

# Star of the South

Newsletter 2 | April 2020

## We want to hear from you

Get involved online at [starofthesouth.com.au/getinvolved](https://starofthesouth.com.au/getinvolved)  
Share your feedback by Sunday 17 May 2020.

## Coronavirus update

Due to the coronavirus, we've cancelled our planned community sessions. Turn to the back page for more details and ways you can share your feedback.

## Planning for Australia's first offshore wind project

Proposed to be located off the south coast of Gippsland, the Star of the South has the potential to supply up to 18% of Victoria's electricity needs.

If built, it would be one of the largest offshore wind farms in the world.

Turbines out at sea would generate electricity from the wind and be transmitted to the Latrobe Valley, into the grid via substations and underground cables.

The Star of the South would diversify Victoria's energy mix to safeguard against blackouts in summer and provide consistent and reliable power during peak demand.

Transformative projects like this can mean change and cause some disruption. We're committed to working hand-in-hand with local people and organisations to minimise disruption and bring a new industry with jobs and local investment to life in Gippsland.

We're taking the first step in seeking government planning and environmental approvals for the project. Read more about what's been happening inside.



To receive more regular updates follow us on Facebook at **Star of the South Project** or email 'subscribe' to [info@starofthesouth.com.au](mailto:info@starofthesouth.com.au) to get our monthly e-news.



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[starofthesouth.com.au](https://starofthesouth.com.au)

# What we've been working on

A project as big as the Star of the South and one that is new to Australia, takes time and a lot of work to get right. Here are some of the things we've been working on, plus what we've found out so far from our site investigations.



## Setting up a local office

We've signed a lease for an office in Yarram at 310 Commercial Road. Stay tuned for opening details. We're getting it ready for visitors.



## Kicking off the environmental assessment process

Victorian and Commonwealth government planning and environmental approvals are needed to build Australia's first offshore wind project. This month we've taken the first step in the assessment process by referring the Star of the South project to the Victorian Minister for Planning and the Federal Minister for the Environment. Government will decide how to assess the project and will publish the referral documents on their websites. We'll also need a commercial licence from the Commonwealth Government to construct and operate the project.



## Understanding fishing in the project area

Fishing is an important part of the local community. We're looking to better understand how and where people fish in the proposed project area. We've commissioned a study, interviewed some local commercial fishermen, and are also keen to hear more from recreational fishers. We'll use this information to plan the project and develop our approach to sharing the waters with fishers, boaters and other marine users.



## Meeting with landholders

We've identified three possible corridors for an underground cable route between the coast and the Latrobe Valley. We've been meeting with landholders in these areas to talk about what's involved in hosting an easement. Read more on page 4.

Wind and wave monitoring equipment at sea off the coast near Port Albert



“Early indications are that the wind is generally strong, particularly on hot days and other peak demand periods.”



The Silver Star vessel preparing to deploy from Lakes Entrance in early March



### Onshore investigations

We've done some early onshore engineering, environmental and heritage studies. Data collected will help us select a transmission route. These investigations will continue and become more detailed this year.



### Wind and wave monitoring

Since November 2019, we've been studying the wind conditions out at sea to confirm the project's feasibility. Early indications show the wind is generally strong, particularly on hot days and in the late afternoon and evening when people are at home using their air conditioners.



### Surveying marine mammals and birds

We're studying marine mammals in and around the project area with acoustic monitoring equipment placed on the seafloor. This can record their sounds up to 20 kilometres away. Bird tagging is also being done so we can understand bird

flightpaths. Digital and visual surveys of marine mammals and birds are also allowing us to understand the types of species and their behaviours in the area seasonally. These investigations will form an important part of our environmental assessment.



### Seabed studies

Offshore, we're studying the seabed, including mapping the seafloor, measuring water depths and identifying any buried infrastructure such as cables and shipwrecks. Later this year, we'll start geotechnical investigations and complete further seabed studies. Geotechnical investigations involve taking a small sample of the seabed to understand the conditions. This information is used to determine the type of turbine foundation.

# Connecting to the grid

An important part of the project is connecting the offshore wind farm to the Latrobe Valley, so we can plug into the grid. This year we'll investigate and design a transmission network to do this.

We're planning to use underground cables for most of the transmission line, unless it's not feasible or where overhead lines would have lower impacts. To do this, we need fairly flat terrain. Underground cables are difficult to build in hilly areas.

## How we'll select a transmission corridor

We're looking to select a transmission corridor that is safe, reduces risk and provides efficient transmission to the grid.

We've narrowed it down to three possible transmission routes. Each option would connect to the same point in the Latrobe Valley. Our work so far tells us that each corridor has both pros and cons.

To identify suitable routes we considered minimising impacts on the environment,

potential use of existing easements, avoiding Aboriginal cultural heritage sites and reducing impacts on landholders.

To select the most suitable corridor, we'll consider:

- Findings from engineering, environmental and heritage studies
- Feedback from landholders and local communities
- Advice from technical specialists.

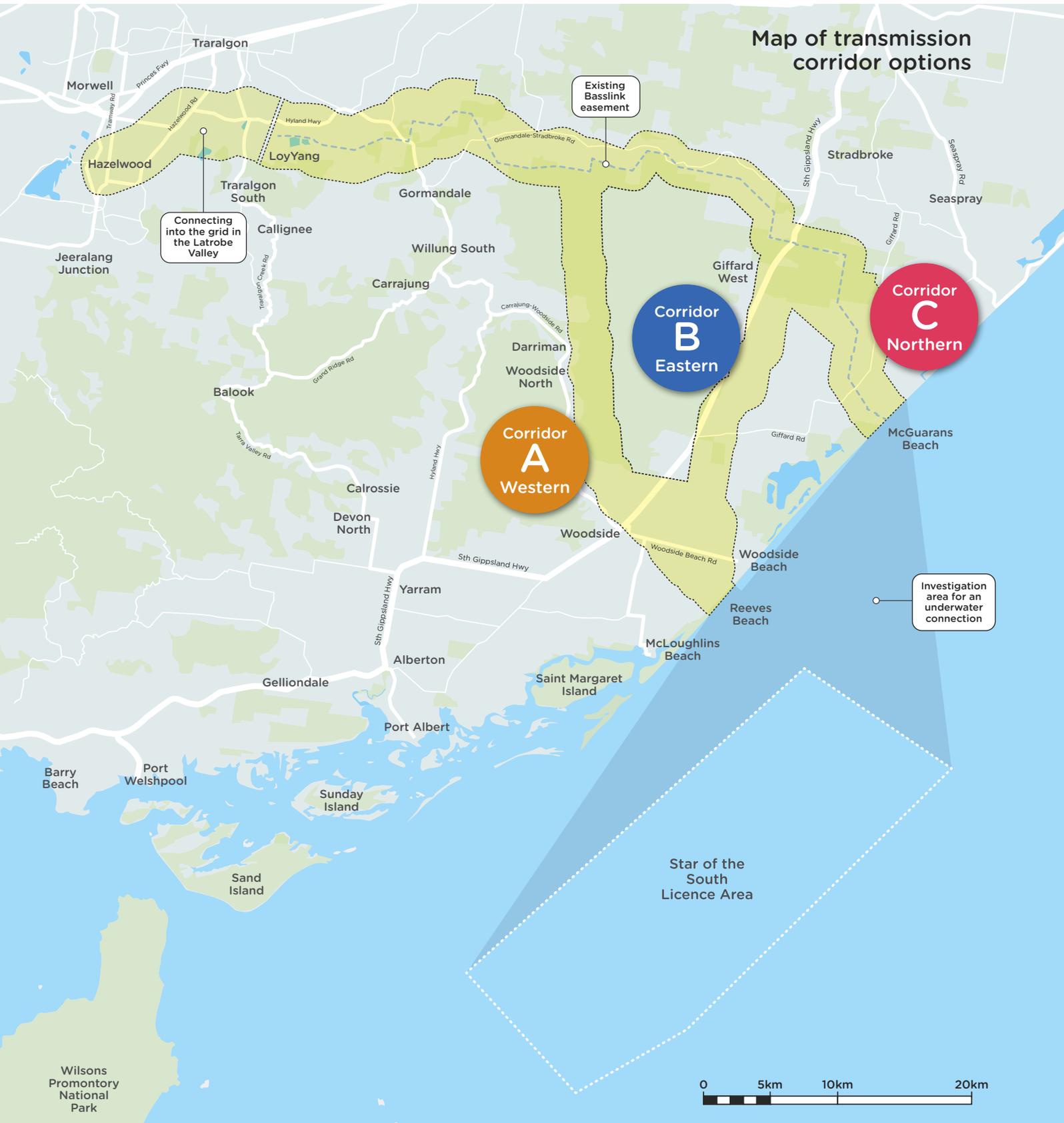


**What would you like us to know before we select a transmission corridor?**

Find more detailed information about each corridor and share your local knowledge at [starofthesouth.com.au/getinvolved](http://starofthesouth.com.au/getinvolved)

### We expect to make a decision later this year

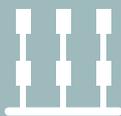
The next steps are land surveys and more detailed studies to inform the design and a full government assessment and approval process.



**Fast facts:**



60-80 km cable route, mostly underground



2-4 onshore substations, above ground



Electricity transmitted in Alternating Current (AC)

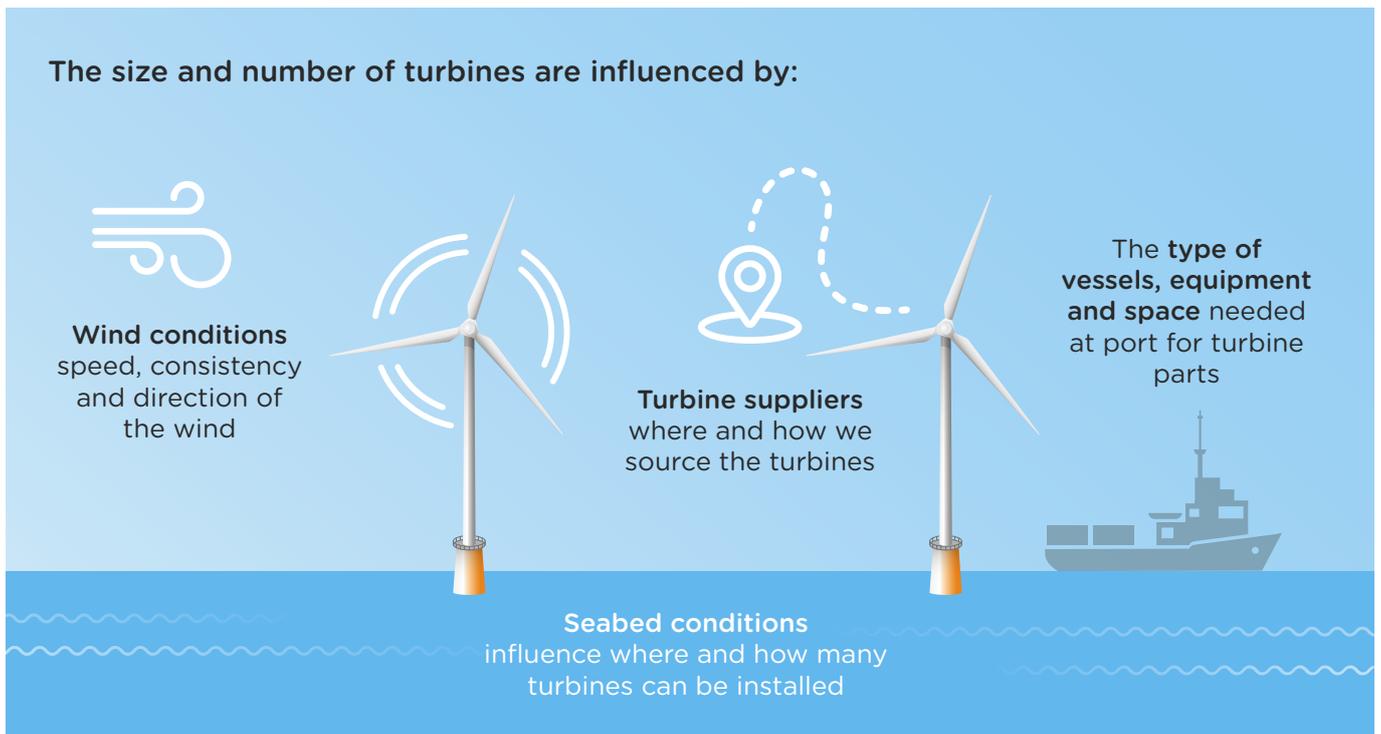


Approximately 30 metre wide easement

# Choosing a turbine

We're doing work to understand the type, number and layout of the turbines that could be used for the Star of the South offshore wind farm.

It's still early days for the project, and at this stage we haven't made any decisions about the type or number of turbines that could be used. Our wind and wave monitoring data, seabed studies and discussions with turbine suppliers will help to identify the best turbine to use for the site.



There could be either more smaller turbines, a bigger turbine with less of them or something in the middle.

We expect the turbines to be spaced about one kilometre apart with space for boats and other vessels to navigate through.

We'll keep you updated as we continue to develop a better understanding of the type and number of turbines needed for this project.

## Did you know?

The Rampion Offshore Wind project, situated 13 kilometres off the coast of Brighton in England, is seen by thousands of people every day. Tourism and charter boats offer wind farm tours for people wanting a closer look, or to fish or dive around the turbines.

Tourists in Brighton checking out the turbines in a boat





## Meet our CEO, Casper Frost Thorhauge

We're very pleased to have Casper join the Star of the South team. He brings extensive offshore wind experience and learnings from Europe and Asia.

Casper is from Copenhagen in Denmark and has relocated to Australia with his wife and three young sons.

He is a mechanical engineer, specialising in energy technology and power plants, and has since worked on \$10 billion of offshore wind projects in Germany and Taiwan.

## Ports for construction and operation

We've been working with local ports and harbours to find a base for the project during construction and operation.

Ports and harbours play a critical role in the construction and operation of an offshore wind farm. It's where most of the activity happens. During construction, activities such as manufacturing, storage and logistics may be based out of existing ports and harbours. After the wind farm opens, existing local ports and harbours would be used for operations and maintenance.

Veja Mate Offshore Wind Farm in Germany



# Learn and share your knowledge

The Star of the South project is founded on a belief that involving communities early is critical to developing a good project.

## Information sessions cancelled

Due to the serious coronavirus situation, we've cancelled our community information sessions planned in April. The health and safety of our staff and the community is our number one priority. But we're continuing to work on Australia's first offshore wind project and we still want to hear from you.

## Get involved

We're collecting community feedback between Tuesday 14 April and Sunday 17 May 2020. There are lots of different ways for you to get involved and help shape the project's next steps.

**Online:** visit [starofthesouth.com.au/getinvolved](http://starofthesouth.com.au/getinvolved) to find the latest information, view video updates and to complete a short online survey.

**By post:** call or email to request a hard copy information pack and survey to be posted to you, including a paid return envelope so you can easily send it back to us.

**Got a question?** We want to hear from you! Have your questions answered by:



Calling us on 1800 340 340 to set up a video or telephone meeting



Emailing us at [info@starofthesouth.com.au](mailto:info@starofthesouth.com.au)



Posting a question on our website



Posting a question to our Facebook page at **Star of the South Project**



Taking part in a live Q&A session with our team on Facebook

Feedback collected at this stage will help inform:

- Selection of a transmission corridor and location of onshore infrastructure
- Project impact assessments
- Our approach to sharing the waters with fishers and boaters
- Future information materials and consultation methods

There'll be many more opportunities through the planning phase to get involved and provide your input to this massive project.

## Join our Community Advisory Group

We're looking for locals to provide advice and share project information with people in their community. Email us to request an application form. Applications close Sunday 17 May 2020.



[starofthesouth.com.au](http://starofthesouth.com.au)

## More information

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

 [starofthesouth.com.au](http://starofthesouth.com.au)

 1800 340 340

 [info@starofthesouth.com.au](mailto:info@starofthesouth.com.au)

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Interpreter service: 13 14 50

