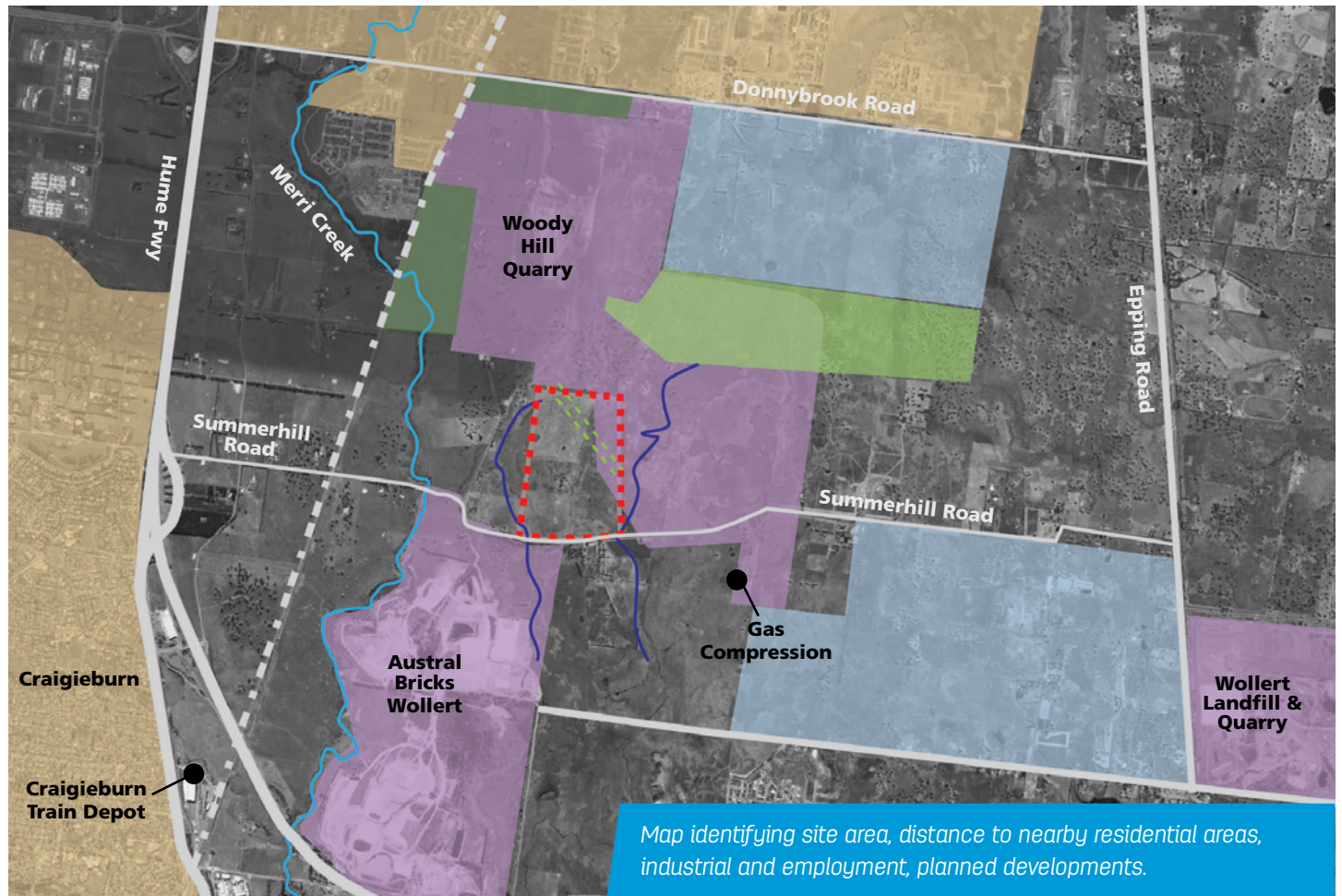
The site is close to the Hume Freeway, accessible via Amaroo Road. Plans are being discussed to further strengthen Summerhill Road to support the transport of waste and resources to and from the facility. Importantly, the route to the MERC does not pass through residential areas.

5 Limited other development options

The site's location next to three quarries makes it unsuitable for residential or other sensitive uses due to buffer zones required around the quarries. Buffer zones mitigate issues like noise, dust, and visual intrusion, ensuring quarries can operate while minimising negative impacts on residential areas.

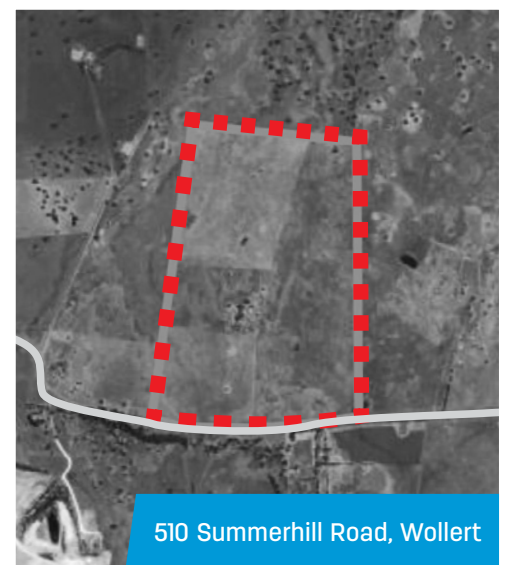
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Legend

- Existing & future industrial
- Existing residential
- Future residential
- Future conservation
- Future public facilities (parkland, small retail etc)
- Property boundary
- Train track
- Existing tributary
- Existing transmission line easement
- Roads



Find out more or contact us at: 03 9021 0603
cleanaway.com.au/location/melbourne-energy-and-resource-centre