

Minutes

Community Advisory Group meeting #13

Chair	Ian Gibson	Time	4:00pm – 6:00pm
Minutes	Julia Preston	Date	2022-06-23
Location	Bond Street Event Centre, Sale		

Attendance

Members		Project team		Apologies	
Wendy Farmer	Jenny Smith		Sarah Altmann		Glenn McColl
Jack Winterbottom	Ian Gibson		Julia Preston		Mary-Lou Dixon
Nina Barry-Macaulay			Lachlan McKinnon		Deb Lucas
Travis Dillow			Michael Dillon		Jonathan Pintus
Jessica Young			Martina Gassner		Marcus McKenzie
Allan Rogers					Harry Mitchelson
Glenn Stagg					Tony Cantwell
Tony Wolfe					Darren McCubbin
Peter Mooney					Caleb Barlow
Nicole Jennings					Erin Coldham

Key discussion points

Item	Discussion points
1	Welcome and Acknowledgement of Country
2	Standing items and actions from previous meeting <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Endorsement of minutes from CAG meeting #12. Congratulations to Jono on the birth of baby Hazel.
3	What's happening on the project <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Refer to presentation for key updates. Significant interest from the group in offshore geotechnical investigations. Star of the South advised contractor to be appointed soon and committed to providing an update after contract is awarded and further details confirmed.



Item	Discussion points
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Star of the South is planning community information sessions in Gippsland in August/September. Sought advice from CAG on the timing of sessions. Star of the South to send draft dates for members review and feedback.
4	<p>What's happening in the community</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Wendy flagged that the Federal Government is expected to announce Gippsland as the first area to be considered offshore wind<ul style="list-style-type: none">Friends of the Earth are planning kitchen table conversations about offshore wind. Wendy encouraged the group members to get involved. The objective is to get people talking, raise awareness and understand hopes or concerns.Wendy will send an email via Star of the South to the group to invite involvement.Glenn asked for an update on the Australian Energy Market Operator's (AEMO) Integrated System Plan. Sarah advised it is due to be released very soon. Note: This has now been released and sent to all CAG members for their information.Nicki noted the community in Giffard West area continue to have concerns about transmission and are refusing access to property for any overhead lines.Jack advised that he spoke with members of Birdlife East Gippsland about the project. Some had not heard about it and asked lots of questions, including about the risk of oil spills from turbines and Orange Bellied Parrots. Noted that Orange Bellied Parrots are an issue for a wind farm in Tasmania. Question about oil spills taken on notice.General interest from the group about other proposed offshore wind projects being proposed off the south Gippsland coast. Some members were aware of these, others had not heard of them. Star of the South to provide links to websites. Sarah highlighted that not all proposed projects will necessarily proceed to construction and discussed licencing process under the Offshore Electricity Infrastructure Act, which includes a public consultation process when determining locations that may be suitable for offshore wind development.Allan asked why other projects could install foundations further out to sea, as he understood Star of the South was constrained by water depth. Question taken on notice.Allan noted that the community in McLoughlins Beach has a renewed focus on offshore wind now that their advocacy regarding the jetty has been successful. The McLoughlins Beach Angling Club would like Star of the South to attend a meeting. Allan and Lachlan to set up a meeting.Tony attended a State Energy Conference which featured a lot of discussion about offshore wind, especially floating technology and opposition to the proposed capacity market.Travis advised that the Woodside Beach community is highly concerned about offshore wind farms spoiling beach views.

Item	Discussion points
5	<p>Ports update</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Refer to presentation for overview. • Multiple ports are likely to be used across the project’s life. • Quayside requirements are estimated at 25 ha hardstand for wind turbine feeder port and 7.5 ha for foundation feeder port. • Some specialist construction vessels may need at least 10 m draft. • Vessels used for operations and maintenance are Crew Transfer Vessels, which need around 2.5 m draft, and Service Operation Vessels, which need around 4-8 m draft. • Star of the South has not yet made any decisions about the type and number of turbines, so port requirements at this stage are based on assumptions and estimates. • Concerns raised that use of ports outside the Gippsland region would mean no local jobs. Michael advised that ports in Gippsland may be appropriate for construction support ports (where crews could be ferried to and from the offshore site) and the long-term operations port, which is where the long-term jobs would be based. Construction, storage and loading components would likely be at bigger ports elsewhere. • Questions from the group: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jenny asked if Port Welshpool could be considered? No, the project is only looking at commercial ports. • Jess asked how far afield the project is looking at ports? Ports across Victoria, plus one in Tasmania and one in NSW, have been asked to provide information to the project about their interest and capacity. • Tony W asked who operates the ports? Each port is different – they are owned and operated by different entities, mostly private. • Is cement used in foundations? No, scour protection is used but no cement. Foundations are piled (hammered) into the seabed.
7	<p>Marine Ecology Survey Program update</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Refer to presentation for overview. • Questions from the group: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jack asked if other offshore wind projects would also need to collect baseline data? Yes, site specific data is critically important and would be a requirement for environmental assessment. • Who decides on and designs ongoing environmental monitoring during operations? Martina advised that the project would propose a plan and regulators would review, provide input and approve it. It would need to meet any approval conditions. • Nicki asked if there will there be more studies or monitoring? Martina advised all the project’s baseline studies are completed, which is used to understand potential impacts. But further studies are likely – however it’s not known yet how much, on which species or when yet. The first step is to understand the potential impacts, how they will be managed and where monitoring may be needed. • Jenny asked if the findings from the bird study will influence wind farm design? Yes, it can. There are many things to consider in the wind farm design and potential risks to birds is one. The tip height (top point of the blade) is generally not an issue, it’s the clearance between the water and blade that is a focus for the project.

Item	Discussion points
6	<p>Other items, questions and feedback</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Group endorsed the proposed approach to managing requests for guests to attend meetings. Star of the South to send the proposed approach in writing for any final thoughts and will then incorporate into the Terms of Reference.

Actions – new

No.	Action	Owner	Due
1	Star of the South to provide links to websites of other offshore wind projects.	Julia Preston	17/8/22
2	Star of the South to issue draft schedule for community sessions to the group for any feedback/advice. Group members to share any feedback on dates, days, times and locations for sessions.	Julia Preston All	1/7/22
3	Star of the South to respond to questions taken on notice: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Rational for project location (why it hasn't been located further offshore) - Oil spillage 	Julia Preston	17/8/22
4	Star of the South Fishing Liaison Officer to set up a meeting with McLoughlins Beach Angling Club via Allan.	Lachlan McKinnon	17/8/22
5	Meeting guest draft procedure to be distributed to the group for any final feedback, before being incorporated into Terms of Reference.	Julia Preston Chair	17/8/22

Next meeting

Date	Time	Place
17 August	4-6 pm	Yarram area

Response to questions taken on notice

Is there a risk of oil spills from turbines?

We are talking with major offshore wind turbine generator suppliers to understand what types of turbines would be best suited to the local conditions, project capacity and project timing.

Most offshore turbine generators now use gearless technology, which means gearbox oil is not needed. Turbines fitted with gearbox systems, which do require gearbox oil, are typically equipped with a monitoring system to detect any oil leaks and some also monitor oil health. Regular maintenance also helps reduce the risk of spills and faults and helps extend the life of the turbines.

The likelihood of an oil spill resulting from a wind turbine is extremely unlikely. An oil spilling risk assessment will be completed as part of the environmental assessments and approvals process.

Why can't Star of the South be located further out to sea?

We selected our current site because it ticks a lot of boxes:

- The wind in this location is strong and consistent
- It has ideal water depths for fixed monopile foundations
- Seabed conditions are suitable
- It avoids lots of constraints in the area including oil and gas fields to the east, sensitive environmental sites to the west, and shipping channels and deeper waters to the south
- It's at least 7km from land.

Key reasons we haven't proposed a location in deeper waters are:

- Technical challenges – the deeper you go the more complex construction becomes. More cables would be needed and the foundations would also need to be wider and longer. This added complexity ultimately pushes up the cost of electricity generated by the project.
- Environmental impacts – laying extra cables and using longer and wider foundation means additional resources such as steel and copper, are used. This also increases the project's footprint on the seabed and can have a greater environmental impact.

What's the carbon 'pay back' period for Star of the South?

Carbon generated from manufacturing, shipping and construction activities for Star of the South is predicted to be offset within approximately 4.5 months of operations, when it is replacing the electricity otherwise generated from coal or gas.