STAR OF THE SOUTH

Commonwealth Environmental Impact Statement

Chapter 20 – Social

Chapter 20 Social

20.1 Introduction

This chapter summarises the existing conditions related to social factors and assesses the impacts and risks associated with the construction, operation and decommissioning of the Star of the South Offshore Wind Farm Project (the project) within the Commonwealth jurisdiction. The chapter describes how impacts will be avoided, minimised or managed.

Social impact assessment is a research process used to identify potential social changes from a proposed project and to assess how those changes may affect individuals and communities.

This chapter is based on the impact assessment presented in *Technical Report R – Social Impact Assessment.*

Other chapters that relate to or inform the social assessment include:

Chapter 10 – Fish and Invertebrates

Chapter 15 – Commercial and Recreational Fisheries

Chapter 21 – Business and Tourism

Chapter 22 – Seascape, Landscape and Visual

20.2 Assessment scope

The study objectives for the social impact assessment are to:

- Identify and assess social impacts associated with the project's construction, operation and decommissioning
- Where necessary and appropriate, recommend mitigation measures to manage identified impacts.

All detailed technical methodologies and assessment on social impacts can be found in *Technical Report R – Social Impact Assessment.*

20.2.1 Commonwealth matters

The project's EIS guidelines inform the preparation of the EIS to enable the Commonwealth Minister for the Environment to make an informed decision on whether to approve the project under the EPBC Act.

The EIS guidelines state that the whole of the environment must be considered in the assessment of the impacts of the action on the Commonwealth marine area, including social, economic and cultural aspects of the environment. The aspects of the EIS guidelines that are directly relevant to social are

- Section 2.6 – Description of the environment
- Section 2.6.3 – Specifies that the whole of the environment must be considered in the assessment of the impacts of the action on the Commonwealth marine area, including social, economic and cultural aspects of the environment
- Section 2.11 – Promoting ecologically sustainable development
- Section 2.17 – State that the economic and social impacts of the action, both positive and negative, must be analysed in the EIS.

Further information about the EIS guidelines is listed in *Attachment V – EIS Guidelines Checklist.*

20.3 Evaluation framework

20.3.1 Key legislation, policy, guidelines and standards

Table 20-1 lists the key legislation, policy, guidelines and standards relevant to the social impact assessment within the Commonwealth jurisdiction.

Table 20-1 Key legislation, policy, guidelines and standards

Type	Applicable legislation, policy, guideline or standard
Commonwealth Government	*Offshore Electricity Infrastructure Act 2021 (Cth)*
	Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999 (Cth)
	Gippsland Local Jobs Plan (2021), Department of Employment and Workplace Relations

20.3.2 Assessment criteria

To assess the project, predicted impacts and risks are compared to criteria that set required environmental performance outcomes (refer *Chapter 6 – Assessment Framework*).

For SIA, the assessment of the effects of the project against criteria has been undertaken by evaluating the significance of changes due to the project for the key aspects of:

- workforce and social profile
- recreational boating and fishing
- coastal character and amenity and
- rural land and amenity

In terms of the sensitivity of receptors and the magnitude of effects as presented in Section 14.4.1.

The criteria for the social impact assessment are derived from legislation and policy, relevant standards and guidelines, stakeholder feedback, workshops, the Star of the South Community Advisory Group and industry best practice.

These sources and activities are used to identify potential relevant change mechanisms, the spatial range over which social effects may be experienced and in turn this informs the geographic focus for the social impact assessment. Community resources and social receptors have also been identified.

20.4 Methods

The purpose of the social impact assessment is to assess the potential impacts of the project on social.

Impacts refer to the consequences of planned project actions, which are given a rating determined by combining the magnitude of the impact and the sensitivity of the receptor.

The technical chapters consider **key impacts** as impacts with a residual consequence rating of moderate to severe. **Other impacts** are impacts with a residual consequence rating of negligible to minor. Refer to *Chapter 6 – Assessment Framework* for more detail on how impact and risk ratings are derived.

The social impact assessment involved:

- Reviewing Australian Bureau of Statistics and other relevant secondary data sources
- Reviewing technical assessments prepared for the EIS, namely:
  - *Technical Report C – Fish and Invertebrates*
  - *Technical Report N – Commercial and Recreational Fisheries*
  - *Technical Report Q – Business and Tourism*
  - *Technical Report U – Seascape, Landscape and Visual*
  - *Technical Report W – Onshore Noise and Vibration*
  - *Technical Report X – Traffic and Transport*
- Reviewing data provided by Star of the South about the number and type of properties that would be traversed by transmission infrastructure
- Reviewing data generated through stakeholder and community engagement conducted by the project during EIS preparation
- Reviewing data collected through community meetings in Woodside Beach (2022 and 2024) and Port Albert (2024), when community members were shown photomontages of the project
- Social impact specialist attendance at community information sessions at McLoughlins Beach (2022), Port Albert (2022), Yarram (2024) and Seaspray (2024)
- Social impact specialist observation of focus groups with Latrobe Valley and coastal area residents (2022)

- Telephone discussions and in-person interviews with representatives of local fishing clubs in 2022 and 2025
- Reviewing data from a survey of recreational fishers conducted at boat ramps at McLoughlins Beach, Port Albert and Port Welshpool, and online, between 2021 and 2025
- Online survey of Wilsons Promontory users
- Meetings and telephone discussions with representatives of South Gippsland Shire Council and Wellington Shire Council.

20.4.1 Assessing significance

The social impact assessment assesses the significance of social impacts by considering both the magnitude of the expected social effects and the sensitivity of receptors to these effects:

- **Magnitude of social effects**: The intensity of change (relative to existing conditions), scale (number of people affected) and duration of the change
- **Sensitivity of affected receptors to the predicted effects:** The compatibility of predicted effects with use and enjoyment of a community resource, the value attributed to an affected community resource by the receptor(s) and the capacity of the receptor(s) to adapt to a predicted effect.

It is well accepted in social impact assessment practice that as magnitude and sensitivity increase, so does significance. However, links between these factors and severity ratings are inherently subjective and contextual.

The significance ratings provided in the *Technical Report R – Social Impact Assessment* and the impact sections of this chapter reflect the overall level of disruption caused by different aspects of the project. However, the way that individuals experience change varies, and the ratings do not imply that the experience of all affected individuals will be the same.

Table 20-2 outlines the rating scale (black) for the social impact assessment and illustrates the concept that an increase in magnitude and/or sensitivity is associated with increasing significance (greyed area). Ratings are formulated taking account of the factors which influence severity. However, the descriptors in the table are illustrative only, and are not used as a ‘formula’ to determine the overall significance rating for a potential social impact.

Table 20-2 Assessing the significance of social impacts

Rating	Recommendation		Factors relevant to a significance assessment					
	Importance	Mitigation (if negative)	Sensitivity			Magnitude of environmental change		
			Compatibility	Importance	Adaptive capacity	Intensity	Duration	Extent
Severe	Impact cannot be justified / is essential	Significant investment in mitigation and/or project redesign is required	Change is highly disruptive / necessary	Resource is essential	Receptors have little to no capacity to cope with / without changes	Very large change relative to baseline conditions	Greater than 10 years	Affects many people across a wider area
Major	Impact is significant in the context of the net benefit assessment	Additional mitigation measures would be highly beneficial	Change is disruptive beneficial	Resource is very important	Receptors have limited capacity to cope with / without changes	Large change relative to baseline conditions	3 – 10 years	Affects many people across a wider district (such as a local government area)
Moderate	Impact is significant but can be tolerated / forgone	Additional mitigation measures should be considered in particular circumstances	Change causes considerable disruption/benefit	Resource is of considerable importance	Receptors have some capacity to cope with / without changes	Considerable change relative to baseline conditions	1 – 3 years	Affects many within a local community
Minor	Impact is of minor importance	Impact can be tolerated, but mitigation encouraged	Change is somewhat disruptive/desirable	Resource is of minor importance	Receptors have the capacity to cope with / without changes	Noticeable change relative to baseline conditions	3 months – 1 year	Affects discrete sections of a local community
Negligible	Impact is not material	N/A	Change has minimal implications for use and enjoyment of the affected resource	Resource is not valued	Receptors are unaffected	Little to no change relative to baseline conditions	Less than 3 months	Affects a small number of individuals

20.5 Existing environment

This section describes the existing conditions within the study area as they relate to social impacts. The study area includes coastal areas and settlements, Wilsons Promontory National Park (Wilsons Promontory), Reeves Beach campground, areas used for recreational fishing and the rural areas that the project traverses.

20.5.1 Population and settlement

There are several small settlements (less than 300 dwellings) located on the Corner and Nooramunga inlets and along the Ninety Mile Beach. These settlements offer a limited range of retail and commercial services and community facilities for residents and visitors. In some areas such as McLoughlins Beach, there are no services or retail outlets.

Land immediately inland from the coast is primarily used for grazing and forestry and is sparsely populated. A number of small settlements are in this rural landscape, including Woodside, Toora and Alberton (less than 250 dwellings) as well the larger townships of Foster (708 dwellings) and Yarram (948 dwellings).

A relatively large proportion of dwellings within the coastal settlements are used as holiday homes and/or rentals. The permanent population of these settlements includes a large proportion of retirees. In contrast, residential accommodation within inland settlements, such as Foster and Yarram and larger regional cities, is occupied primarily by permanent residents and the demographic profile is more diverse.

There has been more substantial growth in Yarram and Foster, than there has been in the coastal settlements. Population projections are not produced for the smaller coastal settlements, however forecasts by South Gippsland Shire and Wellington Shire indicate modest growth near the coast to 2036, the majority of which will likely occur in Yarram and Foster.

Much of the land traversed by the project's onshore transmission alignment is zoned for farming, with many of the rural properties in the area being actively farmed. The remainder of the landholdings are used for forestry.

20.5.2 Community facilities and services

Settlements throughout the study area include various community facilities and services. Higher order facilities, such as hospitals and tertiary and secondary education, are located in larger urban centres such as Sale, Morwell and Traralgon, with smaller health services in Leongatha, Korumburra, Yarram and Foster. The remaining townships and hamlets accommodate locally oriented services such as primary health services, primary schools, sports fields and local parks.

There is a substantial network of existing primary and secondary schools in proximity to the Gippsland ports expected to be used as a base for workers supporting project construction and operation activities (Barry Beach Marine Terminal and/or Port Anthony). There are 16 primary schools which range in size from 20 enrolments (Kongwak Primary School) to 611 enrolments (Leongatha Primary School). The majority of these schools are operating well below their historical enrolment peak (including the government primary schools in Yarram, Woodside, Welshpool, Korumburra, Foster and Leongatha). Similarly, there are six secondary schools which range in size from 280 to 556 enrolments, all of which are operating below their historical enrolment peak (up to 150 students less in the case of Yarram Secondary College).

Existing supply of primary medical health services, such as General Practitioner (GP) services, is limited and below what is required to meet existing community needs. For example, the supply of GP services in the ‘GP Catchment Areas’ (defined by Department of Health) of Foster and Yarram and nearby towns of Leongatha and Korumburra is below the benchmark level.

20.5.3 Ageing and outmigration

The population of South Gippsland Shire is projected to age over the next 20 to 30 years. This trend is partly explained by an outmigration of younger residents from the local government area, who may otherwise settle and raise families. Outmigration (when people move away from an area) occurs within South Gippsland Shire, Wellington Shire and Latrobe City, with recent figures presented in Table 20-3. While the reasons for this are likely diverse, anecdotal feedback suggests a relative lack of attractive education and career opportunities is a key driver.

Table 20-3 Outmigration and in-migration of residents in year preceding the 2021 census by age

	0 to 19	20 to 29	30 to 49	50+
Left South Gippsland by 2021	**6.0%**	**18.3%**	**5.2%**	**2.6%**
Relocated to Wellington or Latrobe	0.8%	2.9%	0.7%	0.5%
Relocated elsewhere	5.2%	15.4%	4.5%	2.1%
Left Wellington by 2016	**3.8%**	**12.5%**	**3.4%**	**1.5%**
Relocated to South Gippsland or Latrobe	0.9%	2.9%	0.9%	0.5%
Relocated elsewhere	2.9%	9.6%	2.5%	1.0%
Left Latrobe by 2016	**3.3%**	**8.7%**	**3.9%**	**1.5%**
Relocated to South Gippsland or Wellington	0.6%	1.1%	0.7%	0.3%
Relocated elsewhere	**2.7%**	**7.5%**	**3.2%**	**1.2%**

Source ABS Census 2021

20.5.4 Housing market activity

Dwelling approvals and new lettings in proximity to the project are relatively limited and concentrated within a handful of smaller settlements along the inlets and coast, and within the hinterland to the north (see Table 20-4). Only a small number of dwellings within these smaller settlements are rented, and available data indicates that new lettings are limited to less than 10 per year in each settlement. Notwithstanding, dwelling occupancy is low in these locations and under the right conditions, rental housing supply could increase if holiday homes were brought on to the rental market. Housing market activity is more substantial in the larger inland settlements such as Yarram and Foster (approximately 35 to 45 new lettings per annum), located 30 kilometres and 17 kilometres respectively from the Gippsland ports.

The majority of housing market activity across South Gippsland Shire, Wellington Shire and Latrobe City is located in regional centres such as Leongatha, Traralgon and Sale. These larger centres are located some distance (greater than 45-minute drive) from locations such as the shore crossing point (Reeves Beach) and the Gippsland ports.

The project is located in a sparsely populated area with limited capacity to accommodate new residents. Anecdotal feedback from local council representatives and other community stakeholders indicates that increased demand for housing associated with other commercial projects in the region (such as the desalination plant at Wonthaggi) led to temporary spikes in rental prices in nearby markets.

This feedback is reflected in housing market data, which show that house prices in the Bass Coast Shire increased by 13 per cent above trend between 2009 and 2012 while the desalination plant was being constructed, but then reverted to trend once the construction was complete (see *Technical Report Q – Business and Tourism*).

Table 20-4 Housing in the study area

LGA	Settlement	Dwellings	Rented	% of rented dwellings in Shire	New Lettings Year to September 2024	Dwelling Approvals (2023-24)
Wellington	Woodside Beach	103	5	0.1%	900	210
	McLoughlins Beach	151	8	0.2%		
	Port Albert	279	24	0.7%		
	Longford	559	23	0.6%		
	Yarram	948	186	5.1%		
	Sale	6,665	1,896	52.4%		
	Shire Balance	14,798	1,478	40.8%		
	Shire Total	23,503	3,620	100%		
South Gippsland	Port Franklin	108	10	0.5%	399	142
	Port Welshpool	228	9	0.5%		
	Toora	259	39	2.1%		
	Foster	708	157	8.6%		
	Meeniyan	234	45	2.5%		
	Leongatha	2,634	541	29.6%		
	Korumburra	11,124	683	30.0%		
	Shire Balance	12,943	344	56.2%		
	Shire Total	28,238	1,828	100.0%		
Latrobe	Moe	7,939	2,102	27.0%	1,812	317
	Morwell	6,891	1,946	25.0%		
	Traralgon	12,428	2,779	35.7%		
	Churchill	2,100	562	7.2%		
	Shire Balance	6,262	395	5.1%		
	Shire Total	35,620	7,784	100.0%		

Source ABS Census 2021; DHS Rental Report 2024; ABS Building Approvals, Australia 2024

20.5.5 Coastal settlements

The project would be visible from various coastal settlements between Wilsons Promontory and Seaspray. These townships offer residents a peaceful residential setting with immediate access to coastal environments including the Corner Inlet Ramsar Site and the Ninety Mile Beach. The physical character of the coastal settlements and the lifestyle patterns of residents and visitors varies in accordance with each settlement's size and complexity and degree of physical connection to the Ninety Mile Beach and inlets.

Coastal areas in proximity to the project accommodate several small coastal settlements and camping areas, including Manns Beach, McLoughlins Beach, Port Albert, Port Welshpool, Robertsons Beach, Seaspray and Woodside Beach. Dwellings within the coastal settlements accommodate a small permanent population, which consists of a large proportion of retirees, with the remainder being used as holiday homes. The size and extent of the coastal settlements have not changed greatly in past decades with only a handful of new dwellings developed each year. Employment and retail opportunities, as well as community services, are very limited. Residents rely on services located within larger inland towns, such as Yarram, and regional centres such as Sale or the Latrobe Valley.

20.5.6 Wilsons Promontory

Wilsons Promontory is a 50,000-hectare national park located in South Gippsland, Victoria. It is located approximately 23 kilometres west of the offshore wind farm area. The park has significant biodiversity, recreation and wilderness values. It is a major tourist destination with over 400,000 people visiting annually to experience its diverse and unspoilt character and scenery.

20.5.7 Reeves Beach campground

The Reeves Beach campground is a free camping area situated within the Ninety Mile Beach foreshore reserve amongst the dune system. Parks Victoria manages the campground, which includes 30 informal camp sites. It has one toilet on site, but no other services. The campground is relatively isolated and secluded, with Woodside Beach being the closest settlement (13 kilometres away by road).

20.5.8 Recreational boating and fishing

Offshore waters located from Wilsons Promontory to Seaspray are used by offshore fishing enthusiasts from across Gippsland, the Latrobe Valley and beyond.

Recreational fishers are generally restricted in their capacity to fish much of the offshore wind farm area due to distance and weather limitations, and because many can only fish weekends and holidays. Many recreational fishers are also less interested in heading offshore as far as the offshore wind farm area due to the presence of fishing reefs nearer to shore and because of their relatively short daily fishing window.

There are several public boat ramps and jetties that facilitate recreational fishing and boating within the Corner Inlet Ramsar Site (which comprises the Corner Inlet and Nooramunga Marine and Coastal Parks) and offshore between Wilsons Promontory and Seaspray. Key recreational boating facilities such as boast ramps and floating jetties are located in Port Welshpool, Port Albert, McLoughlans Beach and Manns Beach.

For coastal settlements, including Manns Beach, McLoughlins Beach, Port Albert and Woodside Beach, the data collected for the social impact assessment shows that a large proportion of residents and visitors (such as holiday homeowners) own boats and regularly engage in fishing.

20.5.9 Para Park

In addition to the conventional residential settlements located along the coastline and inlets in the vicinity of the wind farm there is a privately owned island, Sunday Island, located approximately 10 minutes by boat from Port Albert.

Sunday Island comprises 16 square kilometres of land and is owned by Para Park Co-operative Game Reserve Limited and can accommodate a maximum of 210 members. The co-operative was established in 1965 predominantly to facilitate preservation of Sunday Island as a game management and hunting area, with the hog (or para deer) being a particular focus.

Most members partake in deer hunting and contribute to the preservation of native habitat on the island. Fishing is also popular among members. Members either camp or stay in one of 100 basic dwellings with access to a shared recreation room.

20.5.10 Rural character and amenity

Land within the rural area traversed by the onshore project area is primarily used for agriculture.

The construction corridor for the underground cable system traverses up to 25 properties. These properties include farms, forestry plantations, Crown land managed by Parks Victoria for conservation purposes, and a road reserve.

20.6 Construction impacts

This section describes the potential impacts associated with the construction of the project that relate to social impacts on the respective receptor groups. Impacts refer to the consequences of planned project actions, which are given a rating determined by combining the magnitude of the impact and the sensitivity of the receptor (refer to Section 20.4.1).

The potential impact pathways identified in *Technical Report R – Social Impact Assessment* are used to structure the impact assessment as follows:

- Workforce and social profile (SOC-I002)
- Recreational boating and fishing (SOC-I005)
- Coastal character and amenity (SOC-I004)
- Rural land and amenity (SOC-I001 and SOC-I003).

20.6.1 Workforce and social profile (SOC-I002)

This section considers potential impacts of the project's construction on the social profile of the community in the study area and assesses potential implications for relevant social receptors.

The social impact assessment process identified that demand for housing from the project's workforce during construction has the potential to result in severe social impacts if unmitigated.

To manage this potential impact, Star of the South has developed a draft Workforce Accommodation Strategy to ensure rental and short-stay accommodation in the project's study area remains affordable and accessible, and includes a hierarchy of mitigations. The draft strategy will be further developed post approval in collaboration with construction contractors (when appointed, who will hire the workforce), relevant councils and accommodation providers once a detailed construction schedule and worker numbers are known.

20.6.1.1 Social impacts

The project will generate a substantial amount of employment during the construction phase for both onshore and offshore activities (see Table 20-5 and Table 20-6).

The project's draft Workforce Accommodation Strategy includes a tiered hierarchy of actions for housing workers.

Star of the South will seek to maximise the number of workers who are recruited locally (those who live within a one-hour drive catchment of project workplaces) through procurement strategies developed post approval such as the Workforce Development Strategy (refer to BTM05 - *Technical Report Q – Business and Tourism*) and would sequence construction to minimise peak labour demands where possible. Labour force requirements not filled by local residents will be met by workers from outside the one-hour commuter catchment. This labour force will require accommodation located close to the work site.

For onshore construction activities, the workforce will comprise:

- Technical staff working on rostered shifts
- Onshore management, administration and logistics and other workers.

Table 20-5 Workforce Accommodation Strategy summary – onshore construction

	Onshore technical staff	Onshore management, administration, logistics and other workers
Total peak quarterly workforce	299	46
Work format	Working on rostered shifts and returning to place of residence for a rest period	Conventional working week
Work location	Along the onshore construction corridor	Most likely Sale (or other urban centre in Gippsland / the Latrobe Valley)
Commuter catchment	1 hour of Giffard. For locations more than 45 minutes away, a shuttle bus may be used.	1 hour of Sale
Suitable accommodation	Short-stay rooms	Rental
Available rooms/lettings	Approximately 1,000 short-stay rooms available per annum	Approx 1,300 rental lettings per annum
Proposed housing strategy	• Recruit locally. • Sequence construction to minimise demand. • Use up to 25% of available short-stay rooms. • Encourage short-stay accommodation by using existing short-stay providers as the need / opportunity arises.	• Recruit locally. • Sequence construction to minimise demand. • Workers independently secure longer-term accommodation within existing rental markets and/or Airbnb markets.

For offshore construction activities, the workforce will comprise:

- Offshore technical staff working on rostered shifts, who will work and sleep offshore during their shift and return to their permanent residence on rostered breaks
- Offshore management, administration, logistics and other workers (port-based and Latrobe / central Gippsland), who will work a conventional work week.

Table 20-6 Workforce Accommodation Strategy summary – offshore construction

	Offshore technical staff	Offshore management, administration, logistics and others workers	
		Port-based	Latrobe Valley and/or Sale
Total peak quarterly workforce	917	255	234
Work format	Working on rostered shifts and returning to place of residence for a rest period	Conventional working week	
Work location	Gippsland ports	Gippsland ports	Latrobe Valley and/or Sale
Commuter catchment	1 hour of Gippsland ports	1 hour of Gippsland ports	1 hour of Sale or urban centres in the Latrobe Valley
Suitable accommodation	Short-stay rooms	Rental and/or other suitable short-stay accommodation	Rental
Available rooms/lettings	Approximately 663 short-stay rooms per annum	Approximately 200 rental lettings per annum, 75 holiday rentals and 663 short-stay rooms per annum	>2,300 rental lettings per annum
Proposed housing strategy	• Recruit locally. • Sequence construction to minimise demand. • Accommodate workers at port (bed sits) and/or offshore. • Provide shuttle bus to Melbourne, if required.	• Recruit locally. • Sequence construction to minimise demand. • Workers access rental properties in Yarram (10), Korumburra (10), Foster and Meeniyan and Leongatha (10) (30 in total per annum). • Agreements with existing holiday rental accommodation providers and/or other suitable short-stay accommodation providers (number of properties would not exceed 25% of current supply). • Develop suitable temporary accommodation options with the capacity to accommodate workers not housed by the above measures.	• Recruit locally. • Sequence construction to minimise demand. • Workers to independently secure accommodation in the region.

The draft Workforce Accommodation Strategy sets a limit on the number of rental properties that workers from outside the region stationed at Gippsland ports can access each year. Workers who cannot be accommodated immediately within the rental market will be accommodated within holiday rental or other suitable short-stay accommodation options (such as serviced apartments) and, if necessary, project-specific temporary accommodation.

The draft Workforce Accommodation Strategy commits to using no more than 25 per cent of the current accommodation supply, to minimise displacement of existing users, including tourists.

Housing

The project may attract workers (technical staff as well as managerial, logistics and administrative staff) to a relatively sparsely populated region. The draft Workforce Accommodation Strategy will ensure that potential impacts on housing are appropriately managed.

Technical staff

It is likely most onshore technical staff will be recruited from the local area (with their own housing / accommodation in place) due to region's history of comparable projects and existing skill base. As such, any imported workforce will be small relative to available housing and is not expected to have a material impact on housing accessibility or affordability.

It is likely many offshore technical staff will be recruited from outside the region, given the specialist nature of the work and the relatively small local labour force. These workers will be accommodated at sea during their shift and potentially one night before and after the shift, either on a vessel or in port-based accommodation. As such, these workers would not influence existing rental or short-stay accommodation markets.

Management, logistics, administrative staff

It is likely most of the onshore management, logistics and administrative staff will be recruited from the local area (with their own housing / accommodation in place) due to region's history of comparable projects and existing skill base. As such, any imported workforce will be small relative to available housing and is not expected to have a material impact on housing accessibility or affordability.

There is a much smaller local labour force to draw on for offshore management, logistics and administrative roles. Many of these roles are likely be filled by an imported workforce. The mitigations of the draft Workforce Accommodation Strategy will manage any associated impacts to housing affordability and accessibility. The project will have a positive effect on the viability of short-stay local accommodation businesses, particularly during non-peak periods.

Community facilities and services

There is expected to be a greater demand for community services from staff working at Gippsland ports, however this could be accommodated across Foster, Korumburra, Leongatha and Yarram. There are multiple schools and children's services located in these centres, as well as in nearby smaller townships, such as Meeniyan and Woodside. Any additional demand for children's and educational services can be met by the existing service network and will contribute to the ongoing sustainability of these services.

The additional demand for GP, dental and other primary health services from workers located at Gippsland ports is expected to be relatively modest but may have implications for service accessibility, considering limitations of the current service network.

Demographic sustainability and social cohesion

The demographic profile of populations of the South Gippsland and Wellington Shires is influenced by the outmigration of younger residents who may otherwise settle and raise families.

Primarily through managerial and administrative roles, the project will contribute to the demographic sustainability of the region by facilitating the retention of existing community members who may otherwise leave in search of employment and/or attracting new working-age residents to locations near the Gippsland ports, the Latrobe Valley and Sale. While the construction phase is time-limited, it spans multiple years, and new or retained community members will positively contribute to local activities (such as community sports, social groups etc.) over this timeframe, or opt to stay in the region longer term, both of which also contribute to demographic sustainability. The demographic profile and sustainability is measured through Australian Bureau of Statistics and other relevant secondary data sources (refer to Section 14.4) and positive contributions that affect social vitality and cohesion are measured through numbers of community activity participants (in areas such as sport, arts and cultural groups, etc).

Demographic sustainability

Maintenance of an appropriate balance between young, working-age, and older populations, ensuring a sustainable workforce and social support system.

Social vitality

The quality and extent of social interactions, relationships, and the sense of belonging experienced by individuals

Social cohesion

The willingness of members of a society to cooperate with each other in order to survive and prosper.

While the offshore technical positions would have less influence on the demography of the region, some labour will be locally sourced, facilitating the retention of existing community members. The economic activity generated by the project's construction phase will benefit local businesses.

The mitigation measures proposed to reduce construction phase impacts on workforce and social profile (housing and workforce accommodation, community facilities and services and social cohesion) for relevant social receptors are:

- SOC-M001 – Draft Workforce Accommodation Strategy: Develop and update the draft Workforce Accommodation Strategy prior to construction, in collaboration with the relevant councils and accommodation providers to minimise the impacts of the project's workforce during construction and operation on available accommodation within the local area.
- SOC-M002 – Medical Services: Clarify final workforce numbers prior to construction, and as necessary and appropriate, provide primary medical services at the Gippsland ports which may be used by construction workers to reduce or avoid the need for workers to make use of GP services in the local area.

Further details on the mitigation measures are available in *Technical Report R – Social Impact Assessment and Chapter 23 – Commonwealth Environmental Management Framework*.

Overall, the project's impacts on workforce and social profile during the construction phase on social receptors are considered to range between 'major positive' to 'minor negative' as presented in Table 20-7.

Table 20-7 Workforce and social profile – residual impact assessment, construction

Location	Receptor	Rating
Sale surrounds	Renters	Negligible
	Short-stay accommodation users	Minor negative
	Service users	Negligible
	Broader community	Minor-moderate positive
Near Gippsland ports	Renters	Minor negative
	Short-stay accommodation users	Minor negative
	Service users	Minor negative
	Broader community	Major positive
Latrobe City	Renters	Negligible
	Short-stay accommodation users	Negligible
	Service users	Negligible
	Broader community	Moderate positive

20.6.2 Recreational boating and fishing (SOC-I005)

20.6.2.1 Social impacts

The construction process has the potential to alter the amenity and accessibility of offshore waters within and near the offshore project area in the following manner:

- Offshore wind turbine and offshore substation installation activities will take place within the offshore wind farm area. One turbine foundation pile will be installed at a time. Recreational vessels will be asked to keep clear of installation activities for safety.
- Export cable installation activities will progressively move from the shore crossing to the offshore wind farm area. Recreational vessels will be asked to keep clear of installation activities for safety.
- Construction piling noise is expected to be audible up to four kilometres away. This may reduce the quality of the fishing experience and potentially deter fishing within a radius of approximately four kilometres.
- Fish would be temporarily displaced within 100 metres of construction areas. Fish availability in the remainder of the offshore wind farm area would be comparable with existing conditions.

Construction may result in minor disruptions to offshore recreational boating and fishing within and close to the offshore project area, with particular locations only expected to be affected for a short period (less than three months).

Recreational boating, yachting and fishing activities that occur within Corner Inlet, nearshore waters and around Wilsons Promontory will not be directly impacted by the project's construction.

The mitigation measure proposed to reduce impacts on recreational boating and fishing during construction is the implementation of a Stakeholder Engagement Plan (MMSC03). This plan will include the following in relation to social impact matters:

- Communicating construction activities and sequencing regularly and clearly through a range of easy-to-understand tools
- Charting the location of installed offshore infrastructure using digital tools that are suitable for use by the fishing community.

Overall, the project's social impacts on recreational boating and fishing during the construction phase on social receptors are considered to range between 'negligible' to 'minor negative' as presented in Table 20-8.

Table 20-8 Residual impact assessment, construction – recreational boating and fishing

Receptor	Rating
Offshore fishing participants	Minor negative
Recreational boating, yachting and fishing which occurs with the inlets.	Negligible-minor negative

20.6.3 Coastal character and amenity (SOC-I004)

20.6.3.1 Social impacts

Social impacts from the project on coastal character and amenity may occur during shore crossing works and the construction of offshore wind farm infrastructure. Installation of offshore infrastructure may generate noise which may, in very rare circumstances, have the potential to contribute to background noise levels. Refer to *Technical Report W – Onshore Noise and Vibration.*

Coastal settlements

As the turbines and other structures are installed, the visual appearance of the coast would include wind turbine at a distance of 10 kilometres or more. The change to the character of the coastal environment and magnitude of visual impacts will be largest for residents and regular visitors to Woodside Beach and to a lesser degree McLoughlins Beach and Seaspray (which is 31 kilometres away). It is assumed for the purposes of the assessment and impact rating that residents of these settlements consider the visual impacts of the project a negative change to the landscape. Visual impact is assessed in *Chapter 22 – Seascape, Landscape and Visual*.

Reeves Beach campground

In the initial phases of the construction process (first 27 months), the shore crossing works would be noticeable for users of the Reeves Beach free campground. A temporary concrete batching plant is proposed to be located approximately 500 metres from the Reeves Beach campground, which would operate for approximately seven months and generate noise that may be perceptible, although not necessarily disruptive, at the campground. Refer to *Chapter 4 – Project Description* for detailed information on the proposed shore crossing works.

Construction noise associated with shore crossing works would be elevated relative to existing levels throughout the construction period. During the shore crossing drilling, works will occur 24 hours per day.

Alternative free coastal camping is available elsewhere in Gippsland. For example, 19 free campgrounds available within the Gippsland Lakes Coastal Park along Shoreline Drive to the south of Golden Beach would provide a comparable alternative to the Reeves Beach campground, particularly outside of peak periods.

The mitigation measures proposed to reduce impacts on the coastal character and amenity for coastal communities and users of the Reeves Beach campground include the implementation of a Stakeholder Engagement Plan (SOC-M003), which will communicate information about construction activities sequencing to stakeholders including Parks Victoria and Reeves Beach campground users. Star of the South will also engage with Parks Victoria on the management of Reeves Beach campground and communication to potential users ahead of and during any noisy periods.

Overall, the project's impacts on coastal character and amenity during the construction phase on social receptors are considered to range between ‘minor negative’ and 'major-moderate negative' as presented in Table 20-9

Table 20-9 Residual impact assessment, construction – coastal character and amenity

Location / receptor	Rating
Woodside Beach residents and holiday home owners	Major-moderate negative
McLoughlins Beach residents and holiday home owners	Moderate negative
Other settlements	Minor negative
Reeves Beach campground users	Moderate negative
Other casual visitors to the district	Minor-moderate negative
Para Park	Minor-moderate negative

20.6.4 Rural land and amenity (SOC-I001 and SOC-I003)

Several project design elements and strategies have contributed to avoiding and minimising social impacts on rural communities and landholders. These include:

- Selecting a transmission alignment in consultation with landholders to avoid sensitive land uses
- Locating the cable system underground
- Committing to develop Property Management Plans with landholders and occupiers of affected properties. The plans will include measures to avoid and minimise production impacts where possible, along with measures relating to access to farm infrastructure and water supplies, biosecurity and rehabilitation of the construction corridor. The Property Management Plan is an agreement between Star of the South and the landholder, as part of the Construction Licence.

20.6.4.1 Social impacts

A common alignment is proposed to extend from the shore crossing at Reeves Beach to Giffard. Three alignment options AB, C and D are feasible options to reach the proposed VicGrid connection hub (see Figure 20-1). The common alignment and either option would traverse up to 25 properties between Reeves Beach and the proposed VicGrid connection hub, comprising family farms (a mix of owner occupiers and farmers who live off the farm), forestry plantations, property owned and managed by Parks Victoria for conservation purposes and a road reserve.

Land within the construction corridor will be inaccessible during the construction period (up to two years), after which time rehabilitation of the land will occur. Land affected by construction activities will be remediated immediately once construction is complete, although full rehabilitation may take up to two years, depending on ground conditions. Property Management Plans will be developed for each affected property to ensure disruptions to the current uses are minimised and particular sensitivities are avoided. Landholders are compensated for access to and use of their land, as well as any disruption expected, during the construction phase.

Eight dwellings are located within 500 metres of the proposed construction corridor, with a further 38 dwellings located within two kilometres. Relatively few community facilities are located near the construction corridor, however a newly constructed cultural centre on Four Mile Creek Road, Giffard West, is located approximately 800 metres away.

Construction of the underground cable system will take up to 26 months. Onshore construction is expected to be primarily undertaken during regular working hours, from 0700 to 1800 hours, Monday to Friday, and from 0700 to 1300 hours on Saturday. Some works may be required outside regular working hours, where unavoidable or for safety reasons. In these instances, Star of the South will coordinate with relevant authorities and stakeholders.

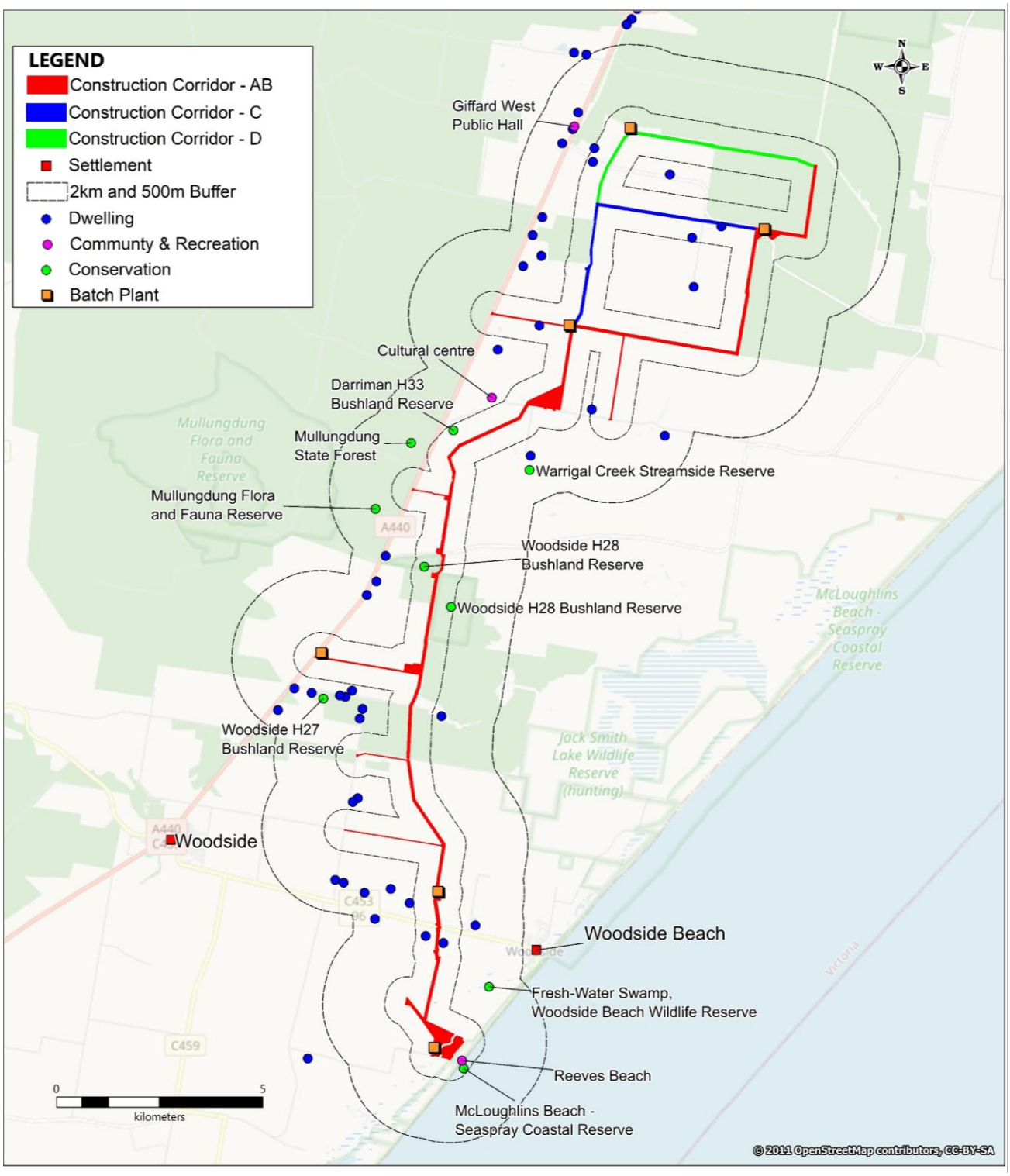
Up to five concrete batching plants will be established and operate for up to seven months. The closest residential dwelling is 700 metres from a temporary batching plant site.

Up to 10 temporary road closures (partial or full closures) are expected during the construction phase, each lasting approximately three to six days.

Traffic generated by the construction workforce is expected to comprise 196 to 255 vehicle movements to and from each work site, with six sites or ‘staging nodes’ operating concurrently along the construction corridor). Heavy vehicle traffic is estimated at 41 to 53 two-way movements per hour during peak construction periods. Traffic noise may be an annoyance. Construction traffic will be limited to regular working hours, excepting any unavoidable out of hours works.

For the purpose of the social impact assessment, the common alignment and three onshore construction corridor options from the common alignment to the VicGrid hub being explored are equivalent in terms of their associated social impacts.

Figure 20-1 Sensitive receptors within onshore project area



Rural landholders and residents

Star of the South has undertaken consultation with host landholders over several years.

Intermittent construction noise and traffic of varying intensity may cause disturbances to occupants of nearby dwellings. Noise will likely be most significant at dwellings within 500 metres of the construction corridor (eight dwellings) and may be audible at times within two kilometres. Nearby residents would be exposed to short periods of construction noise (approximately four weeks in total), with construction activity limited to regular working hours.

While road closures will be short in duration (approximately three to six days), and would affect a small number of residents, in one case (Four Mile Creek Road) this may add up to two kilometres to particular trips).

In accordance with the Stakeholder Engagement Plan (MMSCO3), affected residents will receive advanced notice of planned road closures and associated travel changes. Star of the South will work with local road authorities to identify mitigations tailored to users of these roads through implementation of TTP-M001 and TTP-M002: Traffic Management Plan.

Broader community

Undergrounding of the onshore cable system means the construction phase will have only minimal implications for the broader farming community and people travelling through the district. Some minor inconvenience may be experienced due to temporary road closures.

The two community facilities located in the area (cultural centre and public hall) are located 800 metres and 1.2 kilometres, respectively, from the construction corridor. As such, construction noise may be audible at the facilities. Given the distance and limited exposure, noise from construction may have minimal implications for the use and enjoyment of the facilities, which can be managed effectively via ONV-M001.

Overall, the project's social impacts on rural landholders, nearby residents and the broader community are considered to range from ‘negligible’ to ‘minor negative’ as presented in Table 20-10.

Table 20-10 Construction impact assessment – rural land and amenity

Receptor	Rating
Landholders	Minor negative
Nearby residents	Minor negative
Broader community	Negligible- minor negative

20.7 Operation impacts

This section discusses the impacts and risks associated with the operation of the project that relate to social impacts and the respective receptor groups.

20.7.1 Workforce and social profile (SOC-I002)

20.7.1.1 Social impact

The project will generate a substantial amount of employment during the operation phase. The operation and maintenance of the underground cable system will require a small permanent workforce of three technical staff and two staff members for management, administration and logistics. The offshore workforce will comprise approximately 154 offshore technical staff and 55 offshore management, administration and logistics staff, based at Gippsland ports, who would work a conventional work week. Employment will be lower than in the construction phase, with a lower anticipated demand for housing and community services.

Housing

As with the construction phase, the draft Workforce Accommodation Strategy seeks to employ locals and limit the number of rental properties that workers at Gippsland port can access each year from the open market (30 per annum across multiple townships). Operation phase workers who cannot be accommodated immediately within the rental market will be accommodated within holiday rental or other suitable short-stay accommodation options and, if necessary, project-specific temporary accommodation. There may still be some minor reductions in the accessibility and affordability of rental and/or short-stay accommodation, as workers settle in the area.

Community facilities and services

The operation phase workforce is likely reside across locations such as Foster, Korumburra, Leongatha and Yarram. In this context, any additional demand for children's and educational services could be accommodated by the existing service network and would contribute to the ongoing sustainability of these services.

In the context of current GP, dental and other primary and allied health service limitations, small additional demand from the operation phase workforce may have minor implications for service accessibility. This demand would not eventuate for at least seven years, allowing stakeholders such as the local councils and service providers time to plan for and respond to the projected increase in demand. The project may also assist in attracting and retaining medical professionals by contributing to the economic and social vibrancy of townships such as Yarram and Leongatha, improving the liveability of these areas.

Demographic sustainability and social cohesion

The project will make a notable contribution to the demographic sustainability of the region by attracting new and retaining existing community members who contribute to activities such as community sports and social groups, and support local businesses, contributing to the social vitality of the region. The positive social impacts identified relating to demographic sustainability, social vitality and cohesion are significant in the context of a declining population.

Overall, the project's social impacts on housing, accommodation, service providers and the broader community during the operation phase on receptors are considered to range from ‘major positive’ to ‘minor negligible’.

20.7.2 Recreational boating and fishing (SOC-I005)

20.7.2.1 Social impacts

Once operational, the visual appearance of coastal locations, including the inlet and offshore waters will be different.

Recreational fishers generally don't fish much of the offshore wind farm area due to distance and weather limitations, and because many can only fish weekends and holidays. Many recreational fishers are also less interested in heading offshore as far as the offshore wind farm area due to the presence of fishing reefs nearer to shore and because of their relatively short daily fishing window.

The availability of fish in the offshore wind farm area, and thus the viability and attractiveness of recreational fishing in this area, has been assessed in *Technical Report C – Fish and Invertebrates* and *Technical Report N – Commercial and Recreational Fisheries.* Overall, the project’s impact on fish availability in the context of recreational fishing is assessed as being ‘low’.

The project's assessments indicate the potential for localised and species-specific reductions in fish availability. However, across the offshore wind farm area and broader area of interest to recreational fishers (Wilsons Promontory to Seaspray), fish groups would remain diverse and abundant. In some areas, such as locations where rock armouring is used to protect offshore wind turbine foundations, reef-associated fish may increase in abundance.

To assist, Star of the South will map the location of offshore infrastructure and make the data accessible to the fishing community (for example, as a digital data set that can be uploaded to charting platforms) to help them navigate the area.

Over time, fishers motivated by catching target species will evaluate the favourability of the offshore wind farm area and balance any reductions in amenity against their success catching fish. It is expected fishing patterns may be redistributed, with fishers spending more or less time in the offshore wind farm area, depending on the motivations underpinning their fishing activities.

The visibility of turbines from some areas within the inlets may affect the enjoyment of boaters using the inlets who place a high value on the existing natural character of the location. However, boating, fishing and yachting activity will not be directly affected and can continue uninterrupted.

Overall, the project's social impacts on recreational boating and fishing during the operation phase are considered to range from ‘moderate positive’ to ‘minor negative’ as presented in Table 20-11.

Table 20-11 Residual impact assessment, operation – recreational boating and fishing

Receptor	Rating
Offshore fishers	Ranging from minor-negative to (potentially) moderate positive
Recreational boating, yachting and fishing which occurs with the inlets	Negligible-minor negative

20.7.3 Coastal character and amenity (SOC-I004)

20.7.3.1 Social impacts

Up to 147 offshore turbines (with a tip height of up to 350 metres) and up to five offshore substations will be constructed within the offshore wind farm area. The 'magnitude of visibility' of the turbines has been assessed as part of the seascape, landscape and visual impact assessment process (refer to *Technical Report U – Seascape, Landscape and Visual*), with visibility being rated as moderate, high or very high from various locations along the coast from Wilsons Promontory to Seaspray.

Coastal settlements

During operation, the presence of offshore infrastructure will alter the coastal character and amenity of Ninety Mile Beach, most noticeably at Woodside Beach. At Woodside Beach, the beach's existing character is the principal factor that attracts residents and visitors. In this context, it is noted that reactions to the project as part of the social impact assessment research among residents and holiday homeowners were largely negative.

Views of the project from other small settlements (McLoughlins Beach, Manns Beach, Robertsons Beach and Seaspray) located along the coast and inlets will be moderated by distance and/or intervening landforms. In the case of settlements located on the inlets, there is no direct access to Ninety Mile Beach.

Port Albert and Port Welshpool are larger settlements with a historic port character that offer a more diverse set of attractions, including retail and dining options. These settlements are located further away from the offshore wind farm area, and visual changes would be moderated by intervening landforms. It is unlikely the project will result in members of these communities being dissatisfied with the amenity of their settlement.

Wilsons Promontory

Offshore wind farm infrastructure will be visible from some locations within Wilsons Promontory (primarily on the east coast) at approximately 30 kilometres, an outcome that is likely to be well tolerated by most users. A minority of regular users consider the project's potential effect on ocean views from within Wilsons Promontory to be an unacceptable outcome.

Even so, Wilsons Promontory covers a large area, and numerous locations within the national park will be unaffected, allowing for visitors to avoid or minimise exposure if this is their preference. In this context, the project will not have a material effect on the level of recreation supported by Wilsons Promontory.

Overall, the project's social impacts on the coastal character and amenity on receptors within coastal settlements and Wilsons Promontory are considered to range from ‘minor negative’ to ‘major negative’ as presented in Table 20-12.

Table 20-12 Residual impact assessment, operation – coastal character and amenity

Receptor	Rating
Woodside Beach residents and holiday home owners	Major negative
McLoughlins Beach residents and holiday home owners	Moderate negative
Manns Beach	Minor negative
Seaspray residents and holiday home owners	Minor-moderate negative
Robertsons Beach residents and holiday home owners	Minor negative
Port Albert residents and holiday home owners	Minor negative
Casual visitors to the district	Minor negative
Wilsons Promontory	Moderate negative
Reeves Beach campground users	Minor negative
Para Park	Minor negative

20.7.4 Rural land and amenity (SOC-I001 and SOC-I003)

20.7.4.1 Social impacts

A 40 metre-wide underground cable easement will be in place along the transmission corridor to enable protection and maintenance of the underground cable system. Star of the South will place certain conditions on the easement, including prohibiting:

- The erection of structures or excavation of land below a certain depth
- The planting of permanent vegetation that may impact the underground cable system
- The alteration of the existing contour of the land.

The easement will traverse 25 properties between the shore crossing at Reeves Beach and the proposed VicGrid connection hub in Giffard. The properties comprise farms, forestry plantations, Crown land managed by Parks Victoria for conservation purposes and a road reserve. The land within the easement will be reinstated to its former condition, and other than the restrictions placed on the easement, landowners will have the right to use the land as allowed by its former condition.

The cable easement will have little to no material implications for the ongoing use and enjoyment of the affected properties by existing landowners. All landholders whose land is directly affected by the project will be compensated for associated impacts in accordance with easement terms established prior to construction.

The decision to locate the cable system underground means the project's operation will not affect the broader farming community. No impacts are anticipated to arise for these receptors.

Overall, the project's social impacts on rural land and amenity during the operation phase on receptors such as landholders and the broader community will be negligible.

20.8 Decommissioning impacts

At the end of the project's life, decommissioning activities will begin. The main objective of decommissioning is to leave a safe, stable and non-polluting environment, and to minimise impacts during the removal of infrastructure.

20.8.1 Onshore decommissioning

Decommissioning will be planned and carried out in accordance with regulatory and landholder requirements current at the time. The decommissioning approach is expected to be agreed with regulators before project operations cease. The assessment assumes current industry practices will be adopted.

To minimise disturbance, most below-ground infrastructure is expected to be left in place, with cable ends cut, sealed and securely buried. Surface infrastructure such as signage, markers, link and fibre pits may be removed if required by landholders or if environmental impacts arise.

20.8.2 Offshore decommissioning

Decommissioning is expected to involve similar types and numbers of vessels and equipment as the construction phase. Requirements at the time will determine the scope of decommissioning activities and impacts. The anticipated duration is up to three years. Indicative activities include:

- Removing offshore substation topsides and foundations to just below the seabed
- Removing offshore wind turbines, transition pieces and monopiles to just below the seabed
- Removing scour protection where possible and appropriate to do so
- Retaining offshore cables in situ
- Returning the seabed to baseline conditions as far as reasonably practicable.

Decommissioning will be managed under approved management plans, prepared in accordance with relevant laws and policies in place at the time of decommissioning.

20.9 Cumulative impacts

This section provides an assessment of the potential for cumulative impacts of the project with other proposed developments in the region. The method to consider cumulative impacts is described in *Chapter 6 – Assessment Framework.*

Potential cumulative impacts arise when the effects of a single project on a receptor are considered along with the effects of other projects on the same receptor. Projects that are operational are part of the baseline environment, and the cumulative impact assessment focuses on future developments following the tiered assessment methodology.

A total of 19 projects that fall within the zone of influence for social impacts have been evaluated against the cumulative impact assessment criteria to determine if there is potential for cumulative impacts with the project and sufficient information available to undertake a meaningful assessment.

Housing and community services

Each of the identified projects has the potential to place demands on the supply of labour in Gippsland and/or draw temporary workers to the region, potentially increasing demand for housing and community services alongside that generated by the project. However, the draft Workforce Accommodation Strategy is intended to ensure that these (as yet uncertain) influences are accounted for when Star of the South seeks to recruit and house its workforce, and that the project does not overwhelm existing housing markets. In addition, mitigation measures such as SOC-M001 and SOC-M002 seek to lessen the project's impact on local service capacity. Similarly, if one or more of the projects proceed, they may also need to take steps to ensure that the needs of their workforce can be met without exceeding the capacity of existing housing markets and services.

If one or more of the proposed Gippsland offshore wind projects proceed, their operational life will likely overlap with the project. In this context, the following cumulative impacts are possible:

- Acute effects for sensitive receptors (such as small coastal communities) will be experienced along a greater proportion of the coastline
- The capacity of social receptors to avoid locations where the character and amenity may be affected by offshore wind farm projects will be further diminished, making adaptation more complex
- The offshore wind industry may progressively mature in the region, allowing a greater proportion of employment and economic benefits generated to be retained in the area.

Rural character and amenity

If the construction phase of one or more other projects coincides with the project's construction phase, cumulative social impacts resulting from a concentration of construction activity in the local area may result.

It is also possible that a larger proportion of the local farming community will be dealing with matters relating to the construction and operation of transmission infrastructure on their land. However, given that landholders are largely accepting of and comfortable with the placement of the project's underground cable system on their land, the cumulative impact of several underground cable systems connecting to the proposed VicGrid connection hub in Giffard will likely be of minor significance.

20.10 Summary of mitigation, monitoring and contingency measures

20.10.1 Mitigation measures

The following section outlines the mitigation measures developed to avoid and minimise social impacts within the project area. The focus of these mitigation measures is:

- Avoiding impacts where reasonably practicable
- Developing, preparing and implementing project-specific measures to minimise social impacts.

The mitigations below have been developed for the impacts discussed in detail within *Technical Report R – Social Impact Assessment.* Detailed descriptions of each measure can be found in *Chapter 23 – Commonwealth Environmental Management Framework* and are listed in Table 17.7.

Table 20-13 Mitigation measures relevant to social impacts

ID	Mitigation measure
SOC-M001	Workforce Accommodation Strategy (WAS)
SOC-M002	Medical Services
SOC-M003	Stakeholder Engagement Plan

20.11 Conclusion

The project will have the capacity to power 1.2 million Victorian homes, making a significant contribution to the objectives articulated in Victoria's Climate Change Strategy (2021), Australia's 2035 emissions reduction target, and the legislated Victorian Government target of two gigawatts of offshore wind energy by 2032.

The project will also generate a substantial volume of temporary and ongoing employment, particularly in South Gippsland Shire and Wellington Shire. In doing so, it will contribute to the region's economic and social sustainability and facilitate the attraction and retention of young adults in the area by boosting the region's availability of viable and attractive training and employment pathways.

The physical presence of the wind turbines will alter the aesthetic quality of the coastline from Wilson Promontory to Seaspray. In some locations, changes to the visual appearance of the coastline would detract substantially from the perceived appeal of the location among some residents and regular visitors. These changes, along with localised construction noise around Reeves Beach Campground and along the transmission corridor and occasional noise from offshore piling, may prompt some to relocate and/or avoid visiting the affected locations.

The project will alter the environment in South Gippsland Shire and Wellington Shire. In some instances, this may result in negative impacts for residents and visitors. Potential social impacts include increased demand for housing and accommodation and community services, changes to the coastal character and visual amenity from the turbines and disruptions during construction on rural landholders and communities of the underground transmission cable.

The proposed Workforce Accommodation Strategy (SOC-M001) and proposed mitigation measure relating to medical services (SOC-M002) will allow for associated negative social impacts to be managed, although minor reductions in the accessibility / affordability of housing and services may arise.

The project's workforce will make a substantial contribution to demographic sustainability, social vitality and cohesion in the region, benefits which are significant in the context of a declining and aging population. Star of the South has also committed to investing in the local area through a Community Benefit Program and prioritising local employment and supply opportunities where possible to maximise local benefits.