



Help shape Australia's first offshore wind project

The Star of the South is proposed to be located off the south coast of Gippsland, near Port Albert. It would harness strong Bass Strait winds to power Victorian homes and create a new industry with local jobs.

We're excited to be exploring Gippsland's offshore wind potential.

Over the past 18 months we've been researching the local environment. Check out what we've seen so far on pages 4-5.

We recently started preparing the environmental assessments needed to seek government approvals. We're keen to hear from locals as we continue this work over the coming months and years. Find out more about these assessments on pages 3 and 9.

Get involved!

September 2021
Community consultation sessions:

- Webinar Q&A
- Yarram
- Woodside
- Leongatha
- Port Welshpool
- Longford
- Morwell

Check the back page for details.

Star of the South stats



Exploring up to 2.2 GW of energy



7-25 km off the coast



496 m² exploration area



Up to 200 turbines



Estimated 30 years of operations



Up to 750 construction jobs and 200 long-term jobs in Gippsland



Our timeline

Offshore wind projects take around 6-10 years to plan and construct.

If the Star of the South is approved and proceeds to construction, the earliest works could start is around the middle of this decade.

Here's a typical timeline for an offshore wind project.



Come and say hello!

We're excited to be growing our Gippsland-based team with Susan and Stella joining us this year.

Stella grew up near Yarram and has recently moved back after a stint living in Melbourne for study and work. Susan lives in Blackwarry and has worked in Yarram for many years.

Drop by our community hub at 310 Commercial Road on Mondays and Thursdays 10am-4pm to say hello, chat about offshore wind and pick up the latest project information. You can also book a visit outside normal hours by calling 1800 340 340.



Stella and Susan in our Yarram community hub

Environmental assessments

It's important to us that the Star of the South is developed in an environmentally, culturally, socially and economically responsible way.

The Star of the South is being assessed through a coordinated Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) and Environment Effects Statement (EES). These are the most comprehensive assessments that a project can go through in Australia and include lots of opportunities for consultation.

Information in the EIS/EES will help answer questions about how the project could affect the environment and how we'll manage impacts during construction, operation and decommissioning.

We invite you to get involved as we prepare our EIS/EES. By understanding any concerns and ideas now, we can be sure to consider these in our assessments.

Key steps in the environmental assessment processes



25 technical reports will be prepared for our EIS/EES

- Aboriginal cultural heritage
- Acid sulfate soil
- Agriculture
- Birds (seabirds and shorebirds)
- Business and tourism
- Coastal processes and sediment transport
- Ecology (offshore)
- Ecology (onshore)
- Electromagnetic fields
- Fish and invertebrates
- Fisheries (commercial and recreational)
- Groundwater
- Historic heritage
- Infrastructure and co-existence with other users
- Land use planning
- Marine mammals and turtles
- Marine protected areas
- Maritime heritage
- Noise (onshore)
- Noise (offshore)
- Social
- Seascape, landscape and visual
- Shipping and navigation
- Surface Water
- Traffic and transport

Got questions? We're here to help!

Scan the QR code to watch a video explaining the assessment processes or give us a call to talk about it. Check the back page for upcoming opportunities to meet our team.





The research team prepare for fish surveys

Researching the marine environment

We're proud to be undertaking one of the biggest ever research programs in Bass Strait with some of Australia's leading scientists and research agencies.

This research will tell us how important the project area is for marine life and how they use it.



Fish

We filmed underwater videos at 130 locations and used commercial fishing methods

to study fish in the area during summer and winter. It's amazing to see what goes on under the surface! We saw 150 different fish species during the winter, including lots of sand flathead, gurnard perch and draughtboard sharks. There was a 60% increase in fish and 33% more species seen during summer. Thanks to the local skippers who took us out aboard the Nephelle, Seapride and Gabo Bay for these surveys.

We're also tapping into the CSIRO white shark monitoring program. 20 monitors anchored on the seafloor are picking up signals from CSIRO tagged white sharks.



Octopus and shark captured on our baited camera



Seafloor

Researchers spent two weeks at sea aboard the Bass Trek in December. They collected

around 200 samples from the seafloor and filmed underwater videos at 80 sites. We found that the seafloor is mostly sandy, shell or rubble with patches of rocky reef in deeper waters. Marine biologists will analyse samples and compare the seafloor and fish videos to understand the connections between fish and seafloor habitats.



Sea star



Coastal processes

Wave and current monitors are anchored on the seabed, collecting information about how

local currents transport sediment. Data will be used to predict potential changes in these processes from the project.



Cape Barren Goose with chicks



Humpback whale



Birds

We're collecting information about seabirds and shorebirds with:

- Aerial, boat and shore surveys to identify birds in the area
- Laser measuring technology to measure flight heights
- More than 200 tags fitted to 6 key species to monitor their movements and behaviours
- Population counts to understand how many birds live in local colonies.

So far we've seen a mix of birds including Skua, Jaeger, Gull, Tern, Albatross, Shearwater, Gannet and Cormorant species.

Bird specialists will use data collected to map flight paths and understand how and when birds use the area. A Collision Risk Model will be used to predict the risk of birds colliding with turbines. We'll use this information when designing the wind farm layout.

We're excited to have leading researchers from Monash University, Biosis and Deakin University doing this work.



Black-faced cormorant



Marine mammals

We're looking out for whales, dolphins and seals with aerial surveys and listening with

microphones on the seafloor. The Blue Whale Study survey team take an aeroplane out twice a month to record sightings.

Winter is the most common time for whales to pass along the Gippsland coast. So far, we've seen lots of dolphins, seals, some Humpback whales, and smaller numbers of other species including Pygmy blue, Minkie and Southern Right whales.

Local seal colonies have been counted and 38 tags fitted to track seal movements.

Data will be analysed and included in our environmental assessments.



The survey team and aeroplane



Wind and wave monitoring

Since November 2019, we've been studying the wind out

at sea to confirm the project's feasibility. We're seeing generally strong winds. Most importantly, we're finding that Bass Strait winds blow strong at times when demand for electricity is high – late afternoon, evenings and hot days.

Progressing our transmission route

Earlier this year we finalised a rigorous assessment of three possible transmission routes and selected one to progress through detailed planning and design.

We're now working with landholders to finalise the route, which comes to shore around Reeves Beach and travels underground through Darriman, Giffard West and Hiamdale before connecting to the grid at Loy Yang and/or Hazelwood.



Site investigations

Plant, animal, heritage, water and land investigations are happening along the transmission route this year. The route is mostly located on agricultural and plantation land but passes through a few sections of forest and reserves. It crosses roads and waterways including Merrimans Creek, Monkey Creek and Flynns Creek.

Representatives from Gunaikurnai Aboriginal Land and Waters Corporation (GLaWAC) will advise on Aboriginal Cultural Heritage surveys later in the year.



Ecologists have been recording the type and quality of vegetation and habitat along the transmission route

Learning from other projects

Our team took a trip to see underground cables being installed for the Powering Sydney's Future Project and learn from their design and construction teams. This is one of the only other large scale underground transmission projects currently being built in Australia.



Our engineers Jonas, Jono and Will with a 4.5 m drum carrying 1000 m of cable

Meet our Community Advisory Group

We've established a Community Advisory Group with 22 members across Gippsland to share information, answer questions and seek local advice as we plan for the project.

Members are regularly briefed on project updates and key topics. You can talk with them about the project and raise questions or concerns to be discussed in meetings.

Meeting agendas, presentations, and minutes are available on our website.

*Want to talk
with your nearest
member?*

*Contact us and
we can connect
you.*

Community Advisory Group members

Ian Gibson – Independent chairperson

Allan Rogers – McLoughlins Beach

Allison Spence – Latrobe City Council

Caleb Barlow – Foster

Dane Heinrich – Committee for Wellington

Darren McCubbin – Gippsland Climate Change Network

Deb Lucas – Woodside

Glenn Stagg – Sale

Harry Mitchelson – Lakes Entrance

Jenny Smith – Port Albert

Jessica Young – Traralgon

Jack Winterbottom – Birdlife Australia

Jonathan Pintus – Agnes

Julianne Peavey / Nicole Jennings – Darriman

Marcus McKenzie – Wellington Shire Council

Mary-Lou Dixon – Waratah Bay

Matt Langdon – Yarram

Peter Mooney – Gippsland Trades and Labour Council

Christine Legg – South Gippsland Shire Council

Travis Dillow – Woodside Beach

Tony Cantwell – Committee for Gippsland

Tony Wolfe – Warragul

Wendy Farmer – Voices of the Valley



Ian Gibson



Allan Rogers



Allison Spence



Mary-Lou Dixon



Caleb Barlow



Jack Winterbottom



Travis Dillow



Marcus McKenzie



Nicole Jennings



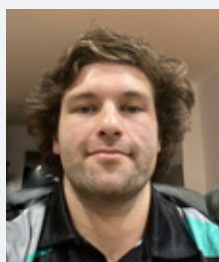
Tony Wolfe



Darren McCubbin



Deb Lucas



Jonathan Pintus



Peter Mooney



Dane Heinrich



Wendy Farmer



Glenn Stagg



Tony Cantwell

Offshore wind turbines

Offshore turbines are built to withstand strong winds, big waves and salt air and water.

Turbine technology is evolving quickly. Turbines being used today will soon be replaced by larger models that generate more electricity.

A final decision on turbine size, number and layout is a few years away. First, we need to consider:

- Advice from turbine manufacturers
- Wind data
- Seabed conditions
- Environmental assessment findings and any approval conditions
- Availability and capacity of local ports
- What's happening in the energy market.

Turbine fun facts



One spin of a 13MW turbine can power an average Australian home for 24 hours



Operate in wind speeds between 11-110 km/h



Up to 90% recyclable – expected to be zero waste by 2040

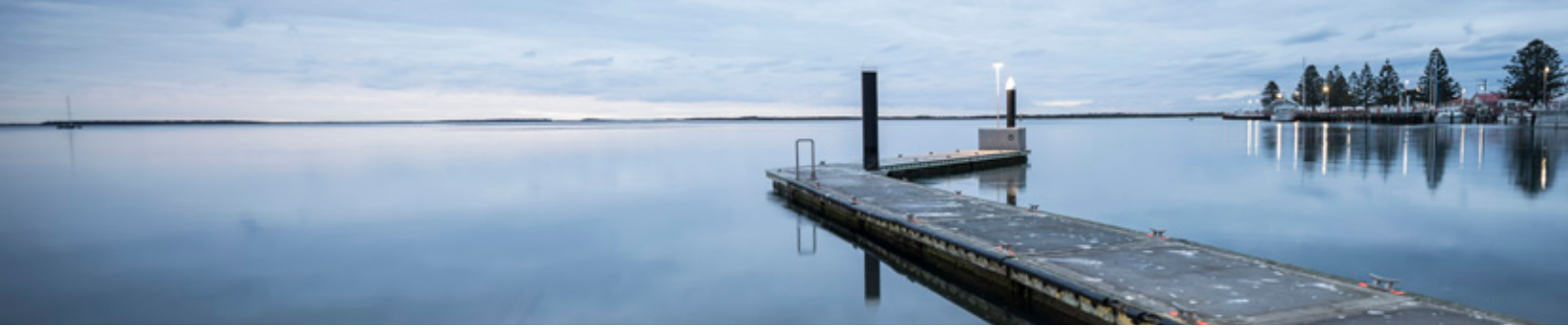


30 year life span

Are you a local business looking to work on this exciting project?

Register your interest, tell us what you do, and receive industry updates at our ICN Gateway. So far, 400 businesses of all sizes have registered. Go to gateway.icn.org.au and search for Star of the South Offshore Wind Project.





Share your views

We're often asked what the offshore wind farm will look like from land. It's a great question and one we're looking into.

The closest turbines could be 7 km from shore and would be visible from land.

One of our environmental assessments is a seascape, landscape and visual assessment. This will:

- Identify visual changes from the Star of the South project
- Assess the impact of visual changes to seascapes, landscapes and important views
- Develop images showing what the project could look like.

The first step is to understand the views that are important to the community and visitors to the area.

Please tell us



If someone you know is visiting for the first time, where would you recommend they go sightseeing? Why is this place special and how is it used?

Your feedback will be used to develop our seascape, landscape and visual assessment.

Share your answer and a photo if you have one.



Visit our Yarram community hub or one of our community consultation sessions in September.



Add your feedback online at getinvolved.starofthesouth.com.au – use the QR code above to get there.



SMS your answer and photo to 0447 029 883 or call 1800 340 340.



Ainsley17
2 hours ago

Port Albert - views over the harbour at

sunrise



ments

89



Sue99
1 hour ago

Ninety Mile Beach - beautiful ocean vistas on my morning walk



Share

5 Comments

43

WOODSIDE BEACH

Out and about in Gippsland

We love talking offshore wind with Gippslanders. Here are some snaps from meetings and events so far this year.



Marcus chats with locals at Woodside Beach Surf Club, March



A Welcome to Country and smoking ceremony at our Yarram community hub, March



Naomi and Sophie with Community Advisory Group member Deb at Woodside Beach Surf Club, March



Erin at a meeting with the Gippsland Trades and Labour Council, July



Jonas shares a project update at Yarram Memorial Park, March



Making windmills at Woodside Primary School

School activities

Getting quizzed by kids about offshore wind really keeps us on our toes! This year, we're involved in the Broadening Horizons program with Yarram Secondary College and Science Week with Gippsland Tech School. On Global Wind Day, local students made paper windmills and built a mechanical lego turbine – drop into our Yarram community hub to see it spinning!



Erin shares a project update at the Lakes Entrance Pub, April



Naomi, Erin and Sarah with Community Advisory Group chair Ian at Morwell Market, March. Thanks to Latrobe Valley artist and blacksmith Paddy McKenzie for the windmill! You can come and see it in our Yarram community hub.

What we've been hearing

Thanks to everyone who has taken the time to talk with us, give feedback and share local knowledge so far. These are the key topics we hear about:



Local jobs and industry opportunities



Managing impacts to communities, landholders and the environment



Setting the project up for success



Fishing in the area



What the wind farm would look like



Construction activities and disruption

Come along and get involved

We're holding community consultation sessions to share the latest project information and hear from you. Feedback will help shape our environmental assessments and ongoing project development.

If you've already shared feedback with us – thank you, we haven't forgotten! All feedback is recorded and considered by our team at the right time as work on the project continues.



Community webinar and Q&A – Join us on zoom to hear a presentation and have your questions answered. A recording will be shared on our website.



Get involved online – Visit starofthesouth.com.au/getinvolved to provide feedback online.



Gippsland consultation sessions – Drop in at any stage or come to hear a brief presentation at the start of each session. Share your feedback or raise concerns and ideas for us to consider in our environmental assessments.



WHERE	DATE	TIME	DETAILS
Online (zoom)	Thursday 2 September	5pm–6pm	Register at starofthesouth.com.au
Yarram	Saturday 4 September	10am–12pm	Yarram Secondary College, Hothouse
Port Welshpool	Saturday 4 September	2pm–4pm	Old Ferry Terminal
Longford	Tuesday 7 September	5pm–7pm	Longford Hall
Woodside	Wednesday 8 September	5pm–7pm	Woodside Hall
Leongatha	Wednesday 15 September	4pm–6pm	Dakers Centre
Morwell	Thursday 16 September	4pm–6pm	Italian Australian Club

Can't make it?

Feel free to contact us any time with your questions or feedback. Find our contact details below.

Also find us at...

- Discover Boating Showcase, Patterson Lakes – 9–10 October
- Yarram Agricultural Show – 20 November

COVID-19 restrictions may mean events are cancelled or changed at short notice. We'll provide any updates on Facebook, e-news and in local newspapers.

More information

To find out more about the Star of the South project and register for updates:

- starofthesouth.com.au
- 1800 340 340
- info@starofthesouth.com.au

- Star of the South
- Star of the South Project
- Interpreter service: 13 14 50
- Yarram community hub 310 Commercial Road, Yarram



This newsletter is printed on recycled paper and wrapped in biodegradable packaging.

AUGUST 2021