



Strategic Assessment Overview

Osborne Submarine Construction Yard



Looking north over the Lefevre Peninsula (Source: ANI)

Introduction

The Draft Strategic Impact Assessment Report (Draft Report), for the construction and operation of the Submarine Construction Yard Project (the Project), is now available for review and comment at www.asa.gov.au as a part of the Public Comment Period.

The Draft Report was prepared as part of the Strategic Assessment process for the Project.

This document provides an overview of the Strategic Assessment and outlines:

1. The Project background
2. The Strategic Assessment project approval process and other approvals required
3. The environmental context for the Strategic Assessment
4. Activities to be undertaken as part of construction and operation
5. Outcomes and commitments for Protected Matters
6. How you can review the Report and make a comment during the Public Comment Period.

Background

The AUKUS trilateral security partnership was formed between Australia, the United Kingdom, and the United States in September 2021. The 2024 National Defence Strategy reaffirmed the Government's commitment to Australia's future conventionally-armed, nuclear-powered submarine capability. The SSN-AUKUS will be a state-of-the-art platform designed to leverage the best submarine technologies from all three nations.

In response to the most challenging strategic circumstances facing Australia since the Second World War, only conventionally-armed, nuclear-powered submarines will meet this aspect of Australia's Defence requirements in the decades ahead. No other platform matches the stealth, endurance, mobility and mix of capabilities which a nuclear-powered submarine provides.

To support the construction of these submarines, a purpose-built Submarine Construction Yard is required. The preferred site for this development is on the Lefevre Peninsula in Osborne, South Australia, approximately 19 kilometres north of Adelaide. 4000 to 5,500 direct jobs are expected to support the build of nuclear-powered submarines in South Australia when the program reaches its peak in 20-30 years.

The Australian Submarine Agency (ASA) was established in July 2023 to safely and securely acquire, construct, deliver, technically govern, sustain and dispose of Australia's conventionally-armed nuclear-powered submarine capability. The ASA will oversee the Project. The government is committed to maintaining the highest levels of nuclear stewardship to protect the health and safety of people and the environment.

The ASA is collaborating with the Australian Government business entity, Australian Naval Infrastructure (ANI), which is dedicated to supporting continuous sovereign shipbuilding through the provision of enabling infrastructure.

Together, both Commonwealth entities are working closely with the South Australian Government and Federal Government, to successfully oversee and deliver the commitment by the Australian Government to support a safe and prosperous Indo-Pacific region.

Strategic Assessment

For the Project to receive approval to proceed, it must undergo a Strategic Assessment.

The Commonwealth Minister for the Environment and Water, and the ASA signed a Strategic Assessment Agreement under the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999 (EPBC Act)*.

This approval pathway, under Part 10 of the EPBC Act, allows the Commonwealth Minister to provide endorsement and approval of actions, and classes of actions. For this Project, actions, and classes of actions refer to the activities and groups of activities to be undertaken to construct and operate the Submarine Construction Yard.

As part of a Strategic Assessment, two main documents are prepared:

1. The Plan, which explains the 'what', 'how' and 'when' of the Project, and
2. The Strategic Impact Assessment Report (Report), that includes an assessment of the potential impacts of the actions and classes of actions to be undertaken.



Other approvals

The Strategic Assessment is one of three approval pathways the Project must undergo.

In addition to Commonwealth environmental approval under the EPBC Act, the Project is subject to South Australian Government permit and licencing requirements, as well as requirements for nuclear licencing, in accordance with the Australian Radiation Protection and Nuclear Safety Agency and the International Atomic Energy Agency.

The overarching legislative processes and related environmental supporting requirements of the three approval pathways are depicted in the Venn diagram in Figure 1.

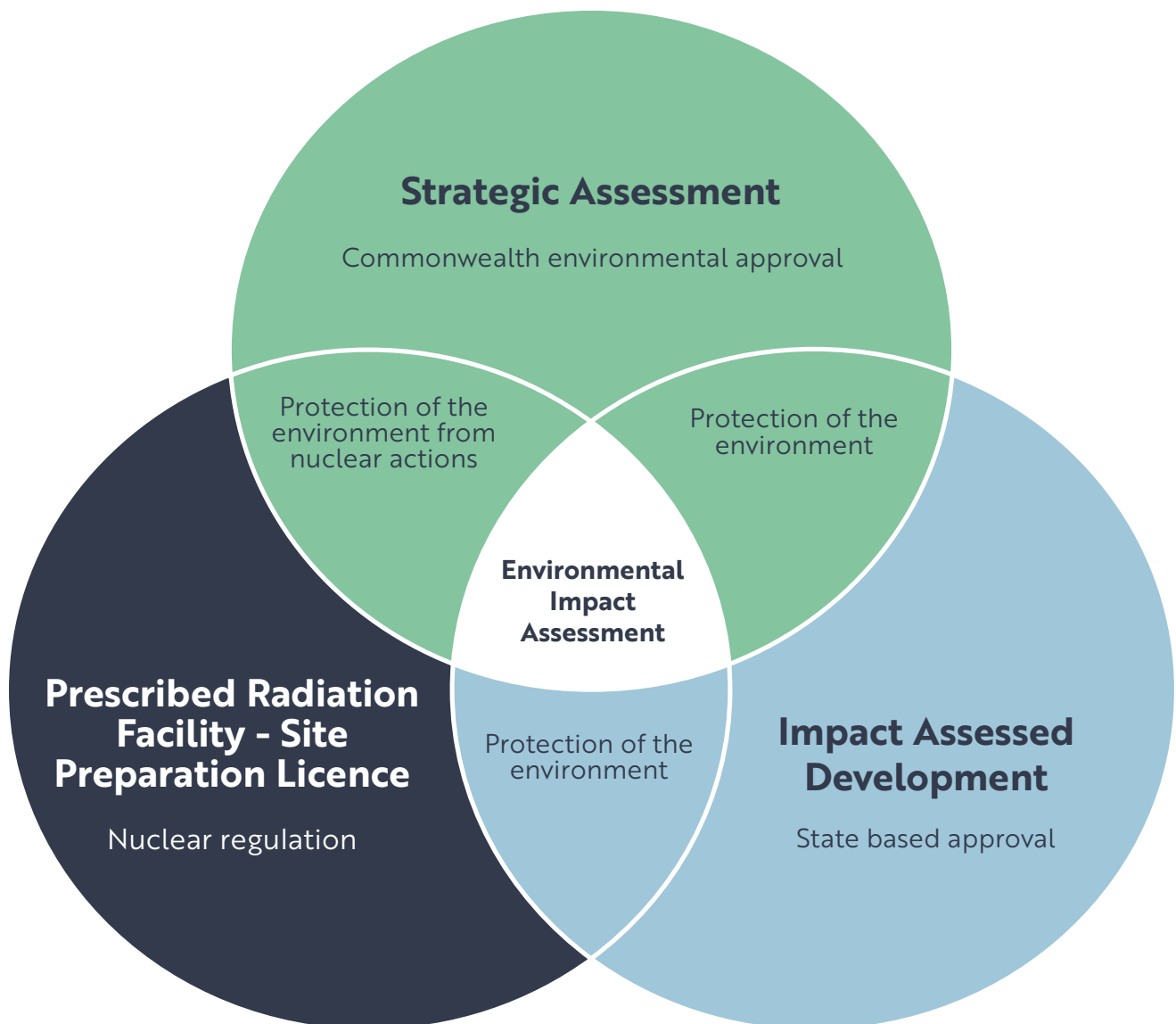


Figure 1 Approval Pathways

Environmental context

The Report examines the current and historical environmental conditions and factors associated within the Strategic Assessment Area and the surrounding region, with respect to the physical, biological and social environment. This helps to establish a baseline understanding allowing for any detection of changes.

The agreed Strategic Assessment Area is presented in Figure 2 below.

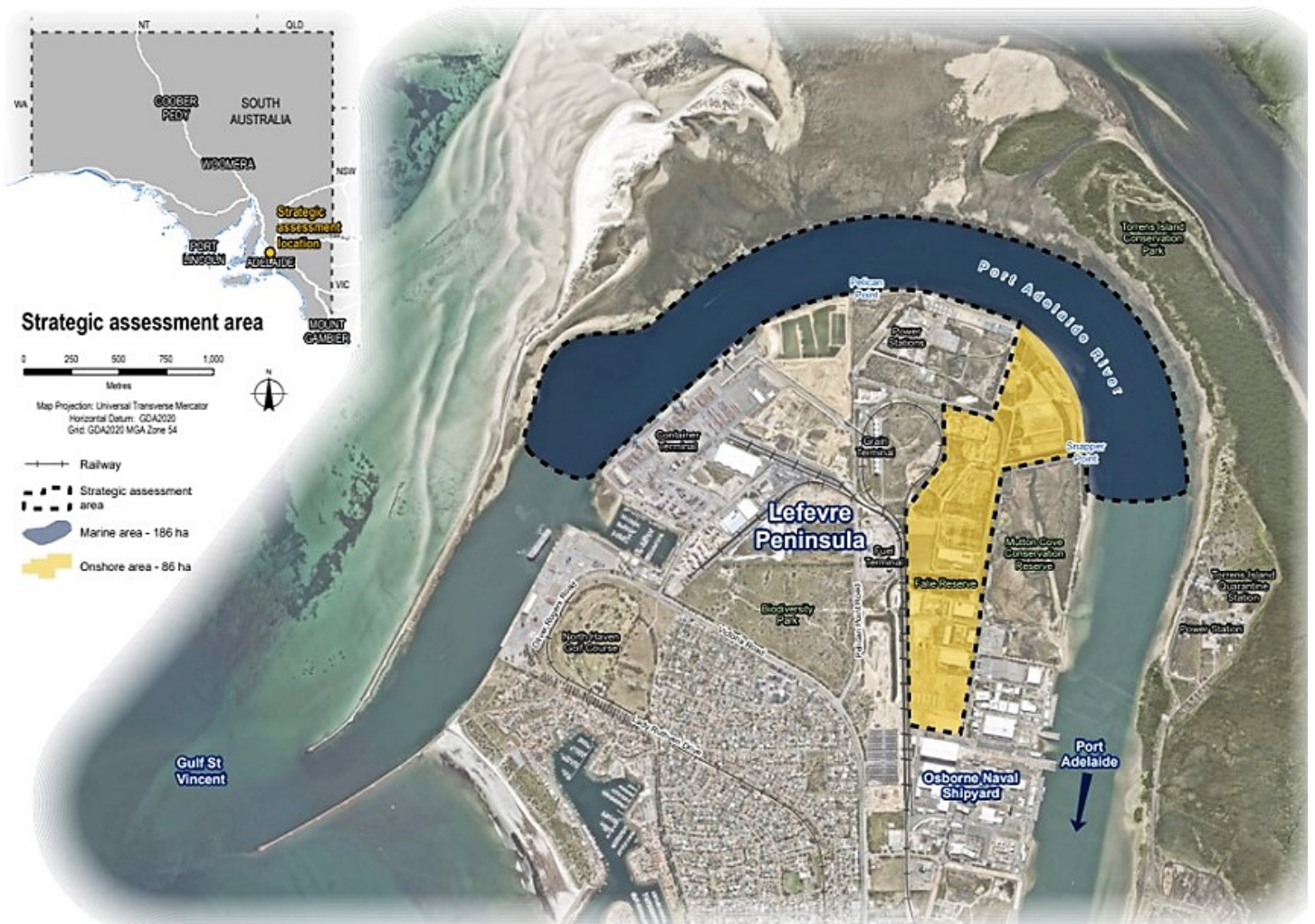


Figure 2 Strategic Assessment Area

The onshore component of the Strategic Assessment Area has altered over time from its natural state, due to historical industrial development on the peninsula. The onshore area is a filled and levelled area of land, which currently contains stormwater management infrastructure, along with some supporting capabilities for existing maritime operations. Partially constructed buildings associated with prior development, also remain.

The marine extent of the Strategic Assessment Area is located within the Port Adelaide River, and includes the shipping channel, the bank-to-bank extent of the river, as well as both upstream and downstream areas. The full extent of this area is not needed for the construction or operation of the Submarine Construction Yard.

Adjacent to the Strategic Assessment Area are maritime and industrial facilities such as power stations, and a fuel and grain depot. Some areas of green space are present, including Mutton Cove, Falie Reserve, Biodiversity Park, Lady Ruthven Park and North Haven Golf Course.

The wider area to the north and east, includes extensive natural areas that support mangroves, tidal flats, saltmarshes and seagrass beds. Many of these areas are included within the Adelaide International Bird Sanctuary, and extend along the coast of Gulf St Vincent to around 60 km north of the Strategic Assessment Area.

These environmental conditions have been considered as part of the Report.

Construction and Operation

If approval is granted under the EPBC Act, the Project will have an approved period to undertake construction and operation of the Submarine Construction Yard.

The actions and classes of actions that will be undertaken during construction and operation are mapped below in Figure 3.

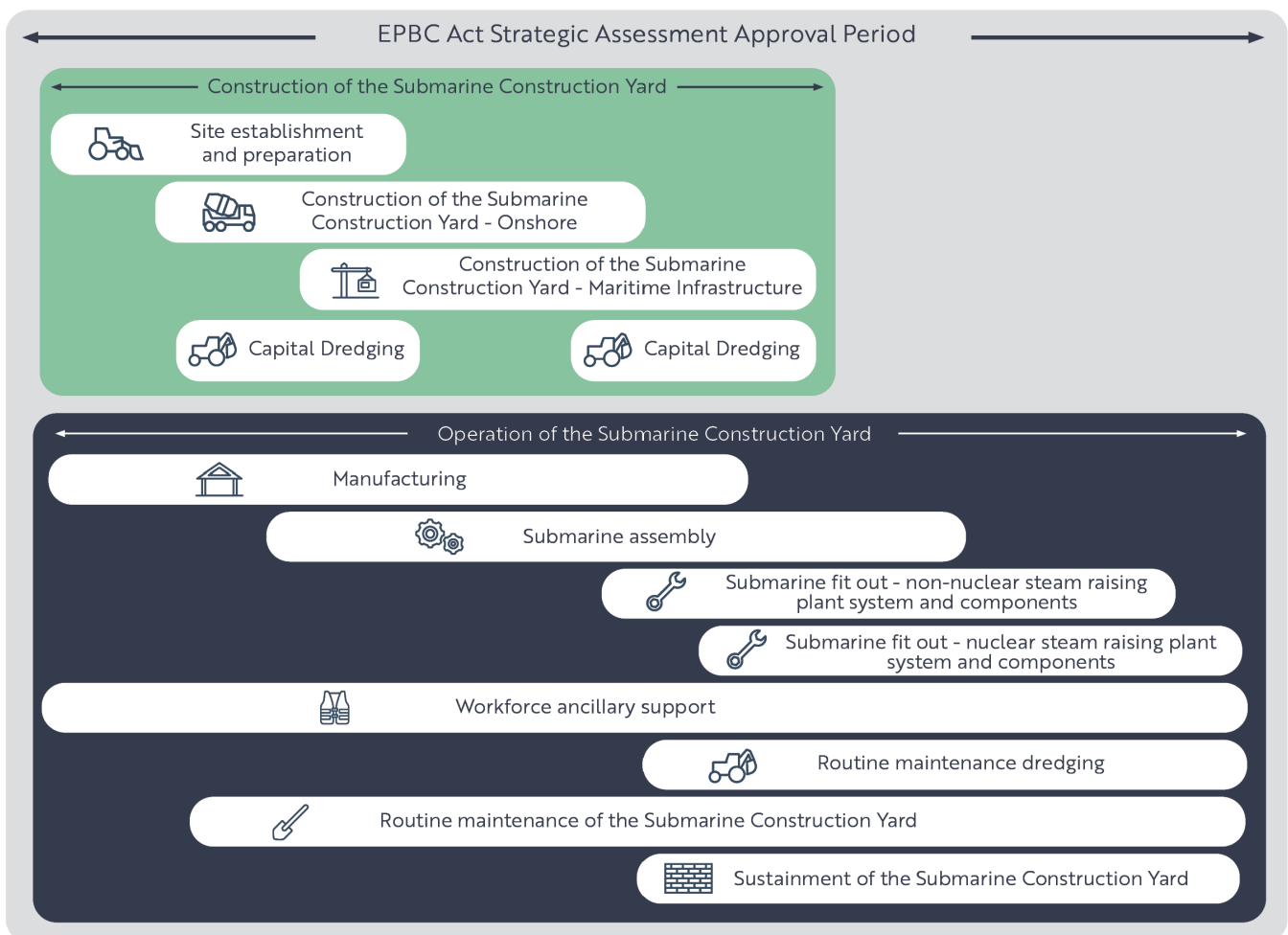


Figure 3 Construction and operation actions and classes of actions to be undertaken during the approval period

Outcomes and commitments for Protected Matters

Protected Matters are items identified in, and protected under, Part 3 of the EPBC Act. Protected Matters identified to be relevant to the construction and operation of the Submarine Construction Yard include listed threatened species, listed migratory species, and the environment.

Outcomes proposed in The Plan:

1. Protected Matters are not adversely affected by construction of The Plan
2. Protected Matters are not adversely affected by operation of The Plan
3. Planning for the future
4. Building knowledge and capacity
5. Effective governance

Figure 4 below outlines the five outcomes and commitments proposed.

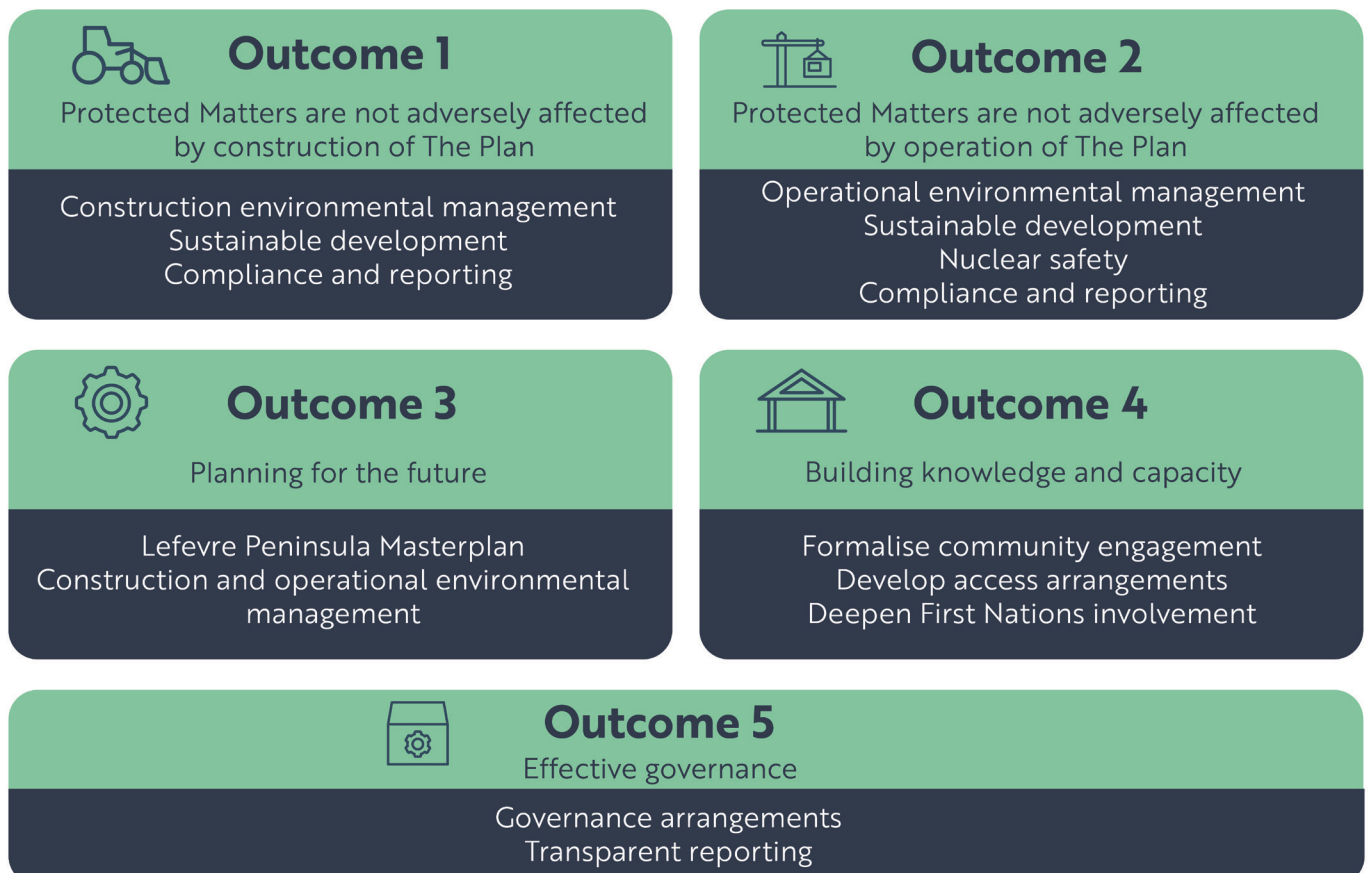
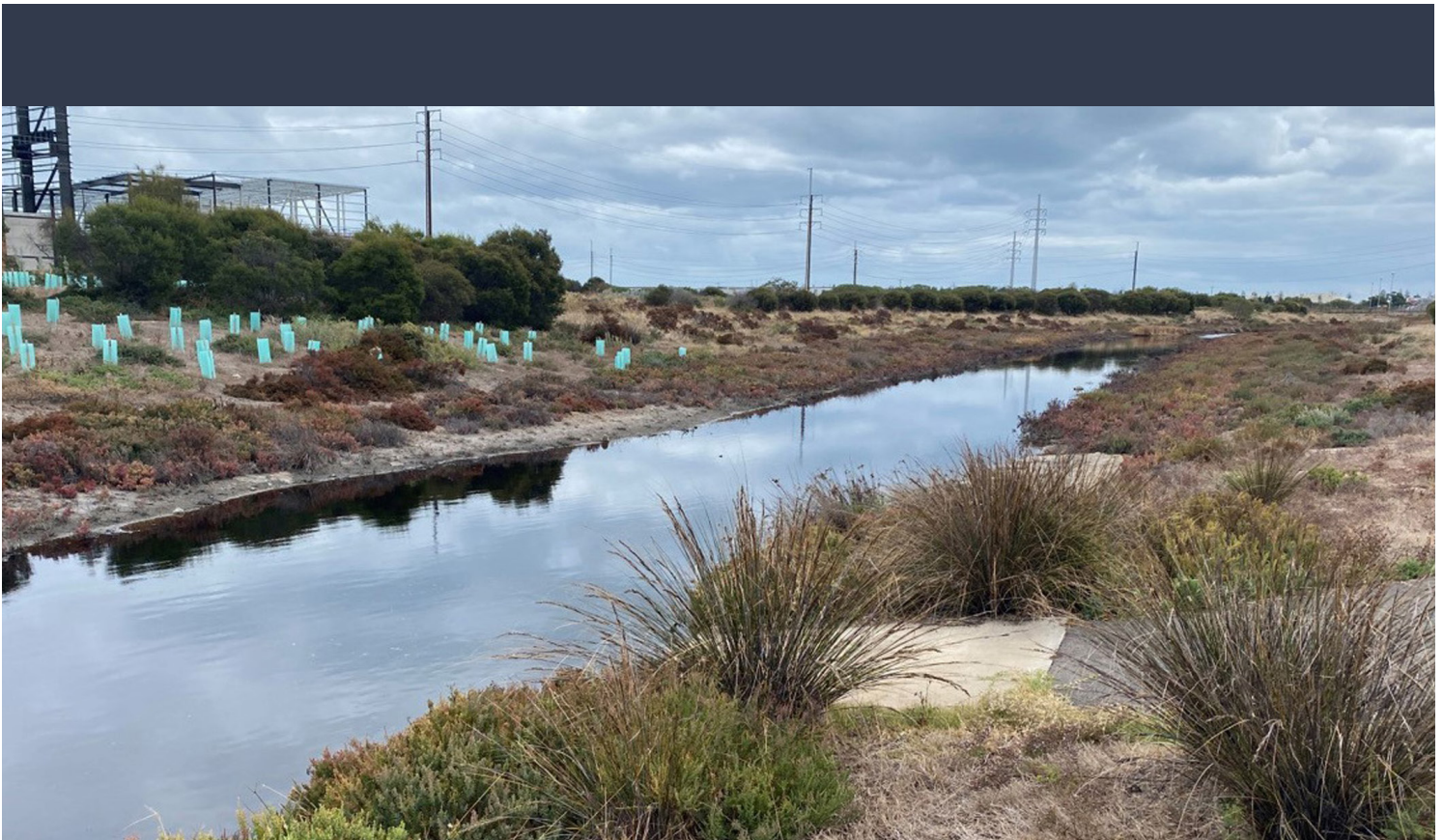


Figure 4 Outcomes and commitments for Protected Matters



The Strategic Assessment considers potential impacts on existing local environments, such as nearby Falie Reserve (pictured). (Source GHD).

Summary

The Project is anticipated to positively influence the local, regional and State economy. It will provide opportunities for employment and training within a number of new skilled trade sectors, as well as the existing shipbuilding industry.

The construction and operation of the Submarine Construction Yard would occur beside existing industrial operations, which have operated on the Lefevre Peninsula alongside extensive zones of designated conservation areas for listed migratory, threatened, and locally important species for many years.

Potential impacts are aligned with those historically and currently occurring. All activities will be subject to ongoing management and reporting, as per implementation plans to be developed following endorsement of the Plan and approval.

Construction and operation of the Submarine Construction Yard is an important project that will develop and contribute to the local region on the Lefevre Peninsula. With the strict measures in place under the approval pathways, the Project will have minimal impacts to the environment.

As the home of the construction for Australia's future fleet of conventionally-armed, nuclear-powered submarines, the Osborne Submarine Construction Yard will have a new, robust regulatory framework to ensure the highest standards of nuclear safety and security.

Have your say on the Draft Strategic Impact Assessment Report

The Draft Strategic Impact Assessment Report is available at www.asa.gov.au

We invite you to review the Report and make a comment. All submissions received will be reviewed and considered, and may influence amendments to the Final Report.

For updates and to learn more about the Project visit www.asa.gov.au

If you have any questions, you can call the Project Team **1800 DEFENCE (1800 333 362)**

or email asa.osborne.enquiries@defence.gov.au

