

PUBLIC WORKS ORDER

Declaration under section 3(1) of the Environment Effects Act 1978

Gippsland Offshore Wind Transmission 2GW Project

The Minister for Planning, being satisfied that works proposed in relation to the Gippsland Offshore Wind Transmission 2GW Project (Project) could reasonably be considered to have or be capable of having a significant effect on the environment, declares the works proposed to be undertaken by VicGrid, on behalf of the Victorian Government, for the purposes of the Project, to be 'public works' under the *Environment Effects Act 1978*.

The public works to which the Order relates broadly comprise the following:

- a double-circuit, high-voltage alternating current overhead transmission line from the proposed onshore connection hub (in the area of Giffard) to the proposed grid connection substation near the Loy Yang Power Station (in the Latrobe Valley);
- an onshore connection hub in the area of Giffard broadly comprising a high-voltage substation plant and equipment, including transformers, synchronous condensers and switchgear; and
- a grid connection substation near the Loy Yang Power Station.

The study area for the proposed public works is depicted in Figure 1.

Procedures and requirements under section 3(3) of the *Environment Effects Act 1978*

The following procedures and requirements are to apply to the environment effects statement (EES) for the proposed public works.

1. The EES is to document investigations of potential environmental effects of the public works, including the feasibility of associated avoidance, environmental mitigation and management measures, including:
 - a) a rationale for the proposed form of the Project and alternative corridors, site locations and other feasible options for the planning, construction and operation of the project;
 - b) potential effects on biodiversity and ecological values including native vegetation, listed flora, fauna and communities through loss, degradation or fragmentation of habitat, collision with transmission lines, or other ecological effects;
 - c) potential effects on Aboriginal cultural heritage and historic heritage values;
 - d) potential effects on landscape values and amenity;
 - e) potential effects on surface water environments including waterways and wetlands; and
 - f) potential effects on socio-economic values and land uses, including agriculture, forestry and local communities.
2. The matters to be investigated and documented in the EES will be set out more fully in scoping requirements. Draft scoping requirements will be exhibited for 15 business days, before final scoping requirements are issued by the Minister for Planning.
3. VicGrid is to prepare and submit to the Department of Transport and Planning (DTP) an adequate draft EES study program to inform the preparation of scoping requirements.
4. The level of detail of investigation for the EES studies should be consistent with the approach set out in the scoping requirements and be adequate to inform an assessment of the significance and acceptability of potential environmental effects, in the context of the *Ministerial Guidelines for the Assessment of Environmental Effects*.

5. DTP will convene an inter-agency technical reference group (TRG) to advise DTP and VicGrid on the scoping requirements, the design and adequacy of the EES studies, and coordination with statutory approval processes.
6. VicGrid is to prepare and submit to DTP its proposed EES consultation plan for engaging with the public and stakeholders during the preparation of the EES. Once completed to the satisfaction of DTP, the EES consultation plan is to be implemented by the proponent, having regard to advice from DTP and the TRG.
7. VicGrid is to prepare and submit to DTP its proposed schedule for the completion of studies and preparation and exhibition of the EES, following preparation of the scoping requirements. This schedule will be finalised in consultation with DTP and is intended to facilitate the alignment of the proponent's and DTP's timeframes, including for TRG review of technical studies and main report.
8. VicGrid is to apply appropriate peer review and quality management procedures to enable the completion of EES studies and documentation to a satisfactory standard.
9. The EES is to be exhibited for a period of 30 business days for public comment, unless the exhibition period spans the Christmas–New Year period, in which case 40 business days will apply.
10. An inquiry will be appointed pursuant to section 9(1) of the *Environment Effects Act 1978* to consider the environmental effects of the public works.

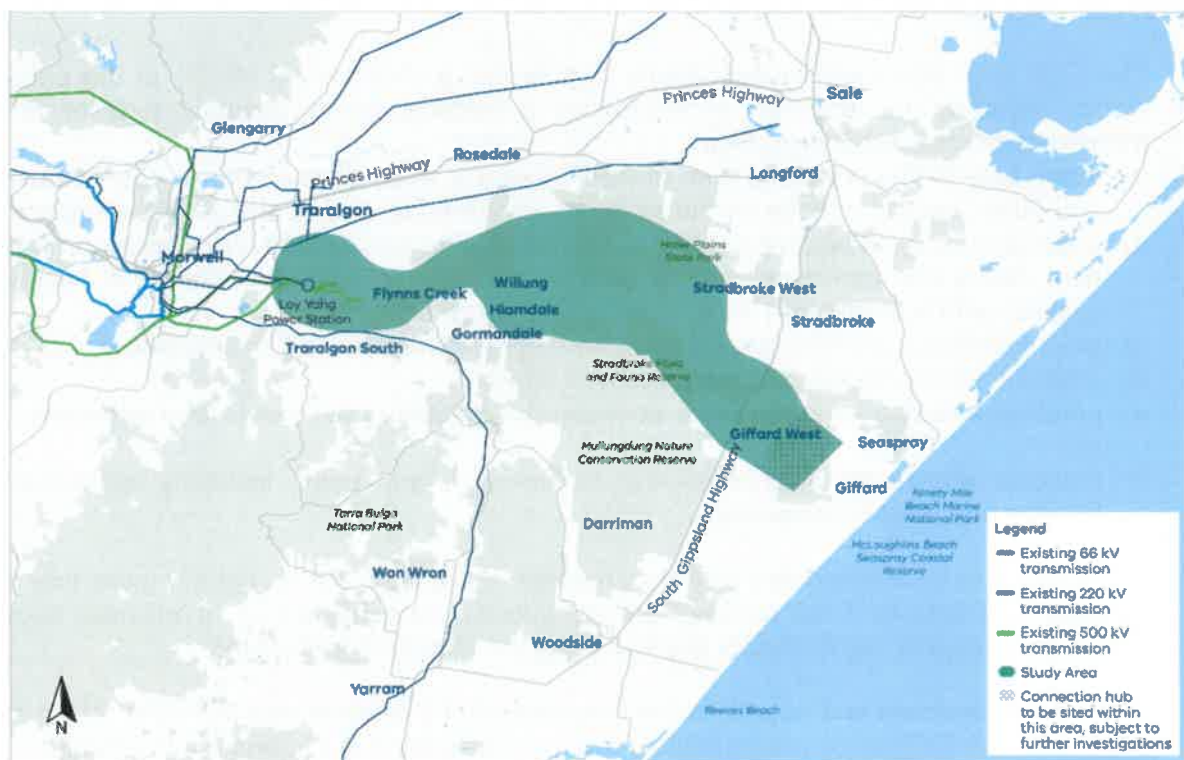


Figure 1. Study area for the proposed public works

SCHEDULE 1

Excluded works

The following works are excluded from this declaration of public works:

1. Early works, including:
 - a. investigative works: geotechnical and environmental investigations, site surveys; and
 - b. locating existing utilities and services.

Excluded works

The works specified in Schedule 1 hereof are excluded from the declaration of public works in this order.



**HON Sonya Kilkenny MP
Minister for Planning**

Date: 24/9/2024