



EES Technical Studies People and Places

This factsheet provides an overview of the People and Places based studies that will be assessed through our Environment Effects Statement (EES)



Port of Hastings Corporation (PoHC) is required to prepare an Environment Effects Statement (EES) for the Victorian Renewable Energy Terminal (the Terminal).

An EES is the most rigorous environmental impact assessment process in Victoria. There are 20 technical studies that are being prepared to investigate the potential impacts of the Terminal.

There are four EES studies that assess potential impacts to People and Places:

- Social and Business.
- Land Use Planning.
- Aboriginal Cultural Heritage.
- Historic Heritage.

Why is assessing people and places important?

Major projects, such as the Victorian Renewable Energy Terminal, can have an influence on the way we live, work and play in the local community. We need to assess how construction and operational activities affect areas like recreation, business, residences, and economic growth in the region.



Social and Business

The Social and Business Assessments look at how the construction and operation of the Terminal might affect local communities, business, and tourism.

What is being investigated?

These assessments consider both impacts and opportunities from the project:

- Any disruption to local communities or businesses around the project area, through both construction and operations, and the impact this has on people.
- The impact the project may have on social cohesion.
- Any impacts to marine infrastructure and tourism.

How are we assessing impacts?

Our social and business assessments are being informed by:

- Analysis of the latest ABS Census to identify relevant population and demographic data.
- Stakeholder interviews and reviews of community plans to identify existing community values, aspirations and concerns.
- Conclusions from other technical studies to understand potential impacts on people and places.

These assessments also consider the social effect construction impacts have on the community, including noise and vibration.



Historical Heritage

Protecting historical heritage values (such as archaeological artefacts and historic shipwrecks) is highly important. Heritage values are finite and once lost or destroyed, can never be recovered.

What is being investigated?

The historical heritage assessments are assessing relevant heritage registers to identify any historic heritage impacts from the construction of the Terminal. Field surveys are also being undertaken.

How are we assessing impacts?

Our onshore assessments have involved a review of land use history, existing heritage studies, reports and registers, and a review of historical mapping, aerial imagery and sources.

Our offshore assessments include reviewing existing seabed survey data, searching the Australasian Underwater Cultural Heritage Database (AUCHD) for historic shipwrecks and other underwater cultural heritage, and examining official and unofficial databases of historic shipwrecks, aircraft crashes, and sea dumping episodes.



Land Use and Planning

The Land Use Planning Assessment analyses how the Project fits with local and state planning policies, impacts to existing land use and amenity, and, open spaces near the OTRA site.

What is being investigated?

Our assessment is examining the nature, extent and duration of land use impacts associated with the project, and its consistency with planning policies and strategic direction. So far, it has found that the land use impacts are expected to be localised and manageable.

How are we assessing impacts?

As part of the assessment, specialists are:

- Reviewing existing baseline data including publicly accessible imagery, ground level photography, aerial imagery, land use planning databases, strategic planning documentation, planning permit registers, and Planning Scheme Amendment (PSA) databases.
- Conducting site visits and consulting with key stakeholders including local Council and relevant landowners.



Image: Southern side of the Old Tyabb Reclamation Area (OTRA) site.



Aboriginal Cultural Heritage

The importance of investigating Aboriginal cultural heritage cannot be overstated, as significant sites and artefacts could be discovered or affected by the project.

The Bunurong Peoples are the Traditional Custodians of the land and waters where the Terminal is proposed and Bunurong Land Council Aboriginal Corporation (BLCAC) is the Registered Aboriginal Party.

BLCAC are responsible for approving the Cultural Heritage Management Plan for the project.

We have been meeting and working with BLCAC since 2023, and they have prepared a Cultural Values Assessment (CVA) that contains key recommendations to manage cultural values in and around the project site.

One of the recommendations is how we manage Cherry Ballart trees, which are culturally significant to the Bunurong Peoples and are used in a range of cultural practices. We worked in partnership with BLCAC's Tarbuk Biik (Land Management) team to identify, tag and geolocate Cherry Ballart trees at the OTRA site. This exercise will assist Port of Hastings Corporation in identifying and where possible avoiding any impacts to Cherry Ballart trees.

Learn more about our other EES study areas

Scan the QR code to view the other Environment Effects Studies fact sheets.



Flora and Fauna

These studies explore the potential impacts to the flora (plants, trees, and seagrasses) and fauna (birds, mammals, skinks, fish, and marine invertebrates) in and around the project area.

Western Port is home to many plant and animal species, including threatened and migratory species. As these species can be affected by new infrastructure projects, we are required under the Environment Effects Act and Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act to assess our potential impacts.



Environment and Water

These studies explore the potential impacts of the project on coastal processes such as tides, currents, and erosion, surface water and groundwater conditions, soil and sediment quality and any contamination risks.

Western Port is an environmentally unique and sensitive area, and it is important that we fully understand ground and marine conditions and potential impacts so that we can ensure the proper mitigation measures are put in place.



Liveability and Amenity

These studies explore the potential impacts of noise, vibration, visual amenity, and air quality as a result of the project.

Constructing new infrastructure can cause noise, visual and other impacts, so we need to assess how these will affect the area surrounding the Project both during construction and ongoing.



Traffic, Transport and Aviation

These studies explore the impacts of additional traffic volumes on local road networks, as well as the potential impacts of the project on local aviation.

Trucks will be needed to bring materials to site, and construction worker vehicles will need to access site via local roads. It's important to assess any potential impacts this could have on the local road network, and ensure roads are safe and traffic is managed appropriately during this time.

From an aviation perspective, offshore wind towers will be up to 200m tall when assembled at the Terminal.



What we've heard so far

Community and stakeholder engagement continues to play an important role in shaping the Environment Effects Statement (EES). We are gathering input through a broad range of activities, including community sessions, online engagement, briefings, and direct conversations.

Across these activities, we have received a wide range of views about matters that are important to local residents, businesses, and other stakeholders. Themes raised include how the project can deliver benefits to the community, opportunities for education and skills development, and how future planning for the area will be managed.

The project is considering these issues at a strategic level, including how the project aligns with planning frameworks and how community benefit initiatives could be incorporated, along with opportunities for local participation through the project's broader planning and procurement approach.



Image: Project boat tour of Western Port

Upcoming Exhibition of the EES (2027)

The project EES will be available for public review and comment for at least 30 business days.

The EES will include supporting technical documentation, including a detailed consultation report outlining how the project engaged with stakeholders and the community, and considered feedback as part of preparing the EES.

During this time, there will be an opportunity to review the full suite of technical studies and EES reports and make a submission to the Planning Minister in response to the project.

Details about the exhibition, how to access documents and how to make a submission will be published closer to the time. At this stage, EES public exhibition is expected to occur in 2027.

Stay informed and up to date about the EES exhibition process

Subscribe to our e-newsletter by scanning the QR code or visiting:

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