Environmental Assessment Report

Simplot Australia Pty Ltd

Installation of a Wet Electrostatic Scrubber Precipitator (WESP)

8 Jetty Street, Ulverstone

May 2025

EPA TASMANIA

ENVIRONMENT PROTECTION AUTHORITY

Environmental Assessment Report

Proponent	**Simplot Australia Pty Ltd**
Proposal	Installation of a Wet Electrostatic Scrubber Precipitator (WESP)
Location	8 Jetty Street, Ulverstone
Class of Assessment	2A
PCE no.	12027
Permit Application No.	2024/164 Central Coast Council
myDAS Folder No.	24/3512
myDAS Document No.	D25-17711

Assessment Process Milestones

Date	Milestone
14/06/2024	Permit Application submitted to Council
5/07/2024	Application received by the Board
8/08/2024	Guidelines Issued
22/02/2025	Start of public consultation period
11/03/2025	End of public consultation period
2/04/2025	Additional information (Supplement) submitted to the Board
10/04/2025	Date draft conditions issued to proponent
12/05/2025	Statutory period for assessment ends

Glossary/Acronyms

Term	Detail
Air EPP	*Environmental Protection Policy (Air Quality) 2004 Tasmania*
Board	Board of the Environment Protection Authority
EER	Environmental Effects Report
EIA	Environmental Impact Assessment
EMPCA	*Environmental Management and Pollution Control Act 1994*
EMPCS	Environmental Management and Pollution Control System
FOG	Food, Oil, Grease trade waste system
LUPAA	*Land Use Planning and Approvals Act 1993*
NOI	Notice of Intent
NSP	Noise-sensitive premises
NSW 2022	*Approved Methods for the Modelling and Assessment of Air Pollutants in New South Wales 2022*
PM_{10}	Fine particulate matter with an equivalent aerodynamic diameter of less than 10 micrometres.
RMPS	Resource Management and Planning System of Tasmania
SD	Sustainable Development
TSP	Total Suspended Particulates
TSPA	*Threatened Species Protection Act 1995*
TWA	Trade Waste Agreement
WESP	Wet Electrostatic Scrubber Precipitator

Report Summary

This report provides an environmental assessment of a proposal by Simplot Australia Pty Ltd.

The proposal involves the installation of an exhaust cleaning system (a wet electrostatic scrubber precipitator, WESP) and associated stack at the existing Simplot Australia Pty Ltd Production Centre in Ulverstone. The purpose of the proposal is to decrease the amount of particulate matter emitted from the existing fryer stacks. The WESP will be installed within the existing boiler house. Seven existing stacks will be removed and ducted through the WESP into the single new stack.

This report has been prepared based on information provided in the permit application and Environmental Effects Report (EER). Relevant government agencies and the public were consulted, and their submissions, representations and comments considered as part of the assessment.

Appendix 1 contains details of matters raised by the public during the consultation process.

Appendix 2 contains a table of the proponent's proposed management measures.

Appendix 3 contains the environmental permit conditions for the proposal.

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1. Approval Process

An application for a permit under the *Land Use Planning and Approvals Act 1993* (LUPAA) in relation to the proposal was submitted to Central Coast Council on 14 June 2024.

The proposal seeks to remove seven existing factory fryer exhaust stacks at the Simplot Australia Pty Ltd potato processing facility in Ulverstone. The exhaust streams currently ventilated through the seven existing stacks will instead be directed to an exhaust cleaning system (wet electrostatic precipitator). Material removed from the exhaust stream will be directed to the on-site wastewater treatment plant, and the cleaned exhaust stream will be drafted to one new stack. This proposal enables a 'level 2 activity' under clause 4(e), Schedule 2 of the *Environmental Management and Pollution Control Act 1994* (EMPCA), being Produce Processing Works, and is therefore a level 2 activity in itself.

Section 25(1) of the EMPCA requires Council to refer the application to the Board of the Environment Protection Authority (the Board) for assessment under the Act. The application was received by the Board on 5 July 2024.

The Board required that information to support the proposal be provided in the form of an Environmental Effects Report (EER), prepared in accordance with the Guidelines issued by the Board on 8 August 2024. Five drafts of the EER were submitted to EPA for review against the Guidelines prior to finalisation and acceptance on behalf of the Board by the Board's delegate on 6 February 2025.

The EER was released for public inspection for 14 days commencing on 22 February 2025. An advertisement was placed in *The Advocate*. One public representation was received.

On 19 March 2025, the Manager, Environmental Assessments requested that the proponent submit additional information to address matters raised during the public consultation period. Satisfactory additional information, in the form of a Supplement to the EER, was submitted by the proponent on 2 April 2025.

The Acting Executive Director, Environmental Assessments has undertaken determination of the assessment under delegation from the Board.

2. SD Objectives and EIA Principles

The proposal must be considered by the Board in the context of the objectives of the Resource Management and Planning System of Tasmania (RMPS), and the Environmental Management and Pollution Control System (EMPCS). Both sets of objectives are specified in Schedule 1 of EMPCA.

The functions of the Board are to administer and enforce the provisions of EMPCA, and to use its best endeavours to further the RMPS and EMPCS objectives. The Board must assess the proposal in accordance with the Environmental Impact Assessment Principles defined in Section 74 of EMPCA.

3. The Proposal

The main characteristics of the proposal are summarised below. A detailed description of the proposal is provided in Section B of the EER.

Summary of the proposal's main characteristics

Activity

Simplot Australia Pty Ltd's potato processing facility is located at 8 Jetty Street Ulverstone (Figure 1). The existing production facility is a level 2 activity under clause 4(e) of Schedule 2 of EMPCA (Produce Processing Works), processing approximately 280,000 tonnes of potato annually into French fries and other value-added products. Potatoes are delivered to site, washed, peeled, inspected and fed to cutters to make potato strips. The strips are blanched, dried, par-fried, frozen, graded and packaged. Potato nubbins, slivers and small off cuts are processed into potato gems and hash browns. The site operates under Permit (former Licence to Operate Scheduled Premises) No. 3522, DA 2002/21 and DA 211076 as varied by Environment Protection Notice (EPN) No. 7372/2 ('the Permit').

Figure 1: Simplot Australia Pty Ltd Production Centre Located on Jetty Street, Ulverstone (Figure 3 of the EER).

The proposal under assessment to aims to improve the management of emissions from seven fryer exhaust stacks associated with three production lines. These stacks have historically emitted oily particulate matter to the atmosphere and caused nuisance in the local community.

Currently, production Line 1 Fryer (chip line) is drafted to two stacks, Line 2 Fryer (chip line) is drafted to three stacks and Value Added (VA) Line 2 Fryer (hash browns and potato gems) is drafted to two stacks (Figure 2). The exhaust streams previously ventilated through the seven existing stacks will instead be directed to an exhaust cleaning system (wet electrostatic precipitator, WESP), which uses electrical fields to charge particles and then collect them on electrodes from which they can be washed. Further description of how the WESP is operated is provided in Appendix A of the EER. Material removed from

the exhaust stream will be directed to the on-site wastewater treatment plant, and the cleaned exhaust stream will be drafted through one new stack to the atmosphere.

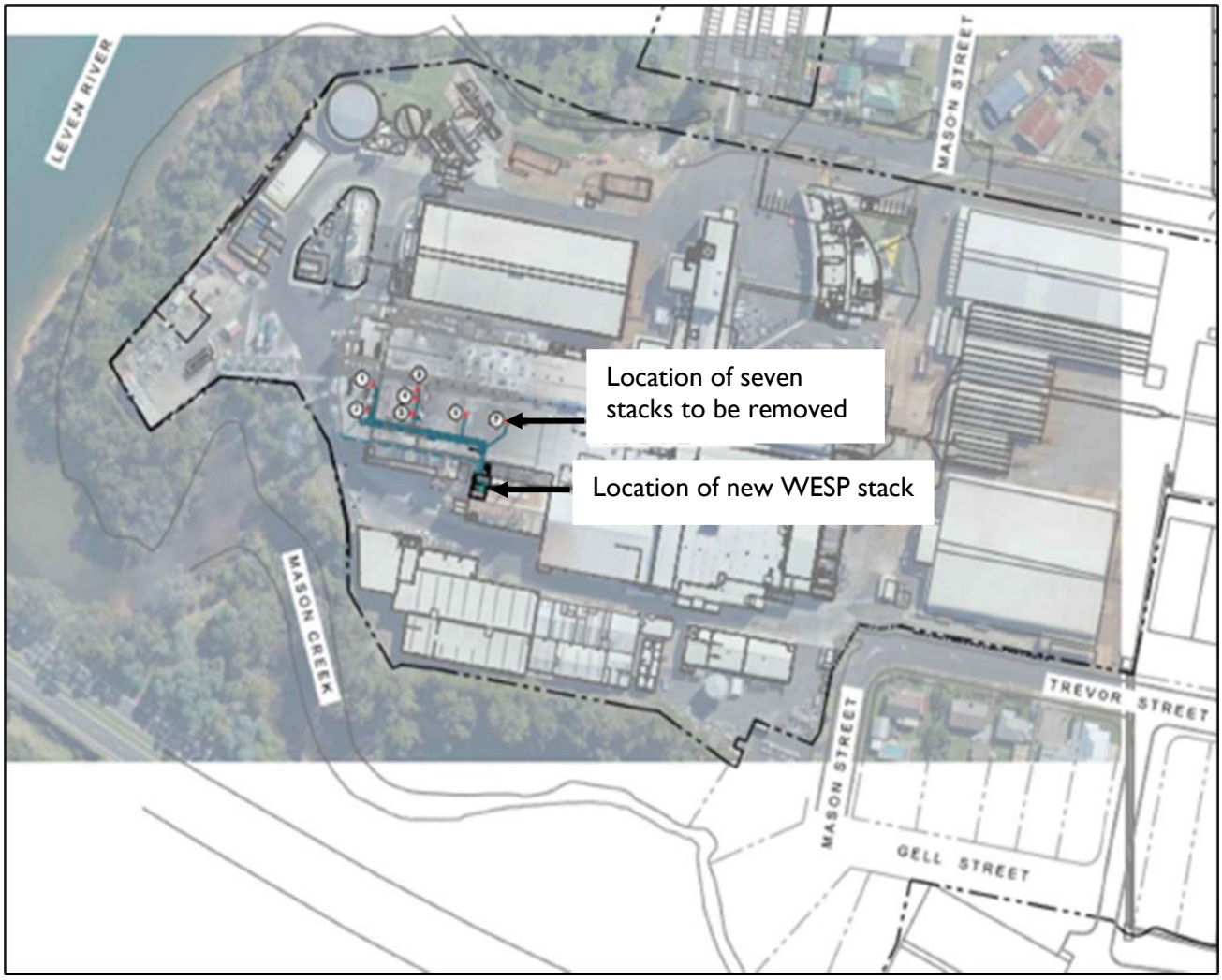

Figure 2: Site plan indicating the existing seven stacks for modification and location of proposed WESP stack (adapted from Figure 5 of the EER).

The development will involve modifying the boiler room on the southern side of the existing chip and potato processing shed. The boiler room roof will be elevated by 2.4 m (total height 13.2 m) to accommodate a new platform for the WESP and an extended service stack. The proposed system will collect exhaust from the fryers, which will first pass through an inlet quench and then be directed via rooftop ducting to the WESP system and stack (23.3 m in height above ground level).

Particle collection tubes in the WESP are flushed with water and cleaning chemicals (caustic soda and antifoam) for 90 seconds every 90 minutes. The waste liquid drains into a recycling tank. The recycling tank pumps water back to the quench duct and recirculation system. Overflows from the system occur as fresh water is added, and report to the on-site wastewater treatment system for primary treatment (floating, settling and centrifuging to separate solids from liquids) (Appendix A of the EER). Treated wastewater is discharged to TasWater's Ulverstone Wastewater Treatment Plant. Fats separated from wastewater in the on-site wastewater treatment system are collected and usually sold for biodiesel or otherwise recycled.

There are an additional three stacks currently in operation at the site: stacks for Boiler 1 and Boiler 3 (gas fired boilers) and a gas turbine co-generator stack. These stacks are independent of the proposal and are regulated by condition A4 of the Permit.

This proposal will enable the existing level 2 activity and is therefore treated as a level 2 activity in itself. It is not necessary to impose a regulatory limit on the operation of the WESP because its inputs and outputs are entirely dependent on the broader level 2 activity and do not need to beindependently controlled. Limits on the overall operation are imposed by condition Q1 of the Permit, which states that the activity must not exceed 36,000 kilograms per hour of processing capacity.

Location and planning context

Location	Jetty Street, Ulverstone, as shown in Figure 1
Land zoning	General Industrial
Land tenure	Private Freehold

Activity site

Land Use	Food processing
Topography	Site is situated on flat terrain, with an elevation ranging from 10 to 30 meters above sea level. The immediate surroundings of the site also consist of flat terrain.
Hydrology	The Leven River is to the west and Masons Creek is to the south of the site.

Location region

Climate	Rainfall approximately 937.9 mm per annum. Wind direction predominantly westerly with south westerlies sub-dominant.
Surrounding land zoning, tenure and uses	The site is surrounded by Light Industrial, General Residential, Utilities (highway), Community Purpose (cemetery) and Environmental Management (foreshore, Crown Land) zones, with Recreation Zone (cricket ground) directly across the river.

Proposed infrastructure

Major equipment	Wet electrostatic scrubber precipitator (WESP) equipment includes: • Main ID fan • Tube cooling fan • Purge fan and air heater • Recycling flush and sump pumps
Other infrastructure	Boiler house roof height increase (2.4 m) New flue stack (23.3 m from ground level) New rooftop platforms

Inputs

Water	Predominantly recycled wastewater collected from the WESP inlet quench duct and hydraulic sprays that flow in to the recycle tank including an additional input of 15,000 L/day of mains water compared to current operations.
Energy	Grid electricity. Will not require a fuel source.

Wastes and emissions

Liquid	Discharge of an additional 8,000 L/day of treated wastewater to TasWater's Ulverstone wastewater network under a new Trade Waste Agreement.
Atmospheric	Particulates and odour to be emitted from new stack, at lower (predicted) levels than from the existing activity. Minor dust emissions from cutting concrete foundation during construction only.
Solid	General refuse including food scraps, paper and packaging. General inert wastes such as metal waste arising from construction.
Controlled and other wastes	Wastes such as oil filters, oil contaminated waste and any grease contaminated materials may be generated during construction and maintenance. Fats, oils and grease (FOG) collected from the inner tubing of the WESP will be treated on site in the existing FOG treatment plant. Waste oil is recovered and sent for recycling as biodiesel.
Noise	Noise emissions may be generated during construction due to additional vehicle movements and concrete cutting. Noise from WESP operation is expected to be below background noise levels.
Greenhouse gases	No significant new sources.

Construction, commissioning and operations

Proposal timetable	Structural fabrication commissioned November 2024. Installation to commence as soon as operationally feasible after approvals are obtained.
Operating hours (ongoing)	24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

4. Project Rationale and Alternatives

The primary purpose of the development is to reduce particulate discharge from fryer exhaust stacks at the facility by redirecting the fryer exhaust streams, via on-roof ducting, to the WESP proposed to be installed within the existing site boiler house.

There are currently no stack emission limits on the fryer stacks. However, between March 2022 and April 2023, 22 complaints were made to Simplot by the public in relation to emissions from the site. 19 of these related to particulate matter deposits on private residential property, two related to odour and one related to an intermittent high-pitched noise. Simplot analysed the particulate matter deposits and concluded that the substance was canola oil from the fryer stacks. It trialled several measures to reduce atmospheric emissions. These included:

- Modifying stack tops from a 'tapered' top (designed to achieve penetration of the plume into the atmosphere), to a 'hatted' top (designed to cause a double direction change to condense and drop out any oil vapours) (December 2022). This resulted in a minor reduction in particulates.

- Adjusting operational parameters to optimise the performance of the initial stack design (February/March 2023). This resulted in minimal change in particulate emissions.

- Diverting the Line 1 fryer exhaust into the Boiler 1 stack via the site's pre-upgrade fryer ducting and oil recovery system (March/April 2023). This resulted in a substantial reduction in particulates and a significant drop in complaints.

Simplot reportedly employs WESP technology at many of its North American plants and asserts that similar technology would be of benefit at the Ulverstone site to control emissions to air on an ongoing basis.

5. Public and Agency Consultation

One public submission was received during the public consultation period, relating to noise, odour and particulate emissions. Appendix 1 of this report provides further detail on the submission. A Supplement to the EER was requested on 19 March 2025 in response to the noise aspects raised in the submission. Noise aspects of the proposal are discussed in full in Section 7.3.3.

Advice was received from the following agencies with an interest in the proposal:

- TasWater
- Department of Health
- Central Coast Council

The EPA regulatory officer for the existing site and EPA air, water and noise specialists also reviewed and provided advice on the EER.

6. General Permit Conditions

The following general conditions will be imposed on the activity:

G1 Activity Area

G2 Access to and awareness of conditions and associated documents

G3 Incident response

G4 Proposed change to activity

G5 Change of responsibility

G6 Change of ownership

G7 Complaints register

G8 Notification prior to commissioning

G9 Amendment of required plans and reports

H1 Storage and handling of hazardous materials

H2 Spill kits

7. Evaluation of Environmental Issues

The following environmental issues are relevant to the proposal.

- Emissions to air
- Wastewater
- Noise emissions

These issues are examined in the following subsections, followed by a short discussion of other environmental aspects.

7.1 Issue 1: Emissions to air

7.1.1 Potential impacts

The site is located in a General Industrial Zone bordered to the north by General Residential zone, to the east by Environmental Management and Recreation zoning and to the north, east and south by Light Industrial zoning. The closest residential properties are located 20 m to the north of the site (Figure 3). Winds are predominantly west and south westerly.

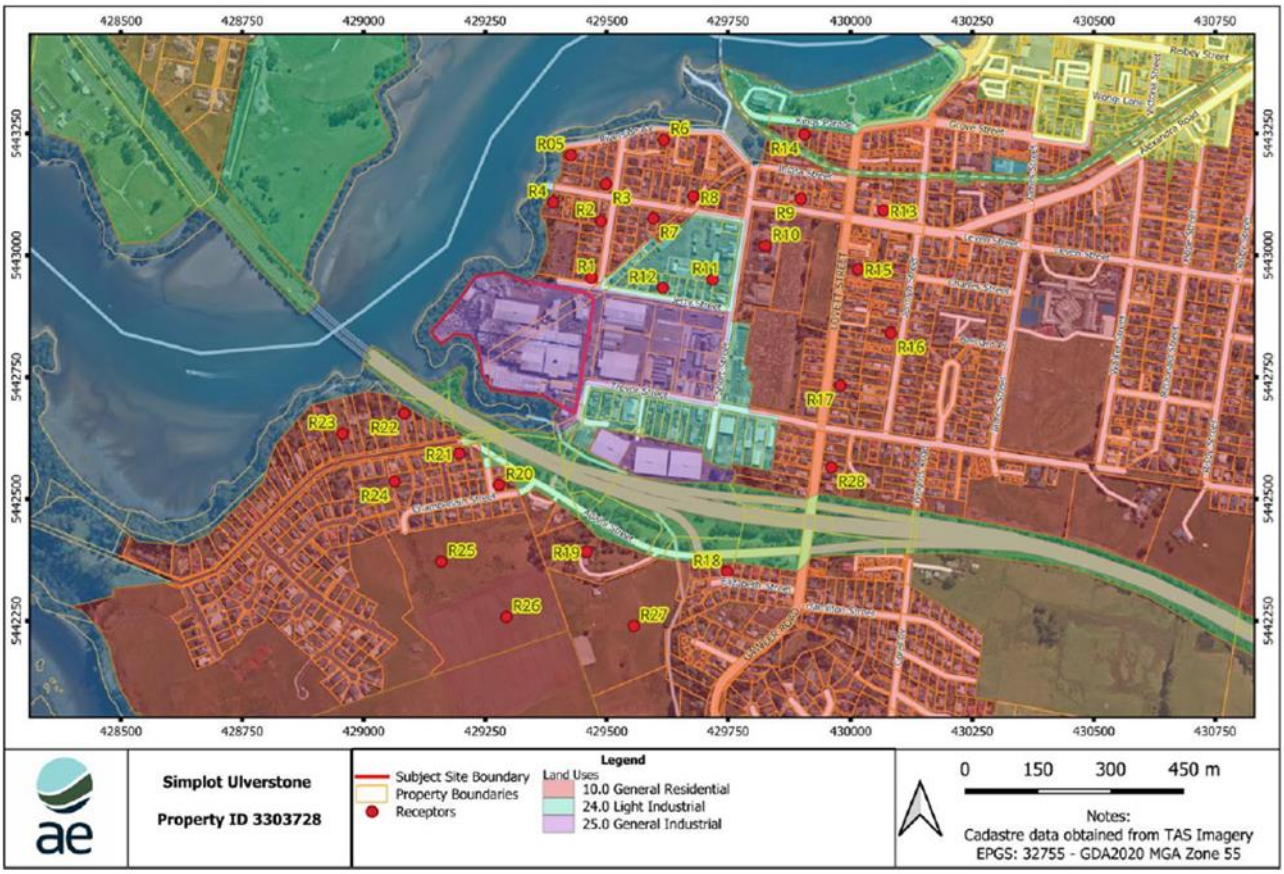

Figure 3: Map of area indicating Tasmania Planning Scheme Zones and location of representative receptors within 500 m of site (Source: Appendix H of the EER)

Assured Environmental (AE) was engaged by Tasmanian Consulting Service on behalf of Simplot to prepare an air quality impact assessment for the proposed installation of the WESP (Appendix H of the EER). The impact assessment included modelling of particulate and odour emissions. Potential impacts at 28 representative locations within a 500 m radius of the proposed site were considered (Figure 3).

Particulate matter impacts

The primary air emissions of concern for this proposal are particulates derived from canola oil mist. Particulate emissions have previously settled on neighbouring residences and vehicles, causing nuisance.

Based on load specifications, the WESP manufacturer expects the WESP to achieve an in-stack concentration for total suspended particulate matter (TSP) of 79 mg/m^3, which represents a reduction of 80% compared to current emission rates and falls within the generic maximum in-stack concentration of 100 mg/m^3 specified for industrial stack concentration in the Air EPP. The same specification has been used to conservatively model emission rates for particulates of less than 10 micron diameter (PM_{10}), which pose a greater risk to human health.

Background PM_{10} data collected by the EPA through its statewide air monitoring network was considered in the assessment, and an estimate of background TSP concentration was obtained by doubling background PM_{10} concentrations.

In the absence of local standards, a target for annual mean ambient TSP concentration of 90 µg/m^3 was obtained from the *Approved Methods for the Modelling and Assessment of Air Pollutants in New South Wales 2022*. Meanwhile, the Air EPP sets a target limit for PM_{10} of 50 µg/m^3 as a 24-hour mean and 25 µg/m^3 as an annual mean. Modelling showed that maximum predicted ground level particulate concentrations at the land boundary were within these limits, both with and without taking background concentrations into account (Table 1 and Table 2).

Table 1: Predicted ground level particulate concentrations at sensitive receivers and boundary – Simplot emissions only

Parameter	Averaging period	Maximum at sensitive receivers (µg/m^3)	Maximum at boundary (µg/m^3)	Target maximum (µg/m^3)
TSP	Annual	0.94	1.96	90
PM_{10}	24 hours	8.8	16.3	50
	Annual	1.06	1.96	25

Table 2: Predicted ground level particulate concentrations at sensitive receivers and boundary – including background concentrations

Parameter	Averaging period	Maximum at sensitive receivers (µg/m^3)	Maximum at boundary (µg/m^3)	Target maximum (µg/m^3)
TSP	Annual	30.5	31.6	90
PM_{10}	24 hours	27.6	25.1	50
	Annual	15.9	16.9	25

Odour impacts

The existing Simplot facility is non-compliant with odour control standards, notably that odour at the boundary or beyond is not to exceed 2 odour units (ou). The current maximum odour at the boundary previously modelled was predicted to be 28 ou, based on data collected at the site over 4 days in August 2023. With the WESP in place, odour emissions are expected to slightly decrease to 25.7 ou at the boundary and 18.8 ou at sensitive receivers (Table 3).

Table 3: Predicted ground level odour concentrations at sensitive receivers and boundary

Parameter	Averaging period	Maximum at sensitive receivers (µg/m³)	Maximum at boundary (µg/m³)	Target maximum (µg/m³)
Odour	1 hour, 99.5 percentile	18.8	25.7	2.0

Other impacts

A minor volume of dust may be generated during the demolition of the seven existing fryer stacks and construction of the WESP, which will include concrete cutting by saw. This will be managed in accordance with standard construction practices. Impacts, if any, are expected to be minor and localised on the worksite.

7.1.2 Management measures proposed in EER

Particulate matter

The primary goal of the proposal is to reduce particulate emissions from Simplot's existing industrial operations and eliminate associated impacts on the community and environment.

Simplot proposes to:

- Undertake system performance testing within three months of operation, including testing stack emissions, to determine particulate emission rates and verify modelled predictions for particulate matter impacts.

Simplot also proposes in the EER to test a particular failure mode to inform future response planning. Further information is required before such a test can be supported.

Odour

Simplot proposes to:

- Undertake system performance testing within three months of operation, including testing stack emissions to determine odour emission rates and verify modelled predictions for odour impacts.

Other

Relevantly for emissions to air, Simplot also proposes to:

- Pre-fabricate as much equipment as possible off-site.
- Manage dust emissions from cutting concrete with a saw by using water suppression or dust extraction equipment as necessary. The concrete cutting will be conducted in an on-site isolated vacant building that can be sealed off to prevent the escape of dust.
- Continue monitoring and reporting in compliance with existing EPA requirements. These include conditions relating to dealing with samples obtained for monitoring and submission of Annual Environmental Reviews.
- Continue to undertake routine audits and compile complaints received.

7.1.3 Public comment

One representor stated that particulates from the site have been emitted and descended on to their property resulting in the need for regular removal and cleaning. The representor requested the EPA or Council set a condition requiring the proponent to conduct a post-commissioning residential cleaning campaign.

7.1.4 Evaluation

Particulate matter

The EPA Air Specialist is satisfied that particulates emitted from the new WESP and associated stack will decrease as a result of the proposal, to a level that is not expected to cause environmental nuisance or harm.

It is appropriate to include a clause allowing the Director to request stack testing if necessary to ensure the WESP is operating as expected in the event of environmental nuisance or harm.

Condition A1 requires stack monitoring to be undertaken within 3 months post-commissioning for TSP, PM_{10} and odour. It will also allow the Director to request stack monitoring at any other time. This power may be employed, for example, in the event of community complaints that may relate to particulate emissions from the WESP stack.

Condition A2 specifies the facilities required at each nominated stack exhaust to facilitate testing.

Condition A3 establishes the processes for collecting, handling and testing samples and measurements obtained for monitoring purposes.

Condition A4 is included in the permit to impose the standard Air EPP emission limit for particulate emissions from industrial stacks of 100 mg/m^3.

Condition A5 requires the submission of an Emission Modelling Validation Report, with specified content, and is intended to require Simplot to identify and implement further management measures if emissions are higher than predicted. **Condition A6** requires the submission of a Monitoring Report subsequent to any stack testing required by the Director.

It is not appropriate for Simplot to purposefully cause a shutdown of the equipment to ascertain what emissions will result, without further justification. **Condition A7** prevents the person responsible from purposefully shutting down the WESP without approval from the Director.

Simplot will be made aware of the request to conduct a residential cleaning campaign post-commissioning, raised by the sole representor.

Odour

There is continued potential for the activity to cause environmental nuisance beyond the boundary of the site as a result of odour emissions. The WESP is not designed to reduce odour and there is no way to accurately ascertain the odour removal potential. There is significant uncertainty associated with the modelled results. However, given the quench step of the gas cleaning process, and given that the seven stacks will be combined, effectively replaced by one stack that is expected to result in a higher emission plume and additional dispersion, it may reasonably be expected that the gas cleaning system, if it has any effect, will decrease odour, and will not result in increased odour nuisance compared with current operations.

Condition A1, described above, requires the proponent to test stack emissions for odour emission rate after commissioning, to verify modelling results. The Emission Modelling Validation Report described in **Condition A5** also applies to odour. **Condition A8** reiterates the standard requirement for odour emissions to be managed to avoid causing nuisance beyond the boundary.

Other

Potential for environmental nuisance from dust emissions is low and Simplot is already required to comply with condition **A1** of the existing Permit, which states that dust emissions from the site must be controlled to the extent necessary to prevent environmental nuisance beyond the boundary.

The proponent will be required to comply with the following conditions:

A1 Stack monitoring requirements

A2 Stack testing facilities

A3 Samples and measurements for monitoring purposes

A4 Stack emission limits

A5 Emission Modelling Validation Report

A6 Stack monitoring reports

A7 Wet electrostatic scrubber precipitator system shutdown

A8 Odour management

7.2 Issue 2: Wastewater

7.2.1 Potential impacts

The site is located on flat terrain with an elevation of 10 to 30 metres above sea level with the River Leven to the west and Masons Creek to the south. The closest component of the activity to an existing waterbody are the system pumps, which will be contained within the existing boiler house building, approximately 65m north from Masons Creek (Figure 2).

The total volume of wastewater emissions currently generated by the site is 4,848 kL/day. The WESP system is expected to use an additional 15 kL/day of mains water and generate an additional 8 kL/day of wastewater (an increase in volume of 0.17%). The remaining 7 kL/day is anticipated to be lost to evaporation.

Discharge of wastewater from the WESP, including the cleaning chemical component (caustic soda and antifoam), is anticipated to have no or negligible impact on the site wastewater treatment process, as the additional load is insignificant. Discharge from the site to TasWater's Ulverstone Wastewater Treatment Plant will be regulated by TasWater.

Spills and leaks of wastewater could contaminate local groundwater or flow into local water bodies, causing localised disruption to local ecosystems. However, the risk associated with the WESP itself, within the overall context of the site, is low. Minor spills or leakages that occur within the WESP will be captured in the internal drainage and directed to the site's wastewater system.

7.2.2 Management measures proposed in EER

To manage wastewater, Simplot proposes to:

- Operate the proposed system using recirculated water.
- Treat contaminated wastewater from the WESP on-site using the existing wastewater treatment infrastructure.
- Maintain and comply with a site-specific Trade Waste Agreement (TWA) with TasWater.
- Continue to monitor and report on wastewater as required by the existing Permit, including by continuing to submit Annual Environmental Reviews outlining the amounts of both solids and liquid wastes produced, waste treatment methods, details of environmental incidents and a summary of monitoring data and record keeping.
- Use sandbags to protect drains and pits during construction to prevent construction debris or contaminants from entering the stormwater system.

7.2.3 Public and agency comment

There were no public submissions in relation to wastewater.

TasWater has advised that it plans to establish a new TWA under an updated contract format, which will include trade waste improvement requirements. Simplot has stated that it intends to maintain and comply with the TWA.

7.2.4 Evaluation

Due to the high dilution, discharge of the WESP washdown water to the on-site processing treatment plant will not require extra treatment steps or negatively impact the existing treatment processes. Based on the information provided, the new TWA to be established with TasWater and commitments made in the EER, the EPA Water Specialist is satisfied that wastewater can be adequately managed to ensure that environmental harm or nuisance is not caused.

Condition **EM1** requires that wastewater streams generated by the activity be directed for treatment through the wastewater treatment system. Storage of hazardous materials, including the cleaning chemicals used in the WESP, is conditioned under **H1**.

7.2.5 Conditions

The proponent will be required to comply with the following conditions:

EM 1 Wastewater management

7.3 Issue 3: Noise

7.3.1 Potential impacts

Though the Simplot site is in a General Industrial Zone, it is immediately surrounded by light industrial and residential zones (Figure 3). The closest noise-sensitive premises (NSPs) are located in the General Residential Zone (R1 in Figure 4), which is approximately 20 m north of the site boundary and 200 m north of the activity area. All modelled receiver positions indicating the furthest receiver location are shown in Figure 5.

Industrial noise is already emitted from the Simplot site. Dominant sources include food processing plant and equipment, the main boiler, forklifts, trucks, and employee cars. These are regulated under the existing Permit, which requires Simplot to conduct periodic noise surveys and to reduce noise emissions over time. It also specifies the maximum noise from the activity allowable at NSPs in other ownership, target noise emission limits for Simplot to work toward and how truck movements must be managed.

The WESP system will include three new potential noise sources: a purge air fan, tube cooling fan and an induced draught fan.

Additional noise emissions may occur during construction as a result of increased vehicle movements, concrete sawing, demolition and removal of existing stacks, and construction of the new equipment.

Simplot commissioned Tarkarri Engineering to conduct an environmental noise assessment for the proposed WESP to determine the impact of the additional equipment on overall site noise emissions. Details of the assessment are provided in Appendices I, J and K of the EER. The assessment included consideration of standard noise propagation and attenuation parameters as described in *ISO 9613-2:1996 Acoustics - Attenuation of sound during propagation outdoors*, and of worst-case propagation parameters.

Results for NSPs are presented in Table 4.

Table 4: Predicted sound pressure levels at NSPs (source: Appendix I of the EER).

	ISO standard propagation conditions			Worst case propagation conditions		
Receiver	**Total site (dB(A))**	**WESP (dB(A))**	**Difference (dB(A))**	**Total site (dB(A))**	**WESP (dB(A))**	**Difference (dB(A))**
1	56	26	-30	59	33	-26
2	53	25	-28	56	31	-25
3	56	26	-30	59	32	-27
4	44	17	-27	49	25	-24
5	49	30	-19	53	34	-19
6	57	32	-25	59	35	-24
7	48	32	-16	54	38	-16

In summary, the noise assessment found that:

- dBA (mid frequency) noise emissions from the WESP are predicted to be at least 15dB below overall site noise emission levels at NSPs, in both standard and worst-case propagation scenarios;
- some results for total site noise at NSPs remain higher than the target noise levels specified in the existing Permit (55 dB(A) for day time and 50 dB(A) for night-time), but emissions from the WESP are expected to comply with target limits;
- all results comply with the current maximum Permit limit of 65dBA at all NSPs considered; and
- predicted dB(C) (low frequency) levels from the WESP are no greater than 15 dB higher than predicted dB(A) levels. This means that the noise emissions are not predicted to produce excessive low frequency acoustic energy.

The noise assessment also found that the WESP will not prejudice Simplot's ability to achieve target noise emission limits for its entire operation over time.

Figure 4: Model receiver positions indicating receiver locations (in blue) 1-7, U1 (front gate) and U2 (back gate) (source: Appendix J of the EER).

Figure 5: Model receiver positions indicating the furthest receiver location, receiver 4 (source: Appendix J of the EER).

7.3.2 Management measures proposed in EER

To aid in the mitigation of noise emissions, Simplot proposes to:

- House the WESP in a dedicated 13.2 m boiler house.
- Limit construction works to daytime hours.
- Use noise barriers or temporary soundproofing around particularly loud equipment.
- Ensure that machinery and tools are well maintained, to reduce excessive noise.
- Fabricate the majority of the structural and mechanical components for the project off-site.
- Complete noise level checks to confirm validity of noise modelling within 30 days after commencement of operations.
- Conduct ongoing noise monitoring in compliance with existing site conditions, once the system is running. This includes maintaining the site noise model and working toward achieving target limits for noise emissions over time.

7.3.3 Public and agency comment

There was one public submission in relation to noise. The representor was of the view that the noise survey conducted by Tarkarri Environmental (Appendix I of the EER) was not a complete representation of potential noise impacts on residents as it failed to undertake testing during the night-time between the hours of 0200 and 0400 when the representor states loud noises are expelled every half hour.

7.3.4 Evaluation

The EPA Noise Specialist is satisfied with the results from the commissioned Tarkarri Engineering assessment. Management measures proposed to mitigate potential noise emissions from the WESP, including the demolition and construction related to the WESP proposal, are considered sufficient to ensure the proposal does not cause serious or material environmental harm or environmental nuisance.

Further information was sought from the proponent in response to the public representation on noise. Potential sources were identified as operation of steam safety valves, operation of ventilation fans due to fan bearing issues, and operation of raw material hoppers and associated equipment. The WESP installation and operation is not expected to have any effect on these noise emissions. The issue is most appropriately addressed by the EPA Regulation Branch, through existing Permit conditions.

Condition N1 imposes on the WESP the same maximum noise limit that applies to the rest of the site, that is 65 dB(A) at any noise-sensitive premises in other ownership, at any time.

Given the low noise risk associated with the proposal, a full noise survey upon commissioning is not necessary. **Condition N2** is included to require the person responsible to report back within 60 days of commissioning as to whether noise emissions meet expectations. The condition requires the report to include reasons behind the conclusion, and, if noise emissions are higher than expected, to identify any further management measure proposed to reduce noise and implement those measures.

7.3.5 Conditions

The proponent will be required to comply with the following conditions:

N1 Noise emission limits

N2 Noise validation requirements

7.4 Other issues

7.4.1 Waste

The proposal will generate additional oil waste as described in section 7.2 above.

Minor amounts of additional general waste will be generated during construction and will be recycled if possible or otherwise sent to an approved landfill.

7.4.2 Environmentally hazardous substances

The proposal will not significantly increase Simplot's need to store or use environmentally hazardous materials. Standard hazardous substance conditions are considered sufficient to control related risks.

7.4.3 Decommissioning and rehabilitation

The proposal will not significantly change the decommissioning considerations in relation to the site.

8. Report Conclusions

This assessment has been based on the information provided by the proponent, Simplot Australia Pty Ltd, in the permit application DA 2024/164 and the case for assessment (the EER).

This report incorporates specialist advice provided by EPA scientific and regulatory staff and other government agencies, and considers issues raised in public submissions.

It is concluded that:

1. the RMPS and EMPCS objectives have been duly and properly pursued in the assessment of the proposal; and
2. the assessment of the proposal has been undertaken in accordance with the Environmental Impact Assessment Principles; and
3. the proposal is capable of being managed in an environmentally acceptable manner such that it is unlikely that the RMPS and EMPCS objectives would be compromised, provided that the Permit Conditions - Environmental No. 12027 appended to this report are imposed and duly complied with.

9. Report Approval

Environmental Assessment Report and conclusions, including environmental conditions, adopted:

Cindy Ong

ACTING EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENTS

Acting under delegation from the Board of the Environment Protection Authority

Date: 9 May, 2025

10. References

Tasmanian Consulting Service Pty Ltd (2025) *Ulverstone Production Centre WESP Project Environmental Effects Report* (dated January 2025), Simplot Australia Pty Ltd; Ulverstone, Tasmania.

11. Appendices

Appendix 1 Summary of public and agency submissions

Appendix 2 Table of proponent management measures

Appendix 3 Permit Conditions Environmental No. 12027

Appendix 1: Summary of public and agency submissions

Table 1: Matters raised during public consultation period

Representation No. / Agency	Comments and Issues	Further Information Requested	EPA Comments
1 – Public	Night-time noise survey did not include the hours between 0200 and 0400 when representor states there is excessive noise.	Yes	Potential sources were identified as operation of steam safety valves, operation of ventilation fans due to fan bearing issues, and operation of raw material hoppers and associated equipment. The WESP installation and operation is not expected to have any effect on these noise emissions. The issue is most appropriately addressed by the EPA Regulation Branch, through existing permit conditions.
	Odour	No	Odour is expected to reduce as an unintended consequence of the WESP installation. Conditions to include testing of odour to be undertaken.
	Particulates emissions descending onto residential property.	No	Intent of proposal is to reduce particulate emissions. Emissions are expected to be reduced by approximately 80%. Conditions will require pre-installation modelling, which shows that impacts are expected to be acceptable, to be validated following WESP installation.

Appendix 2: Table of proponent management measures

Table 1: Proponent management measures (Section 4, Part D of EER)

Number	Action	Timing
1	Complete noise level checks to confirm validity of noise modelling	Within 30 days after commencement of operations
2	System performance testing, to confirm minimum 80% average particulate removal	Two days of testing within the first three months of operation, Ongoing testing to be scheduled or evaluated based on results, if deemed necessary.
3	Odour testing at stack, with specific methodology of testing to be confirmed and communicated/consulted to the EPA prior to testing	Within the first three months of operation (pending EPA confirmation of methodology)
4	Continued monitoring and reporting as per existing EPA requirements	Ongoing
5	Trial operation without HV system engaged	Within the first six months of operation

Appendix 3: Permit Conditions – Environmental No: 12027

PERMIT PART B
PERMIT CONDITIONS - ENVIRONMENTAL No. 12027

Issued under the *Environmental Management and Pollution Control Act 1994*

Activity: **The operation of Installation of a Wet Electrostatic Scrubber Precipitator (WESP) (ACTIVITY TYPE: Produce Processing Works (works discharging all wastewater to external approved Wastewater Treatment Works).)**
SIMPLOT ULVERSTONE, 8 JETTY ROAD
ULVERSTONE TAS 7315

The above activity has been assessed as a level 2 activity under the *Environmental Management and Pollution Control Act 1994*.

Acting under Section 25(5)(a)(i) of the EMPCA, the Board of the Environment Protection Authority has required that this Permit Part B be included in any Permit granted under the *Land Use Planning and Approvals Act 1993* with respect to the above activity.

Municipality: **CENTRAL COAST**
Permit Application Reference: **DA 2024/164**
EPA file reference: **24/3512**

Date conditions approved: 09 May 2025

Signed: _____

DELEGATE FOR THE BOARD OF THE ENVIRONMENT PROTECTION AUTHORITY

DEFINITIONS

Unless the contrary appears, words and expressions used in this Permit Part B have the meaning given to them in **Schedule 1** of this Permit and in the EMPCA. If there is any inconsistency between a definition in the EMPCA and a definition in this Permit Part B, the EMPCA prevails to the extent of the inconsistency.

ENVIRONMENTAL CONDITIONS

The person responsible for the activity must comply with the conditions contained in **Schedule 2** of this Permit Part B.

INFORMATION

Attention is drawn to **Schedule 3**, which contains important additional information.

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Schedule 1: Definitions

In this Permit Part B:-

Activity means any environmentally relevant activity (as defined in section 3 of EMPCA) to which this document relates, and includes more than one such activity.

Activity Area means the area to be used for the Activity when these conditions take effect, as depicted in Attachment 1.

Air Quality Assessment means the document titled *Simplot Ulverstone - Air Quality Impact Assessment, Project ID 15799m,* Release R2 dated 25 November 2024, prepared by Assured Environmental.

Authorized Officer means an authorized officer under section 20 of EMPCA.

Commissioning means the testing of major items of equipment and is taken to be completed [X months after notification of the commencement of commissioning, as required by these conditions, or on a date otherwise specified in writing by the Director] OR [when the item(s) are being used or operated in the course of normal commercial operations].

Construction means activities associated with the construction phase of the activity, including but not limited to, activities associated with the clearance of vegetation, site works to create a level site, rock breaking, installation of fences and other infrastructure whether on land or in water.

Director means the Director, Environment Protection Authority holding office under section 18 of EMPCA and includes a delegate or person authorised in writing by the Director to exercise a power or function on the Director's behalf.

EMPCA means the *Environmental Management and Pollution Control Act 1994*.

Environmental Harm and **Material Environmental Harm** and **Serious Environmental Harm** each have the meanings ascribed to them in section 5 of EMPCA.

Environmental Nuisance has the meanings ascribed to it in section 3 of EMPCA.

Environmentally Hazardous Material means any substance or mixture of substances of a nature or held in quantities which present a reasonably foreseeable risk of causing serious or material environmental harm if released to the environment and includes fuels, oils, waste and chemicals but excludes sewage.

EPA Board means the Board of the Environment Protection Authority established under section 13 of EMPCA and includes a delegate or person authorised in writing by the EPA Board to exercise a power or function on the EPA Board's behalf.

In-Stack Concentration has the meaning ascribed to it in the *Environment Protection Policy (Air Quality) 2004*.

Noise Assessment means the document titled *Technical Memo,* with the subject line "Ulverstone Wet ESP Project environmental noise assessment", dated 23 October 2024, prepared by Tarkarri Engineering.

Noise Measurement Procedures Manual means the document titled *Noise Measurement Procedures Manual*, by the Department of Environment, Parks, Heritage and the Arts, dated July 2008, and any amendment to or substitution of this document.

Noise Sensitive Premises means residences and residential zones (whether occupied or not), schools, hospitals, caravan parks and similar land uses involving the presence of individual people for extended periods, except in the course of their employment or for recreation.

Nominated Exhaust Points means the wet electrostatic scrubber precipitator stack located within the area marked by reference points 001 to 007 on the plan at Attachment 1.

Person Responsible is any person who is or was responsible for the environmentally relevant activity to which this document relates and includes the officers, employees, contractors, joint venture partners and agents of that person, and includes a body corporate.

Planning Authority means the Council(s) for the municipal area(s) in which the Activity Area is situated.

Pollutant has the meaning ascribed to it in section 3 of EMPCA.

Stack Test means the taking of measurements and the collection of samples for analysis from within a chimney, stack or flue.

Stormwater means water runoff as a consequence of a rainfall event, whether surface flow, piped flow, or flow within conduits, including any contaminants collected by the water during its passage.

Wastewater means spent or used water (whether from industrial or domestic sources) containing a pollutant and includes stormwater which becomes mixed with wastewater.

Wastewater Treatment System means the on-site wastewater treatment system at Simplot Ulverstone.

Schedule 2: Conditions

Maximum Quantities

Q1 Regulatory limits

1 The activity must not exceed the following limits:

1.1 No limit has been set for the purposes of the Environmental Management and Pollution Control (General) Regulations 2017.

General

G1 Activity Area

The activity must be confined to the Activity Area.

G2 Access to and awareness of conditions and associated documents

A copy of these conditions and any associated documents referred to in these conditions must be held in a location that is known to and accessible to the person responsible for the activity. The person responsible for the activity must ensure that all persons who are responsible for undertaking work within the Activity Area, including contractors and sub-contractors, are familiar with these conditions to the extent relevant to their work.

G3 Incident response

If an incident causing or threatening environmental nuisance, serious environmental harm or material environmental harm from pollution occurs in the course of the activity, then the person responsible for the activity must immediately take all reasonable and practicable action to minimise any adverse environmental effects from the incident.

G4 Proposed change to activity

1 The person responsible must notify the Director in writing prior to implementing any change to the activity authorised by this document that may cause or increase the emission of a pollutant or which may result in environmental harm or environmental nuisance (even temporarily). A change includes, but is not limited to, any of the following:

1.1 an increase in the discharge of a pollutant, or the location of its discharge.

1.2 the construction, installation, alteration or removal of any structure or equipment used in the course of carrying out the activity.

1.3 any clearance of native vegetation or earthworks.

1.4 a change in the quantity or characteristics of materials used in carrying out the activity.

2 The notification must be in an approved form and include the following:

2.1 details of the proposed change;

2.2 an assessment of the environmental impacts that may result from the change;

2.3 any relevant approvals held by the person responsible; and

2.4 any advice from the relevant planning authority to the effect that approval is not required.

3 The person responsible must provide additional information as requested by an Authorized Officer.

4 The proposed change must not be implemented until the Director has confirmed in writing that they are satisfied that no other approval or variation of this document is required.

5 For the avoidance of doubt, a notification of a proposed change under this provision is not required if the proposed change is part of a referral to the EPA Board for assessment under sections 24, 25 or 27 of EMPCA.

G5 Change of responsibility

If the person responsible for the activity intends to cease to be responsible for the activity, that person must notify the Director in writing of the full particulars of any person who will become the person responsible for the activity, before such cessation.

G6 Change of ownership

If the owner of the Activity Area changes or is to change, then, as soon as reasonably practicable but no later than 30 days after becoming aware of the change or intended change in the ownership of the Activity Area, the person responsible must notify the Director in writing of the change or intended change of ownership.

G7 Complaints register

1 A public complaints register must be maintained. The public complaints register must, as a minimum, record the following detail in relation to each complaint received in which it is alleged that environmental harm (including an environmental nuisance) has been caused by the activity:

1.1 the date and time at which the complaint was received;

1.2 contact details for the complainant (where provided);

1.3 the subject matter of the complaint;

1.4 any investigations undertaken with regard to the complaint; and

1.5 the manner in which the complaint was resolved, including any mitigation measures implemented.

2 Complaint records must be retained for a period of at least 3 years.

G8 Notification prior to commissioning

At least 14 days prior to the commencement of commissioning the wet electrostatic scrubber precipitator the person responsible for the activity must notify the Director of the date on which commissioning is expected to commence.

G9 Amendment of required plans and reports

1 The plans and reports required by these conditions must be amended to address any matter required by the Director, as advised by notice in writing.

2 Amended plans and reports must be resubmitted within the timeframe that the Director specifies.

<u>Atmospheric</u>

A1 Stack monitoring requirements

1 Unless otherwise specified in writing by the Director, testing of emissions from the wet electrostatic scrubber preciptitator stack must be carried out:

1.1 within 3 months after completion of commissioning; and

1.2 if requested in writing by the Director.

2 Unless otherwise specified in writing by the Director, the stack test referred to in clause 1 of this condition must employ a methodology suitable for analysing both condensable and filterable fractions of stack emissions, and must test for:

2.1 total suspended particulate matter emissions; and

2.2 particulate matter emissions less than 10 microns (PM_{10}); and

2.3 odour emissions in odour units (OU).

3 Any stack testing requested by the Director under clause 1.2 of this condition must be carried out within any timeframe specified by the Director.

4 Stack tests must be carried out while the activity is operating under normal conditions unless otherwise approved in writing by the Director.

A2 Stack testing facilities

1 The following stack testing facilities must be available at all nominated exhaust points when undertaking stack testing required by these conditions:

1.1 sampling positions must be in accordance with Australian Standard AS 4323.1 (*Stationary source emissions - selection of sampling positions*), or as approved in writing by the Director;

1.2 safe sampling platforms must be located to allow access to the sampling positions and safe access to these sampling platforms must be provided; and

1.3 all necessary services required for the test method prescribed must be provided.

A3 Samples and measurements for monitoring purposes

1 Any sample or measurement required under these conditions must be taken and processed in accordance with the following:

1.1 sampling and measuring must be undertaken by a person with training, experience, and knowledge of the appropriate procedure;

1.2 the integrity of samples must be maintained prior to delivery to a testing facility;

1.3 sample analysis must be conducted by a testing facility accredited by the National Association of Testing Authorities (NATA), or a testing facility approved in writing by the Director, for the specified test;

1.4 details of methods employed in taking samples and measurements and results of sample analysis, and measurements must be retained for at least three (3) years after the date of collection; and

1.5 sampling and measurement equipment must be maintained and operated in accordance with manufacturer's specifications and records of maintenance must be retained for at least three (3) years.

A4 Stack emission limits

1 The in-stack concentrations in emissions from the nominated exhaust point listed in Column 1 of the Table of Atmospheric Emission Limits below of the substance listed in Column 2 must not exceed the limits specified in Column 4 when measured in the units specified in Column 3.

2 Table of Atmospheric Emission Limits

Column 1: Nominated exhaust point	Column 2: Substance	Column 3: Unit of Measure	Column 4: Emission Limit
Wet electrostatic scrubber precipitator stack	Particulate matter	mg/m^3 dry gas at 0°C and 101.325 kPa	100

A5 Emission Modelling Validation Report

1 Unless otherwise specified in writing by the Director, within 60 days of completion of the monitoring specified in clause 1.1 of condition A1, an Emission Modelling Validation Report must be provided to the Director, for approval.

2 The Emission Modelling Validation Report must include:

2.1 the results of the stack test for parameters specified in clause 2 of condition A1;

2.2 the date on which the stack test was conducted;

2.3 weather information at the time the stack test was conducted;

2.4 relevant operating conditions;

2.5 the stack test methods employed;

2.6 comparison of results to the data used in the Air Quality Assessment to model the environmental impacts of particulate and odour emissions from the wet electrostatic scrubber precipitator stack;

2.7 discussion of the implications of any differences between model inputs and stack emission data; and

2.8 identification of any further management measures proposed to be taken in relation to any results that are higher than predicted in the Air Quality Assessment.

3 Once approved, the person responsible must implement any management measures as identified in the Emission Modelling Validation Report.

A6 Stack monitoring reports

1 If stack testing is requested by the Director as specified in clause 1.2 of condition A1, a Monitoring Report must be provided to the Director within 60 days of the date on which stack testing is completed.

2 The Monitoring Report must include:

2.1 the results of the stack test;

2.2 the date on which the stack test was conducted;

2.3 weather information at the time the stack test was conducted;

2.4 relevant operating conditions;

2.5 the stack test methods employed;

2.6 identification of breaches of limits specified in these conditions, explanation of why each breach of specified limits occurred and details of actions that have been or will be taken in response to each identified breach of limits.

3 Where total particulate matter testing is carried out reporting must be done in accordance with Section 9 of Australian Standard AS 4323.2.2023 Stationary source emissions - Determination of total particulate matter - Isokinetic manual sampling - Gravimetric method, and any subsequent version of the standard.

A7 Wet electrostatic scrubber precipitator system shutdown

The person responsible must not purposefully cause the wet electrostatic scrubber precipitator system to shut down, in whole or in part, while normal food production operations continue, unless otherwise approved in writing by the Director.

A8 Odour management

The person responsible must institute such odour management measures as are necessary to prevent odours causing environmental nuisance beyond the boundary of the Activity Area.

Effluent Management

EM1 Wastewater management

1 Unless otherwise approved in writing by the Director, the following wastewater streams generated by the activity must be directed for treatment through the Wastewater Treatment System:

1.1 all process wastewater;

1.2 all contaminated and potentially contaminated wastewater, such as wash down water; and

1.3 any stormwater potentially contaminated.

Hazardous Substances

H1 Storage and handling of hazardous materials

1 Unless otherwise approved in writing by the Director, environmentally hazardous materials held within the Activity Area must be:

1.1 stored within maintained and functional impervious bunded areas, spill trays or other containment systems; and

1.2 managed to prevent unauthorised discharge, emission or deposition of pollutants:

1.2.1 to soils within the boundary of the Activity Area in a manner that is likely to cause serious or material environmental harm;

1.2.2 to groundwater;

1.2.3 to waterways; or

1.2.4 beyond the boundary of the Activity Area.

H2 Spill kits

Spill kits appropriate for the types and volumes of materials handled within the Activity Area must be kept in appropriate locations and maintained in a functional condition to assist with the containment of spilt environmentally hazardous materials.

Noise Control

N1 Noise emission limits

Noise emissions from the activity at any noise sensitive premises in other ownership and expressed as the equivalent continuous A-weighted sound pressure level must not exceed 65 dB(A)at any time.

N2 Noise validation requirements

1 Unless otherwise approved in writing by the Director, within 60 days of completion of commissioning of the wet electrostatic scrubber precipitator system, the person responsible must submit to the Director a written statement that describes whether noise emissions from the system meet the performance expectations described in the Noise Assessment.

2 The statement described in clause 1 of this condition must include the reasons supporting the conclusion.

3 If the noise emissions from the system do not meet the performance expectations described in the Noise Assessment, the statement required by clause 1 of this condition must identify any further management measures that are proposed to be undertaken to reduce noise emissions from the system and appropriate timeframes for implementation.

4 The person responsible must implement those management measures identified under clause 3 within the timeframes identified under clause 3.

Schedule 3: Information

Legal Obligations

LO1 EMPCA

The activity must be conducted in accordance with the requirements of the EMPCA and Regulations made under the EMPCA. The requirements of these conditions of registration must not be construed as an exemption from any of those requirements or principles.

Other Information

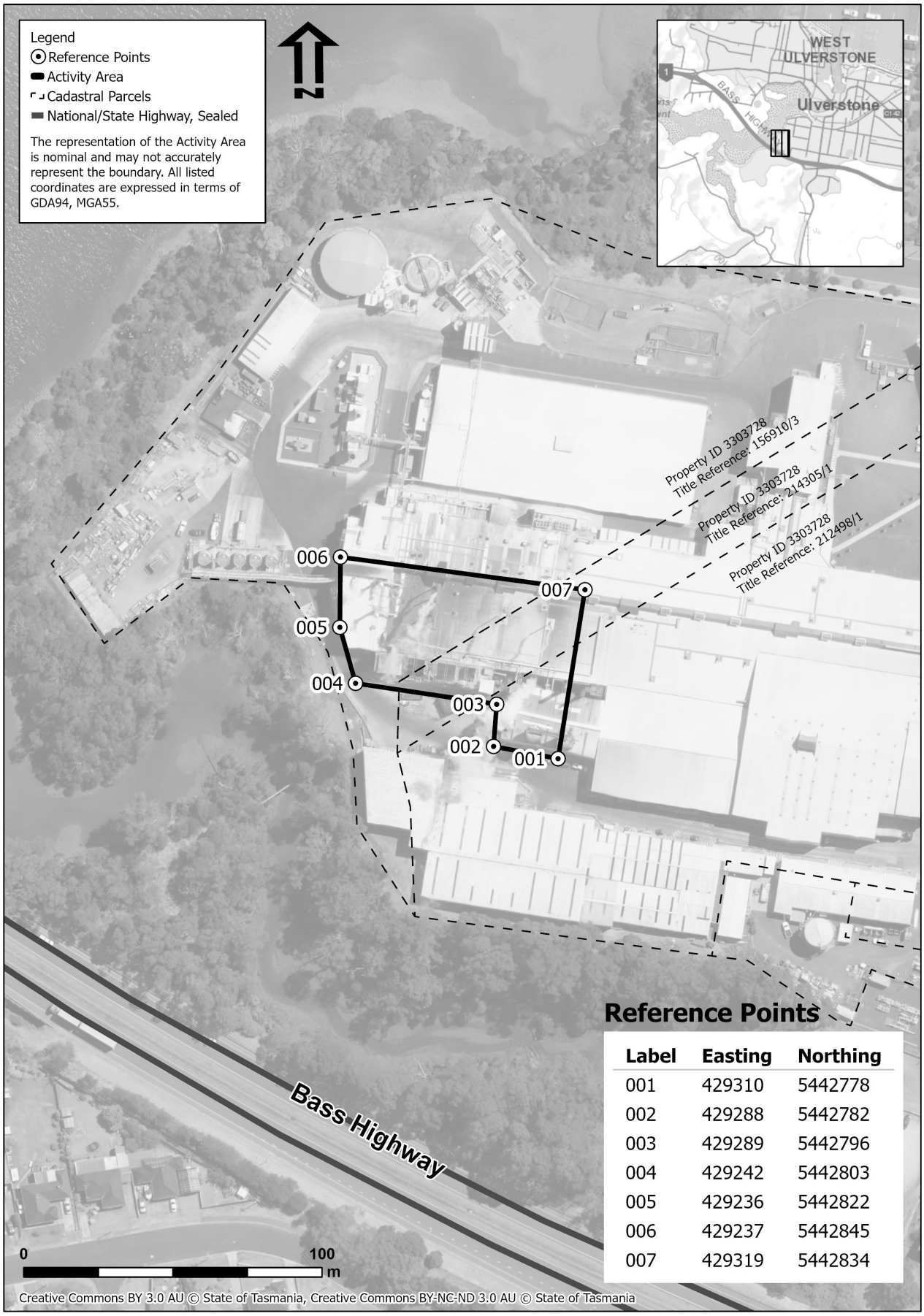
OI1 Notification of incidents under section 32 of EMPCA

Where a person is required by section 32 of EMPCA to notify the Director of the release of a pollutant, the Director can be notified by telephoning **1800 005 171** (a 24-hour emergency telephone number).

OI2 Release of Relevant Information

Under the provisions of section 23AA of EMPCA relevant information relating to monitoring of environmental impacts required under these conditions may be subject to publishing or public release by the Director.

Attachment 1: PCE 12027 - Activity Area



Reference Points

Label	Easting	Northing
001	429310	5442778
002	429288	5442782
003	429289	5442796
004	429242	5442803
005	429236	5442822
006	429237	5442845
007	429319	5442834

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