


# Chapter 3 – Stakeholder and Community Engagement

AAP01-000-GEG-GGEN-00002

Approved Rev	Approver Position	Signature	Date
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# Document revision history and tracking

## Document Preparation

Rev	Status	Date	Prepared by	Position	Reviewed by	Position
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## Revision history tracking record (Use after Rev 00)

Rev	Date	Description	Prepared by	Approved by

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# 3 Stakeholder and Community Engagement

## 3.1 Introduction

The NT EPA's objective for community, economy and broader stakeholder engagement is to:

*Enhance communities and the economy for the welfare, amenity, and benefit of current and future generations of Territorians.*

Stakeholder and community engagement must be undertaken to meet the requirements of the NT EPA. This chapter considers the Stakeholder Consultation Report (Appendix I – Draft EIS), SIA (Appendix I – Draft EIS), the Preliminary SIMP (Appendix J – Draft EIS), the Stakeholder Consultation Report (Appendix 3.1), and the SIMP (Appendix 3.2 – SEIS). This chapter focuses on the NT EPA's Direction to include additional information issued on 28 September 2022 (the Direction). It discusses social impacts associated with the Project and is guided by the feedback from stakeholders and communities during the public exhibition period of the Draft EIS, between 20 April and 15 July 2022. The chapter provides a high-level summary of the stakeholder and community engagement approach pre and post Draft EIS submission and identification of the key themes and issues raised during public consultation (with a detailed report appended to this chapter, Appendix 3.1. Stakeholder Consultation Report). The chapter builds on the original social impact documentation and includes the following:

- A summary of the social areas of influence to provide clarity on the communities and potential impacts affecting them
- An overview of the legislative requirements and governance frameworks for the assessment of social impacts and stakeholder engagement to assist with context setting
- A revision of the impact assessment ratings based on further analysis and stakeholder consultations, which changed ratings for several risks or impacts
- An updated SIMP, with a thematic structure that aligns with feedback from stakeholder engagement and community consultation. The SIMP includes revised SIA ratings (where relevant) and strengthened mitigation measures, key performance indicators and review mechanisms. Three interconnected themes link the actions and mitigation measures - connecting with people and culture, protecting and nurturing country and values and delivering enduring benefit.
- Responses to community and stakeholder aspects of the NT EPA's Direction
- Responses to the formal submissions submitted by stakeholders during the exhibition period. Where further technical detail is available that relates to a submission or stakeholder issue, the relevant SEIS chapter is cross referenced. Mitigation measures are also included in the SIMP at Appendix 3.2.

## 3.2 Context

The Project has the potential to be socially and economically transformational for the NT. The Project could act as an enabler for the 'green' manufacturing sector, create thousands of jobs across its 70-year lifespan and build workforce skills and business capacity. The scale of the Project and sensitivity of the social areas of influence due to diverse social, cultural, economic, and cultural values is likely to be varied. Some of the positive and negative effects of change may be obvious, immediate, and readily managed. Others may be felt or perceived more as ripple effects or indirect consequences of change with complex causal factors and solutions.

There will be opportunities for the Proponent to align with existing regional capacity-building investment plans for local communities adjacent to the Project, particularly through the Barkly Regional Deal (Barkly Regional Deal, 2019). The Proponent's ability to fully capitalise on these opportunities may grow incrementally and would require collaborative governance and ongoing stakeholder and community engagement (Esteves and Barclay, 2001; Mutale, Franco and Masinja, 2019).

### 3.2.1 Social Areas of Influence

This section provides a demographic summary of the social areas of influence. The areas have been identified following Munday's (2020) dimensions (Figure 3-1) of social impacts for the North Australia context (Table 3-1). Identifying the social area of influence begins with understanding the nature of the Project, the characteristics of affected communities and how positive and negative impacts may be reasonably perceived or experienced by different people (NSW, 2021). The social areas of influence were also determined in relation to the administrative jurisdictions where they are located, namely, Barkly Regional Council, Katherine Town Council and Greater Darwin. The Great Darwin Area includes the Darwin, Palmerston and Litchfield Local Government Areas. Other jurisdictions such as the Coomalie Community Government Council (CCGC) (Adelaide River) and Victoria Daly Regional Council (Pine Creek) are acknowledged but are not identified as social areas of influence.



Figure 3-1: Key Dimensions of Social Impacts (Munday, 2020)



Table 3-1: Social Areas of Influence: Descriptions of Dimensions (Munday, 2020)

Dimension	Description
People and Communities	Health, wellbeing, safety, community cohesion, our sense of connectedness, ability to feel safe, shared values and capacity to absorb newcomers into the community.
Social infrastructure and services	The quality, accessibility and affordability of social infrastructure and services, such as housing, health, education, transport, emergency services, utilities.
Economies and jobs	Jobs, economic opportunities, and community development, including the employment and training of Aboriginal people, local procurement and equitable distribution of economic benefits and harm.
Cultural identity	Covers connections to country, cultural authority and respect for Aboriginal world views and cultural values. Cultural identity can be affected by reduced access to land and traditional livelihoods, damage to sacred or important cultural sites, threats to traditional leadership or dilution of shared values. This dimension also covers the shared culture and values of communities.
Healthy country	Healthy land and seas cover values associated with the use and enjoyment of the natural environment. This is sometimes described as socioecological systems or 'ecosystem services', which are the commercial, cultural, recreational, and aesthetic benefits, goods, and services we derive from the use of our land, clean air, and water.
Living environment	Our living environment incorporates what is often described as 'surroundings' and includes the community's experience or perceptions of factors that cause annoyance or disturbance to the amenity of places where people and families live, work and play. This includes disturbance from industrial noise, dust, lights, heat, vibrations, traffic congestion, destruction of landscapes or pollution that detracts from the quality of our environs. Technical studies might assess the likelihood and consequences of impacts on receptors. A social perspective explores who these 'receptors' might be, their values and their sensitivity to disturbance.
Strong voice	A strong voice means having influence over decisions and contributing to our own governance. Communities may feel ineffectual if their voice is not heard.

People with connections to the social areas of influence, service providers and economies are likely to be impacted by the Project's activities. This includes the supply chain, transport, logistics and workforce. A map outlining the geographical influence of the project footprint is presented in Figure 3-2 and regional centres and distances from the Powell Creek Solar Precinct in Table 3-2. Key components of the project footprint include:

- Powell Creek Solar Precinct in the Barkly Region of the NT where electricity will be generated, stored, and transmitted
- OHTL to transmit electricity from the Solar Precinct to Darwin
- DCS including VSCs, energy storage and network connection to supply electricity to the Darwin region
- Cable Transition Facilities at Murrumujuk and Gunn Point Beach to transition power cables between land and sea
- Subsea Cable System extending from the Cable Transition Facilities to Singapore
- Singapore Converter Station to receive electricity and supply the Singapore electrical network.

*Table 3-2: Key Regional Centres and Distances from the Powell Creek Solar Precinct*

<b>Distance by road to key regional centres</b>	<b>Approximate distance from Solar Precinct</b>
Kulumindini (Elliott) - closest town to Solar Precinct and closest service centre.	68 km
Tennant Creek – likely source of workers, services, and supplies.	233 km
Katherine – likely source of services, supplies and possibly workers.	478 km
Alice Springs – likely source of workers, services, and supplies.	706 km
Darwin – NT’s main population and business centre.	802 km





### 3.2.1.1 Barkly Region Local Government Area

The Solar Precinct is in the Barkly Region—the second largest local government area in Australia. The Barkly encompasses the social areas of influence of Elliott, Tennant Creek, and Powell Creek Station. Table 3-3 presents a community profile for the Barkly area.

Table 3-3: Community Profile: Barkly Regional Council

Profile	Data
Coverage	The Barkly Region is 325,514km <sup>2</sup> and includes Elliott and Tennant Creek.
Demographic profile	<p>The latest census register revealed that the total population of the Barkly was 6,313 (ABS, 2021). Out of the total population, 3,182 people were male and 3,131 were female (ABS, 2021).</p> <p>Identify as Aboriginal people: 4,051.</p> <p>Communities: Ali Curung, Alpurrurulam, Ampilatwatja, Arlparra, Elliott, Tennant Creek, Wutunugurra.</p>
Employment and Income	<p>There were 2,519 people who reported being in the labour force in the week before Census night in the Barkly. Of these, 54.1% were employed full time, 15.5% were employed part-time and 24.9% were unemployed (ABS, 2021).</p> <p>In the Barkly, 22.0% of households had a weekly household income of less than \$650 and 9.5% of households had a weekly income of more than \$3,000 (ABS, 2021).</p>
Socio-Economic Indexes for Areas (SEIFA Index)	The Barkly has a low SEIFA score at 679.0 compared to the Australian average of 1,000 (2016 Index).
Education	<p>People attending an educational institution (ABS, 2021):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Preschool: 121</li> <li>• Primary: 725</li> <li>• Secondary: 321</li> <li>• Tertiary: 170</li> <li>• Other: 28.</li> </ul>
Social infrastructure	<p><b>Health Services</b></p> <p>Tennant Creek Hospital, Government run clinics and the health centre. The latter is managed by three Aboriginal Health Workers. Health staff from Tennant Creek visit two days per week and are also on call for phone consultations.</p> <p><b>Police station</b></p> <p>Elliott Police Station, Tennant Creek Police Station, Ali Curung Police Station, Avon Downs Police Station.</p> <p><b>Schools</b></p> <p>A complete list of schools in urban and remote areas can be accessed in the NT Government Directory (NT, 2022).</p> <p><b>Tertiary institutions</b></p> <p>Batchelor Institute of Indigenous Tertiary Education.</p> <p><b>Fire Services</b></p> <p>NT Fire and Rescue Service (Fire station), Bushfires NT.</p>

Profile	Data
	<b>Library and Community Centre</b> The Tennant Creek Public Library is a free service provided by the Barkly Regional Council.

### 3.2.1.2 Katherine Town Council Local Government Area

Katherine is the fourth largest town in the NT. It is 320 km southeast of Darwin at the junction of the Stuart and Victoria Highways and is the regional headquarters for government departments servicing the Big Rivers Region.

Katherine Town Council takes in Manbulloo, Florina, the Binjari and Rockhole communities. The town also hosts the headquarters of the Victoria Daly Regional Council (which extends from Katherine to the West Australian border, including Pine Creek, Timber Creek, Kalkarinji/Dagaragu, Daly River and Yarralin) and the Roper Gulf Regional Council (which extends from north of Elliott to the Queensland border across 186,000 km<sup>2</sup>, including Barunga, Manyallaluk, Jilkminggan, Minyerri). (Katherine Town Council, 2022).

Table 3-4: Community Profile: Katherine

Profile	Data
Coverage	Katherine covers 7,443 km <sup>2</sup> and provides services to communities from the Western Australia border to the Gulf of Carpentaria.
Demographic profile	The latest census register revealed that the total population was 9,644. Out of the total population, 4,979 people were male and 4,665 were female (ABS, 2021). Identify as Aboriginal People: 2,462. Communities: Binjari, Barunja, Manyallaluk, Jilkminggan, Minyerr
Employment and income	The main drivers of economic activity and jobs are defence, mineral production, and exploration. Major projects include the expansion of Tindal Air Base, which is expected to be completed in 2025 and has contributed to substantial population growth and economic activity since it opened in 1988. Other major projects include upgrades to the Bradshaw Field Training Area, a proposed cotton gin 20 kilometres north of the town, a flood mitigation program in Katherine East, a proposed \$35 million Katherine Logistics and Agribusiness Hub and NT Road development and aquaculture projects. There were 2,747 people who reported being in the labour force in the week before Census night in Katherine. Of these 71.4% were employed full time, 16.9% were employed part-time and 4.5% were unemployed (ABS, 2021b).
SEIFA Index	The SEIFA index for Katherine is 991 compared to the national baseline of 1,000 (2016 Index).
Education	People attending an educational institution (ABS, 2021): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Preschool: 153</li> <li>• Primary: 898</li> <li>• Secondary: 484</li> <li>• Tertiary: 417</li> <li>• Other: 67.</li> </ul>

Profile	Data
Social infrastructure	<p><b>Medical services/hospitals</b></p> <p>Katherine Hospital.</p> <p>Aboriginal community health organisations such as Sunrise Health, Katherine West Health Board.</p> <p><b>Police station</b></p> <p>Katherine Police Station.</p> <p><b>Schools</b></p> <p>A complete list of schools in urban and remote areas can be accessed in NT Government Directory (NT, 2022).</p> <p><b>Tertiary institutions</b></p> <p>Charles Darwin University Katherine Campus.</p> <p><b>Fires Services</b></p> <p>Katherine Fire Station, Bushfires NT.</p> <p><b>Library and Community Centre</b></p> <p>Katherine Public Library.</p>

### 3.2.1.3 Greater Darwin

Greater Darwin comprises the Litchfield, Palmerston and Darwin local government areas including Murrumujuk and Darwin Harbour waters. A community profile (as depicted in the SIA and further data analysis) is presented in Table 3-5.

Table 3-5: Community Profile - Greater Darwin

Profile	Data
Coverage	The Greater Darwin region covers over 30,000 km <sup>2</sup>
Demographic profile	<p>The latest census register revealed that the total population of the Greater Darwin region was 139,900. Out of the total population 69,161 people were women and 70,739 were men (ABS, 2021).</p> <p>Identify as Aboriginal People: 14,539.</p>
Employment and income	<p>There were 74,820 people who reported being in the labour force in the week before Census night in Greater Darwin. Of these 69.4% were employed full time, 19.8% were employed part-time and 4.6% were unemployed (ABS, 2021).</p> <p>In Greater Darwin, 10.3% of households had a weekly household income of less than \$650 and 30.6% of households had a weekly income of more than \$3,000 (ABS, 2021).</p>
SEIFA Index	The 2016 is the latest version of this index. The index for Greater Darwin is 1,035 which is higher than the national average of 1,000 (2016 Index).
Education	<p>People attending an educational institution (ABS, 2021):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Preschool: 2,621</li> <li>• Primary: 12,064</li> <li>• Secondary: 8,648</li> <li>• Tertiary: 10,440</li> </ul>

Profile	Data
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Other: 1,746.</li> </ul>
Social infrastructure	<p><b>Health services</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Royal Darwin Hospital has 360 beds, offering a large range of services in all speciality areas</li> <li>Darwin Private Hospital is located adjacent to the Royal Darwin Public Hospital at Casuarina</li> <li>Palmerston Regional Hospital has 116 beds and offers a range of specialty services.</li> </ul> <p><b>Police station</b></p> <p>Palmerston Station, Darwin City Police Station, Casuarina Police Station, Humpty Doo Police Station, Australian Federal Police, NT Water Police.</p> <p><b>Schools</b></p> <p>A complete list of schools in urban and remote areas can be accessed in NT Government Directory (NT, 2022).</p> <p><b>Tertiary institutions</b></p> <p>Charles Darwin University.  Batchelor Institute of Indigenous Tertiary Education.</p> <p><b>Fire Services</b></p> <p>Bushfires NT headquarters in the Greater Darwin Region and there are several volunteer fire brigades in the Greater Darwin region.</p> <p>Berrimah Fire Station, Darwin Fire Station, Palmerston Fire Station, Humpty Doo Fire Station, Marrara Fire Station.</p> <p><b>Library and Community Centre</b></p> <p>Darwin City Public Library, Casuarina Library, Karama Library, Nightcliff Library, Palmerston Library.</p>

### 3.2.2 Alice Springs Local Government Area

Alice Springs is a potential source of workers, services, and supplies. It is located 706 km from the solar precinct. A community profile (as depicted in the SIA and further data analysis) is presented in Table 3-6.

Table 3-6: Community Profile – Alice Springs Local Government Area

Profile	Data
Coverage	Alice Springs Town Council Local Government Area covers 328.3 km <sup>2</sup> and is 1,200 km from the nearest ocean and 1,500 kilometres from the nearest major cities, Darwin, and Adelaide. Mining and tourism are some of the most predominant industries in the area.
Demographic profile	<p>The latest census register revealed that the total population was 25,907. Out of the total population, 12,598 people were male and 13,309 were female (ABS, 2021).</p> <p>Identify as Aboriginal People: 5,343.</p>
Employment and income	The key sectors are mining, tourism, and primary industries.



Profile	Data
	There were 14,220 people who reported being in the labour force in the week before Census night in Alice Springs. Of these 68.9% were employed full time, 21.4% were employed part-time and 9.8% were unemployed (ABS, 2021).
SEIFA Index	The SEIFA index for Katherine is 1,007 which is higher than the national baseline 1,000 (2016 Index).
Education	People attending an educational institution (ABS, 2021): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Preschool: 485</li> <li>• Primary: 2,404</li> <li>• Secondary: 1,548</li> <li>• Tertiary: 1,549</li> <li>• Other: 1,821.</li> </ul>
Social infrastructure	<p><b>Medical services/hospitals</b>            Alice Springs Hospital.</p> <p><b>Police station</b>            Alice Springs Police Station.</p> <p><b>Schools</b>            A complete list of schools in urban and remote areas can be accessed in NT Government Directory (NT, 2022).</p> <p><b>Tertiary institutions</b>            Charles Darwin University.            Batchelor Institute of Indigenous Tertiary Education.</p> <p><b>Fires Services</b>            Alice Springs Fire and Rescue Service, Bushfires NT.</p> <p><b>Library and Community Centre</b>            Alice Springs Public Library.</p>

### 3.3 Governance

This section provides context on the legislative requirements and governance frameworks for the assessment of social impacts and community and stakeholder engagement.

The governance frameworks that support this chapter and the foundational documents (SIA and SIMP) are the *EP Act* and the EP Regulations. This document is prepared in accordance with the NT EPA's Stakeholder Engagement and Consultation Guidance for proponents (NT EPA) and section 6.5. of the Guidelines for the Preparation of an Economic and SIA (NT EPA, 2013), as follows:

*Provide for broad community involvement during the process of environmental impact assessment and environmental approval.*

*Recognise the role that Aboriginal people have as stewards of their country as conferred under their traditions and recognised in law, and the importance of participation by Aboriginal people and communities in environmental decision-making processes.*

### 3.3.1 Jurisdictional Policies and International Frameworks

This document has been prepared with consideration of:

- *NT Aboriginal Sacred Sites Act 1989 (NT)*
- *Aboriginal Land Rights (NT) Act 1976 (Cwth)*
- *Native Title Act 1993 (Cwth)*
- *Heritage Act 2021 (NT)*
- Principles under the International Finance Corporation's (IFC) Performance Standards and Guidance Notes (2003; 2012) and the principle of informed consultation and participation
- The International Association for Impact Assessment (IAIA) guidelines for identifying and managing social issues emerging from project development (IAIA, 2015)
- The United Nations Guiding Principles were consulted to inform mitigation actions and enable the development of indicators to measure the effectiveness of such actions in the social areas of influence, as follows:
  - United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (UN SDGs) served as a baseline to develop indicators to track mitigation actions
  - United Nations Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights and the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples provided guidance on mitigation actions concerning protecting and nurturing country and values
  - United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change served as a framework to outline strategies and mitigation actions relating to energy solutions and energy security
  - The ISO 31000:2009 Risk Management guidelines were applied to develop the risk and opportunity matrix for the SIA. The matrix is included as an appendix to the SIMP
  - IAP2 Core Values, Spectrum of Participation and Quality Assurance Standard (2015) which are regarded as industry best practice for public participation and community/stakeholder engagement were considered during the development of the Draft EIS and will continue to inform stakeholder engagement and consultation processes (Figure 3-3).





Figure 3-3: International Association for Public Participation (IAP2) Core Values

### 3.4 Community and Stakeholder Engagement

This section provides a summary of the stakeholder and community engagement approach undertaken in addition to the Draft EIS statutory exhibition period (20 April to 15 July 2022) (see Stakeholder Consultation Report – Appendix 3.1). Consultation with key stakeholders and communities across the project footprint was informed by key objectives, stakeholder mapping and a stakeholder engagement and communication strategy.

In 2021, consultants True North Strategic Communication prepared a Stakeholder Engagement Strategy and scoping study for the Project outlining consultation methods and key stakeholders likely to be impacted by, and/or interested in, the Project's proposal. This strategy informed the planning and roll-out of a SIA and engagement schedule that laid the foundation for the development of a preliminary SIMP and Stakeholder Consultation Report. These reports were submitted to the NT EPA in April 2022 as part of the Draft EIS. The Stakeholder Engagement Strategy has been operationalised via public consultation and direct engagement with key stakeholders. To support engagement activities, partnerships with peak industry groups such as the NT Chamber of Commerce and the NTIBN were also established to leverage off existing networks across the project footprint.

In early 2022, utilising the baseline SIA, the Stakeholder Consultation Report and the SIMP as a foundational platform, the Proponent launched an extensive Draft EIS consultation campaign. The program included proactive stakeholder mapping in the project footprint and careful consideration of how to effectively engage with each stakeholder group. Communication materials were developed to support stakeholder engagement and education which considered the needs of culturally and linguistically diverse communities.

Leading up to and during the NT EPA's consultation period, the Proponent proactively engaged with stakeholders to deliver updates and field questions about the Draft EIS. A robust EIS consultation program was rolled out in the social areas of influence via targeted engagement. While general EIS engagement was underway across the NT, the Proponent also met regularly with the NLC and AAPA, the Aboriginal groups they represent and other Aboriginal stakeholders to prioritise information briefings in select areas across the project footprint.

The Stakeholder Engagement Strategy will continue to evolve and focus on building deeper connections with the communities and stakeholders during the transition to the construction phase.

The strategy will achieve this by:

- Fostering transparent ongoing dialogue and maintaining stakeholder relationships through tailored language, transparency, and mutual respect
- Utilising multi-method, adaptive and culturally appropriate communication methods that enable stakeholders to provide input into decision-making and to understand the level of influence they have had in the final decision
- Addressing and managing stakeholders' expectations and concerns early and closing feedback loops to ensure stakeholders receive accurate responses in a timely manner
- Respecting cultural authority and community aspirations and working in partnership with stakeholders to deliver sustainable intergenerational benefits
- Building and maintaining a social license to operate – legitimacy, credibility, and trust.

### 3.4.1 Stakeholder Mapping and Analysis

In preparing an engagement strategy and consultation schedule, the Proponent mapped the key stakeholders and defined the social areas of influence or regions assessed to be either directly or indirectly affected by the Project. (Figure 3-4).



Figure 3-4: Categories of Stakeholders Consulted

Stakeholder mapping resulted in the identification of key stakeholders and tailored information dissemination strategies. For example, a 12-page booklet summarising the Draft EIS was developed to inform local communities. The booklet distilled the Project's impacts and mitigation strategies using accessible language and infographics into a form that could be handed out during engagement and left in public locations. The following activities were also undertaken:

- Three-hundred and ten stakeholders notified via email of the Draft EIS lodgement milestone and offering a project briefing
- Partnered with the NT Chamber of Commerce and NTIBN to deliver five information sessions for industry and business stakeholders seeking information about the Draft EIS and the Project more generally (held in Elliott, Tennant Creek, Alice Springs, Katherine and Darwin in May and June 2022)
- Delivered presentations to stakeholders and peak bodies representing the whole of the NT and specific localities across the project footprint.

### 3.4.2 Identification of Key Themes Raised During the Public Consultation Period

This sub-section summarises the key themes raised during community consultation which are documented in the SEIS chapters and appendices (Table 3-7).

Table 3-7: Summary of Key Themes Raised During Community Consultation

Community	Themes	Consultation	Cross reference
Tennant Creek Community	Workforce Development	Cumulative impacts from other major projects on an already constrained local workforce.  General support for the Project and optimism about the opportunities it may provide for Tennant Creek.  Need to effectively harness Aboriginal workforce development.  Ensure local contractors are provided an opportunity to work on the Project.	Appendix 3.1. Stakeholder Consultation Report contains detail on the matters raised.  Appendix 3.2. SIMP provides the proposed strategies and mitigations.
	Electricity Access and Energy Security	Stakeholders are interested in access to electricity for communities in the project footprint.	Appendix 3.1. Stakeholder Consultation Report. Appendix 3.2. SIMP.
	Housing and Accommodation	Ensure adequate employer-supplied housing for workers on the Project.  Provide housing for Aboriginal workers from local communities to increase their participation.	Appendix 3.1. Stakeholder Consultation Report. Appendix 3.2. SIMP.
	Community benefits	Invest in regional social infrastructure as a means of attracting workers.  Acknowledgement of potential tourism opportunities.	Appendix 3.1. Stakeholder Consultation Report. Appendix 3.2. SIMP.

Community	Themes	Consultation	Cross reference
Elliott Community	Workforce Development	Prospective job opportunities for Elliott. Capacity-building for local Aboriginal communities.	Appendix 3.1. Stakeholder Consultation Report. Appendix 3.2. SIMP.
	Culture and Heritage.	Sacred Site protection as a priority. Concerns that cultural knowledge is not being passed to the younger generations.	Appendix 3.1. Stakeholder Consultation Report. Appendix 3.2. SIMP. Chapter 13 Culture and Heritage.
	Electricity Access and Energy Security	Stakeholders queried whether Elliott will receive electricity from the Project.	Appendix 3.1. Stakeholder Consultation Report Appendix 3.2. SIMP
	Project Description	Better understanding of infrastructure proposed at the Solar Precinct.	Appendix 3.1. Stakeholder Consultation Report. Appendix 3.2. SIMP.
	Human Health	Stakeholders are interested in potential safety risks within the OHTL, including impacts from EMF.	Appendix 3.1. Stakeholder Consultation Report. Appendix 3.2. SIMP.
Alice Springs	Waste Management	Recycling, waste management and research and development opportunities for renewables.	Appendix 3.1. Stakeholder Consultation Report. Appendix 3.2. SIMP.
	Environmental Impacts	Impacts of land clearing on biodiversity, the survey methodology in the EIS and how impacts to biodiversity will be monitored.	Appendix 3.1. Stakeholder Consultation Report. Appendix 3.2. SIMP. Chapter 5 Terrestrial Ecosystems.
	Electricity Access and Energy Security	Aboriginal communities' access to electricity from the Project and future opportunities to connect Alice Springs to the power grid.	Appendix 3.1. Stakeholder Consultation Report.
	Workforce Development	Training and employment opportunities for local business.  Alice Springs as a FIFO location to the Solar Precinct.  Involvement in the proposed Renewable Centre of Excellence.	Appendix 3.1. Stakeholder Consultation Report. Appendix 3.2. SIMP.

Community	Themes	Consultation	Cross reference
Katherine	Workforce Development	Training and local capacity for local businesses.  Holistic approach to job readiness that supports cultural competency, inclusivity, and Aboriginal employment.	Appendix 3.1. Stakeholder Consultation Report.  Appendix 3.2. SIMP.
	Environmental Impacts	Environmental impacts from land clearing and water usage.	Chapter 5 Terrestrial Ecosystems.
	Community benefits	Support to local businesses and communities.	Appendix 3.1. Stakeholder Consultation Report.  Appendix 3.2. SIMP.
	Electricity Access and Energy Security	Access to electricity from the Project.	Appendix 3.1. Stakeholder Consultation Report.
Darwin	Project Description	Proposed infrastructure, pertaining to the OHTL and Electrodes.	Appendix 3.1. Stakeholder Consultation Report.
	Workforce Development	Increasing interest in work opportunities arising from the Project.	Appendix 3.1. Stakeholder Consultation Report.
	Environmental Impacts	Better understanding of environmental impacts and Subsea Cable System.	Appendix 3.1. Stakeholder Consultation Report.
	Electricity Access and Energy Security	Sensitivities to issues of energy insecurity across the region.	Appendix 3.1. Stakeholder Consultation Report.  Appendix 3.2. SIMP.
Darwin Rural Area	OHTL	Stakeholder concerns regarding the visual amenity and safety of the OHTL and potential property devaluation.	Chapter 12 Land Use and Transport.  Chapter 10 Amenity.
	Engagement	Recreational value access to Gunn Point and the environmental, social, and cultural values of the region.	Appendix 3.2. SIMP.
	Electricity Access and energy Security	Stakeholders' lack of awareness of access to electricity from the Project.	Appendix 3.1. Stakeholder Consultation Report.  Appendix 3.2. SIMP.
	Environmental Impacts	Concerns about marine wildlife and impacts on land clearing.	Chapter 5 Terrestrial Ecosystems.

## 3.5 SIA

This subsection provides a revision of the impact assessment ratings. Some of the ratings for specific risks or impacts were revised due to further analysis and feedback from engagement and stakeholder consultation.

### 3.5.1 Revised Risk and Impact Ratings

This section summarises the revised risk rating of four risks and impacts and the rationale for doing so. The impacts documented below have been revised as their original ratings did not match those of the risk and opportunity matrix ISO 31000 (Table 3-8).

Table 3-8: Revised Risks

Impact	Original Rating Untreated	Revised Rating Untreated	Residual Rating	Revision
Reduced recreational opportunities due to impacts on fish and shellfish habitat and health	Low	Medium	Low	<p>Rationale: This risk was addressed in initial project design which selected a Subsea Cable System route which avoids high value fishing areas, mangroves, and seagrass. This was not raised as a major concern during consultation.</p> <p>Rating: The likelihood of this impact is possible, and the consequence is minor. Based on ISO 31000, the rating resulting from these two variables suggest that the untreated rating is medium. The likelihood and consequence rating are included in the risk and opportunity matrix in the SIMP.</p> <p>Mitigation: The Project is developing a Stakeholder Engagement Strategy and seeks to engage with stakeholders in the recreational space throughout the life cycle of the Project.</p>
Reduced amenity from congestion on the roads and delays with project traffic	Medium	Low	Low	<p>Rationale: Increased construction traffic on the Stuart Highway (the only highway running north-south) and Gunn Point Road, particularly at 'pinch points' along the route during transport of the OHTL structures, machinery, and equipment. Congestion is likely to reduce amenity for other road users, including tourists.</p> <p>Rating: The likelihood of this impact is unlikely, and the consequence is minor. Based on ISO 31000, the rating resulting from these two variables suggest that the untreated rating is low. The likelihood and consequence ratings are included in the risk and opportunity matrix in the SIMP.</p> <p>Mitigations to be taken to reduce this impact are as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Traffic Impact Assessment Study</li> <li>• Traffic Management Plan to be developed based on transport route.</li> </ul>



Impact	Original Rating Untreated	Revised Rating Untreated	Residual Rating	Revision
Deaths, injuries, or disruptions to recreational traffic on the harbour during trenching of cables	Medium	High	Medium	<p>Rationale: Previous dredging operations have resulted in collisions by recreational boating traffic with dredging equipment.</p> <p>Rating: The likelihood of this impact is possible, and the consequence is moderate. Based on ISO 31000, the rating resulting from these two variables suggest that the untreated rating is high. The likelihood and consequence ratings can be considered in the risk and opportunity matrix in the SIMP.</p> <p>Mitigation: The Project is undertaking regular communication with the Harbour Master and other stakeholders, in alignment with the Stakeholder Engagement Strategy. As noted in the Draft EIS, a Marine Environmental Management Plan will be developed to avoid/mitigate any impacts during construction including consideration of the relevant maritime legislation and Port of Darwin requirements.</p>
Reduced social, cultural, recreational, and ecological values of Darwin Harbour due to large-scale changes to land and sea use	Medium	Medium	Low	<p>Rationale: There is sensitivity to potential cumulative impacts on the harbour's diverse values from incremental industrialisation and population pressures over the past 20 years. The harbour is integral to the Territory's unique lifestyle. Industrial development has the potential to impact on recreation and ecological values in the harbour so there is high sensitivity to disturbance. However, Project activities during the construction phase are short in duration and operational impacts once infrastructure is installed are minimal or negligible, provided the proposed mitigation measures are adopted.</p> <p>Rating: The likelihood of this impact is likely, and the consequence is moderate although predominantly isolated to the construction phase. Based on ISO 31000, the rating resulting from these two variables suggest that the untreated rating is medium. The likelihood and consequence ratings are included in the risk and opportunity matrix in the SIMP.</p> <p>Mitigation: The Project is developing EMPs for a broad range of project activities including subsea cable installation to mitigate potential environmental impacts during construction. Chapters 8 and 9 of this SEIS discuss the marine environment in more detail.</p>

### 3.6 SIMP

Consultation revealed that many community members are enthusiastic about the opportunities that the Project will bring, although some are wary of the negative impacts of rapid growth, particularly during the construction phase. The Project intends to provide enduring community value so that



potential opportunities will be enhanced. Further detail on the benefit to the NT is outlined in the SIMP and will be described in the Territory Benefit Plan (TBP).

The Project has developed a revised SIMP (refer Appendix 3.2) to reflect the updated risk ratings, the refinement of mitigations and feedback from stakeholder engagement and public consultation. The SIMP includes the revised SIA ratings (where relevant) and updated mitigation measures to reflect risks, key performance indicators and review mechanisms. Three interconnected themes join the actions and mitigation measures - connecting with people and culture, protecting and nurturing country and values and delivering enduring benefit. Figure 3-5 provides a summary of the themes and the subcomponents under each pillar.

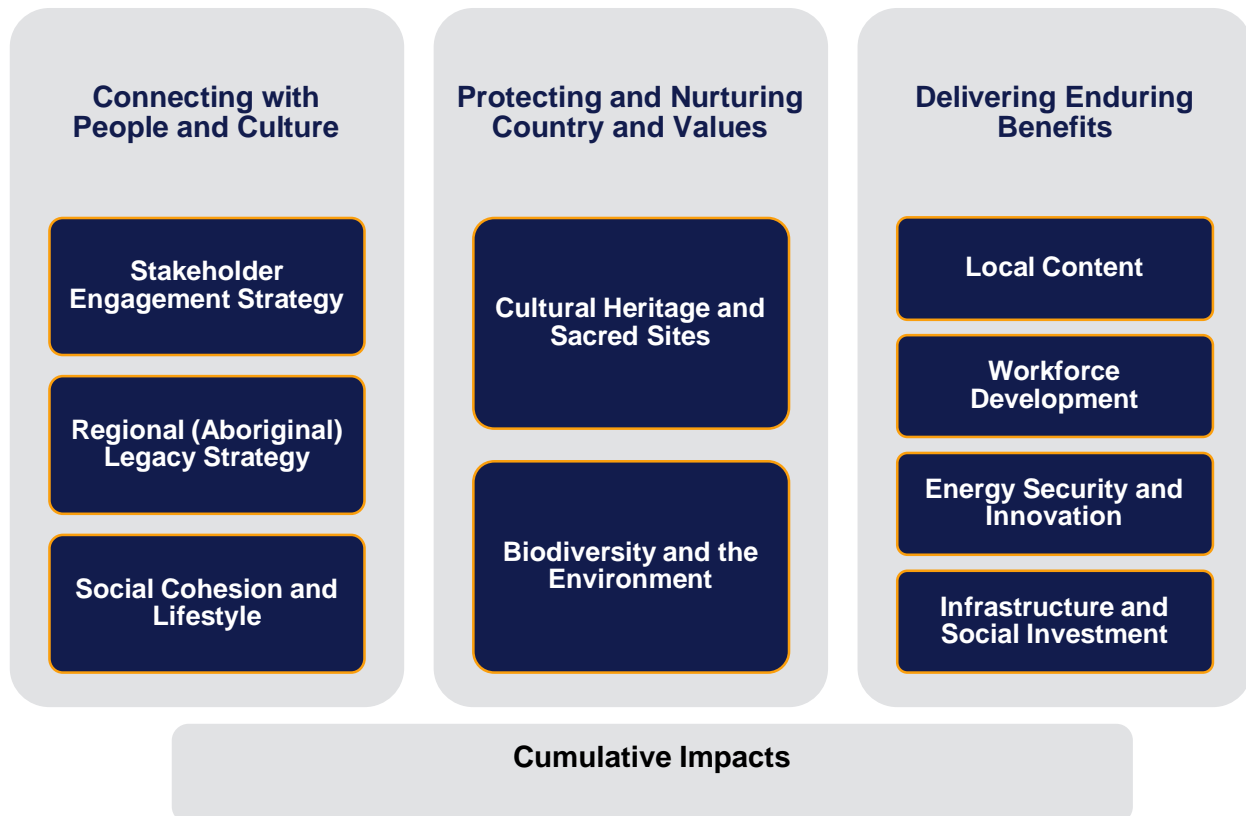


Figure 3-5: SIMP themes and action plan subcomponents

### 3.6.1 Connecting with People and Culture

Meaningful engagement and the forging of long-term connections with people and culture is critical to achieve the dual goals of protecting, preserving, and safeguarding cultural identity, lifestyle and the environment while contributing to transformational community and industry benefits. This section describes the Project's strategies under the theme: 'connecting with people and culture.' The action plans focus on a Stakeholder Engagement Strategy, Regional (Aboriginal) Legacy Strategy and Social Cohesion and Lifestyle. Table 3-9 presents the Project's commitments in this area.

Table 3-9: Connecting with People and Culture: Action Plans and Commitments

Theme	Commitment
Stakeholder Engagement Strategy	<p>The Proponent is developing a stakeholder engagement strategy for the construction and operation phases. It will maintain a flexible engagement approach with the ability to continuously adapt the methods to ensure that stakeholders have an opportunity to influence project decisions with the most relevant information. Commitments under this component, are as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue to review and improve a Stakeholder Engagement Strategy</li> <li>• Implement consultation forums, regular stakeholder briefings, meetings, and public information sessions, as appropriate</li> <li>• Develop engagement materials for culturally diverse communities taking into consideration different levels of literacy and numeracy. Potential communications using First Nations languages and targeted channels</li> <li>• Continue and increase communications and site visits with communities across the project footprint to support stakeholder and community input to planning, risk mitigation and community benefit.</li> <li>• Utilise a customised Stakeholder Management System to manage and track interactions to better understand issues, and thus enhance responsiveness and help inform strategic decisions</li> <li>• Develop a Community Investment Strategy that delivers enduring benefits to host communities</li> <li>• Proactively engage with stakeholders and community in accordance with local policies</li> <li>• Continue to work closely with NT and Australian government agencies during project planning and implementation</li> <li>• Engage with local schools, community organisations and language centres to provide local communities with education, knowledge, and awareness of solar power</li> <li>• Undertake industry and business briefings</li> <li>• Develop a Grievance and Dispute Policy to ensure internal and external stakeholders have access to mechanisms to resolve escalated issues during the life of the Project. The policy will enable: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Acknowledgement, investigation and document all complaints and grievances</li> <li>– Resolution through consensus</li> <li>– Advice to complainants promptly and documented actions and outcomes</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Develop a Local Workforce Strategy to further engage locals in project development.</li> </ul>
Regional (Aboriginal) Engagement Strategy	<p>The strategy will cultivate intergenerational benefits for Aboriginal people. Under the strategy the Proponent will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop the Regional (Aboriginal) Legacy Strategy in partnership with Aboriginal people, communities, and organisations so that Aboriginal people can meaningfully participate in sustainable community development</li> <li>• Negotiate ILUAs with Traditional Owner groups holding native title within the project footprint</li> <li>• Develop engagement materials for culturally diverse communities taking into consideration different levels of literacy and numeracy. Potential communications</li> </ul>

Theme	Commitment
	<p>using First Nations radio and other channels will be considered and in native Indigenous languages</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Open a regional office and employ people from the project footprint as cultural advisors</li> <li>• Develop a RAPs</li> <li>• Develop a Cultural Learning Framework to ensure all staff and contractors are aware of Aboriginal cultures within the project footprint.</li> </ul>
Social Cohesion and Lifestyle	<p>The Proponent commits to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Build Temporary Construction Accommodation with amenities including a 'wet mess', with alcohol limits in place, to mitigate the potential impact for alcohol issues in remote areas from project activities</li> <li>• Develop and ensure compliance with the workforce Code of Conduct to help mitigate impacts on recreational values in the social areas of influence</li> <li>• Develop traffic management plans, transport workers by plane and bus to reduce light-vehicle trips, transport equipment by rail where possible to reduce heavy vehicle traffic and develop and implement work health and safety plans and fatigue management plans to mitigate the risk of traffic congestion and road trauma</li> <li>• Communicate potential impacts and mitigation measures associated with noise, light, heat, emissions, and other contaminants</li> <li>• Include information in health, safety, and environment training to protect the wellbeing of people in communities, particularly women and girls</li> <li>• Ongoing communication with the Darwin Harbour Master and relevant stakeholders, under the Stakeholder Engagement Strategy to monitor the potential impact on recreational waterways</li> <li>• Ongoing engagement with relevant Councils, community groups, residents, and users to communicate about temporary access restrictions, impacts on landscape and changed land use and rehabilitation of recreational areas</li> <li>• Develop a Workforce Code of Conduct to foster employees' good behaviour and respect to local residents</li> <li>• Develop and implement a Construction Environmental Management Plan</li> <li>• Develop and implement a Construction Sustainability Plan.</li> </ul>

### 3.6.2 Protecting and Nurturing Country and Values

The Proponent is taking action to foster respect, trust, and good faith relationships for the protection of cultural areas, world views and practices with a focus on two key subthemes, namely, cultural heritage and biodiversity and the environment. Table 3-10 presents the Proponent's commitments.

Table 3-10: Protecting and Nurturing Country and Values: Action Plans and Commitments

Theme	Commitment
Cultural Heritage and Sacred Sites	<p>Land clearing could impact on both cultural practices and ecological values and species valued by both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people. The Proponent seeks to reduce this impact through the following mitigations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop a Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP)</li> <li>• Secure AAPA Sacred Sites Authority Certificates covering the entire project footprint and abide by any conditions outlined in the certificates</li> <li>• Develop a Cultural Heritage Management Plan, including protocols for discovering artefacts and engaging Cultural Managers</li> <li>• Develop and implement a Cultural Learning Framework for all staff and contractors</li> <li>• Explore opportunities to support and promote cultural heritage projects at Powell Creek Telegraph Station and at Newcastle Waters.</li> </ul>
Biodiversity and the environment	<p>The Proponent aims to reduce adverse impacts on biodiversity and habitat, as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Collaborate with relevant government, ranger and civil society groups on the rehabilitation and planting of degraded areas and biodiversity within the project footprint</li> <li>• Develop and implement EMPs (refer to Chapter 17 of the Draft EIS and Chapter 17 of this SEIS)</li> <li>• Strengthen community groups in areas such as land management, ranger groups and commercial services with landscaping, rehabilitation, ecological surveys, seed collection and ongoing environmental monitoring.</li> </ul>

### 3.6.3 Delivering Enduring Benefits

The Proponent is committed to delivering enduring and intergenerational benefits for local communities in the social areas of influence. This section presents commitments under four strategies: local procurement, workforce development, energy solutions and security, infrastructure, and social investment. The commitments in this area are presented in Table 3-11.

Table 3-11: Delivering Enduring Benefits: Action Plan and Commitments

Theme	Commitment
Local Content	<p>The Proponent seeks to maximise opportunities for local business to be involved in the Project, as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop and implement a TBP</li> <li>• Deliver industry and business briefings to promote opportunities for local industry involvement</li> <li>• Conduct NT capability mapping to determine NT industry capabilities to support the Project and highlight areas of capability and capacity development</li> <li>• Develop a Local Workforce Strategy.</li> </ul>

Theme	Commitment
Workforce Development	<p>The Proponent seeks to attract and retain an appropriately skilled workforce and support Aboriginal people and Territorians to find employment opportunities in the Project. In doing so, the Proponent aims to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop a Local Workforce Strategy</li> <li>• Collaborate with industry, government, and business sectors to implement training and education programs that support the Project's needs</li> <li>• Develop an Employee Relations Management Plan</li> <li>• Develop and implement a Cultural Learning Framework for all employees, contractors, subcontractors, and consultants</li> <li>• Construct Temporary Construction Accommodation and operational accommodation at the Solar Precinct. This will include a wet mess, health services, recreation, office, and accommodation facilities to mitigate and minimise the negative impact on the community and enhance workforce attraction and retention.</li> </ul>
Energy Solutions and Security	<p>The Proponent seeks to leverage its expertise to support communities to develop their own energy solutions through the following commitments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establish a NT Renewable Centre of Excellence to foster world-class collaboration in research and development activities and knowledge transfer across the renewable energy industry</li> <li>• Partner with key stakeholder groups or select entities to explore renewable energy solutions within the project footprint to support local-led opportunities.</li> </ul>
Infrastructure and Social Investment	<p>Explore mechanisms to ensure the Project does not exacerbate housing market pressures, particularly in the social areas of influence. In doing so, the Proponent commits to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Construct a Temporary Construction Accommodation and operational accommodation at the Solar Precinct. This will include a wet mess, health services, recreation, office, and accommodation facilities to mitigate and minimise the negative impact on the community and enhance workforce attraction and retention</li> <li>• Establish temporary 'fly camps' for the construction of the OHTL</li> <li>• Develop and implement a Construction Sustainability Plan</li> <li>• Develop and implement a TBP</li> <li>• Develop a Community Investment Strategy based on a principle-based approach to manage sponsorship and development funding requests that align with the Proponent's purpose and values</li> <li>• Collaborate with local authorities to mitigate emerging staff housing risks</li> <li>• Develop and implement an Emergency Response Plan.</li> </ul>

#### 3.6.4 Cumulative Impacts

Cumulative impacts from industrial development and changed land use could exacerbate impacts within the social areas of influence, particularly during the construction stage of the Project. In response, the Proponent seeks to minimise its contribution to cumulative negative impacts and increase the opportunities of positive cumulative impacts through collaborative planning. Table 3-12 presents specific commitments.

Table 3-12: Cumulative Impacts: Action Plans and Commitments

Theme	Commitment
Cumulative Impact	<p>The Proponent commits to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Implement an 'avoid, minimise and mitigation hierarchy' to prioritise the reduction of negative impacts and will collaborate with regional economic development groups to enhance the potential for available opportunities</li> <li>Engage with relevant Councils to understand how the Project's workforce needs impact existing community capacity constraints</li> <li>Develop and implement an Emergency Management Plan for the provision of services for local emergency response</li> <li>Implement Charter flights - some from major capital cities direct to the Solar Precinct, others from Darwin to the Solar Precinct to reduce traffic congestion and the risk of road trauma</li> <li>Participate in government engagement forums with other major projects, particularly in the Barkly region and social areas of influence to understand community views and inform mitigation strategies to minimise cumulative impacts.</li> </ul>

### 3.7 Responses to NT EPA's Supplement Direction

This section presents responses to community and stakeholder aspects of the NT EPA's Direction. Table 3-13 summarises these responses.

Table 3-13: Community and Stakeholder Aspects and Responses

Scope	Section of Draft EIS	Information Requirements	Response
1	General	Outcomes of stakeholder engagement and how the information gaps identified in the draft EIS have been addressed.	Appendix 3.1 Stakeholder Consultation Report reflects how specific stakeholder engagement gaps and concerns raised by stakeholders have been addressed.
10	OHTL Corridor options	Provide information on the OHTL where it deviates from the Rail Corridor and include in the assessment of potentially significant impacts how it impacts on community values.	Appendix 3.1. Stakeholder Consultation Report has addressed this issue, particularly in relation to proposed infrastructure and OHTL. Chapter 2, and Appendix 2.2 of this SEIS discusses the OHTL Corridor.
11	Cable Transition Facilities	Assess impact on community access and use during construction (residential and community use).	Chapter 12 Land Use and Transport contains further information on land access and use during construction.
32	Community and economy – visual amenity	Provide more information about how community concerns will be addressed and any alternatives to the design to avoid or mitigate potentially significant impacts from visual amenity of the powerline from road and rail users, residents, and the tourism industry.	Chapter 10 contains further information on visual amenity.

Scope	Section of Draft EIS	Information Requirements	Response
33	Community and economy – cumulative impacts. Appendix 3.2 SIMP	Provide further information on cumulative impacts as they relate to community and economy and future development along the proposal footprint from Barkly to Katherine, Gunn Point and offshore.	<p>Appendix 3.2. SIMP includes the following mitigation actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Proponent will engage with other major projects occurring in the NT, particularly in the Barkly region and social areas of influence to seek community feedback and develop mitigation strategies to minimise potential cumulative impacts</li> <li>• The Proponent has implemented an ‘avoid, minimise and mitigation hierarchy’ to prioritise the reduction of negative impacts and will collaborate with regional economic development groups to enhance the potential for available opportunities</li> <li>• Support Working Groups and establish MOUs with appropriate organisations to provide emergency response services.</li> <li>• Additional information addressing cumulative impacts can be found in Chapter 12 Land Use and Transport.</li> </ul>
34	Community and Economy – SIMP Action Plans. Appendix 3.2. SIMP	<p>Provide additional information on the Action Plans in the SIMP –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Providing renewable energy to support the NT’s goal of net zero emissions by 2050</li> <li>• Bolstering the renewable energy sector and supporting communities</li> <li>• Cumulative impacts on community and economy</li> <li>• Maintaining housing affordability and availability, particularly in the Barkly, where most construction activity will take place.</li> </ul>	Appendix 3.2 contains a revised SIMP with the Action Plans containing more information across these areas.



Scope	Section of Draft EIS	Information Requirements	Response
35	Stakeholder Engagement.  Appendix 3.1. Stakeholder Consultation Report.  Appendix 3.2. SIMP	Provide additional information about ongoing stakeholder engagement, but not limited to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consultation gaps as identified in the Draft EIS (Litchfield Council, business and renewable energy stakeholders, community consultation along the new route to Murrumujuk)</li> <li>• Clarify consultation undertaken</li> <li>• Demonstrated consideration of issues raised.</li> </ul>	Stakeholder Consultation Report (Appendix 3.1) includes a summary of stakeholder engagement pre and post the statutory exhibition phase as well as future planned engagements.  SIMP (Appendix 3.2) contains Action Plans focused on Stakeholder Engagement and Aboriginal Engagement.

### 3.8 Response to Submissions

This section provides responses to the formal submissions raised by stakeholders during the public consultation period cross referenced to more detail in other SEIS chapters and mitigation measures (as relevant) included in the SIMP.

The NT EPA stipulated that the Draft EIS be on public exhibition for 60 business days from 20 April to 15 July 2022. It provided an opportunity for stakeholders to learn more about the Project and to submit comments to the NT EPA. During this period, 20 submissions were received, with 18 submissions relating to 'stakeholder and community engagement' issues, listed below:

Government submissions:

- DEPWS
- DCCEEW
- Department of Industry, Tourism and Trade
- CCGC
- DIPL.

Community submissions:

- ECNT
- Community members, which included anonymous submitters, provided comments that relate to key themes such as recreation, future land use, transport, visual and acoustic impacts, the consultation process to date, Territory benefits and property values.

#### 3.8.1 Submission: Department of Environment, Parks, and Water Security (DEPWS)

*The high recreational value for hunters in Shoal Bay needs to be observed.*

##### 3.8.1.1 Response

Chapter 5 Terrestrial Ecosystem discusses the significance of potential impacts to terrestrial ecosystems (i.e., flora and fauna) associated with the Project. The chapter provides a specific response on recreational value for hunters in Shoal Bay.

Since the Draft EIS was lodged, the following reports were prepared, which deal with Terrestrial Ecosystem matters in the project footprint:

- Supplementary Ecology Report - Part 1 - Threatened Species (Appendix 5.1)
- Supplementary Ecology Report - Part 2 (Appendix 5.2)
- Weed Management Plan (Appendix 5.3)
- OHTL Vegetation Management Framework (Appendix 5.4)
- Memorandum – Riparian Vegetation Assessment (Appendix 5.5).

### **3.8.2 Submission: DCCEEW**

*In Appendix 3.2 – SIMP section headings for 2.3 and 3.1 are missing from the document. The Department recommends inserting these section headings in the document including the missing content, or update Table of Contents.*

*In Appendix 3.2 – SIMP section 7 headings need adjustments. The Department recommends removing duplicate 7.2 and ensure all section headings are in consecutive numerical order, and update Table of Contents.*

#### **3.8.2.1 Response**

Appendix 3.2 SIMP has been amended following further stakeholder engagement and project planning, and therefore, the headings have been adjusted. Sections headings 2.3 and 3.1 and 7.2 differ from the original SIMP. Duplication has been removed and all section headings are in consecutive numeric order.

### **3.8.3 Submission on Visual Amenity: Department of Industry, Tourism, and Trade**

*The OHTL from the solar precinct to the DCS (788 kms) may present a visual amenity issue for visitors travelling along the highway in the sections where the OHTL is near the highway or travellers using the railway on the Ghan. The size of the transmission line poles is substantially larger than regular power poles meaning the poles may be highly visible to travellers. Given the extensive length of the OHTL it has potential to impact the visual amenity of a large expanse of outback.*

#### **3.8.3.1 Response**

Appendix 10.1 (LVIA) and Chapter 10 Amenity assess the potential visual amenity impacts of the Project. The visual amenity issue for visitors travelling along the highway due to the OHTL from the Solar Precinct to the DCS has been addressed since the Draft EIS was lodged. The following SEIS technical appendices address potential amenity impacts:

- Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (Appendix 10.1)
- Constraints Planning and Field Development Procedure (Appendix 4.1)
- Environmental Design Criteria and Standards (Appendix 2.1)
- Land Based Electrode Technical Report (Appendix 12.1).

### **3.8.4 Submission on Temporary Construction Accommodation: Department of Industry, Tourism, and Trade**

*We note that accommodation for the OHTL workforce will be in either existing accommodation in service centres/towns or mobile fly camps. The stakeholder consultation report shows that the proponent has conducted stakeholder consultation in regions affected by the Project, and this has included consultation with tourism accommodation providers. Tourism NT recommends that the proponent also engage with Tourism Top End and Tourism Central Australia, as the two major tourism representative bodies of the project area. It is important that this consultation continue as*

*the project advances to give as much notice as possible to businesses and tourism bodies in order to plan around any impacts this may have to availability of tourism accommodation in the region.*

#### **3.8.4.1 Response**

Appendix 3.2 SIMP document outlines ways to enhance potential positive impacts and to avoid, manage or mitigate the negative effects of the project footprint. Workforce accommodation is a risk treated in the SIMP and measures have been taken to address this issue, as presented below:

The Proponent is engaging with government, community groups and non-government organisations and tourism providers to minimise and to not exacerbate cumulative effects on accommodation. An Engagement Plan for 2023 is currently being prepared and will include the stakeholders identified in this submission. The Proponent has committed to arrange different types of charter flights - some from major capital cities direct to the Solar Precinct, others from Darwin to the Solar Precinct.

Other actions taken towards the mitigation of workforce accommodation, are as follows:

- Construction of purpose-built Temporary Construction Accommodation. This will include a wet mess, health services, recreation, office, and accommodation facilities to mitigate and minimise the negative impact on the community and enhance workforce attraction and retention.
- Construction of the OHTL will require mobile 'fly camps,' approximately 100 km apart. Existing town accommodation and services will be used where available in more remote sections of the OHTL, the fly camp locations will be negotiated with landholders and centred around existing rail corridor access points and consider relevant legislative requirements for land use and environmental factors e.g., under the (NTPS).

#### **3.8.5 Submission: CCGC**

*CCGC has listed the following concerns relating to the Project:*

*Lack of knowledge in the community regarding the Project*

*The community has raised concerns with the Elected Members who encourage the proponents to release detailed responses to community concerns and to ensure an accessible, open process of information dissemination takes place to ensure all members of the community understand the projects intent, design and technical implications, the impacts on human and animal health the environment and what measures are being put in place to mitigate these risks and/or dangers.*

*Lack of knowledge on the potential effects on human health, livestock, and the environment.*

##### **3.8.5.1 Response**

The Proponent has addressed impacts associated with community consultation, human health and livestock and the environment in Appendix 3.1 Stakeholder Consultation Report, Chapter 14 Human Health, and Chapter 5 Terrestrial Ecosystems, respectively.

Appendix 3.1 Stakeholder Consultation Report examines the key community perceptions, concerns, and comments during the 2022 EIS and broader consultation campaign. The report also outlines the engagement methods employed and provides an analysis of key themes that have emerged across the Project's social areas of influence.

The Project utilised multi-method approaches and developed a suite of communication materials for stakeholders to support the EIS consultation campaign and to increase community awareness and understanding of the Project. These materials were designed to ensure that communication was accessible to the diverse needs of communities in the project footprint, including culturally and

linguistically diverse stakeholders with limited familiarity with the Project and EIS process. Some selected materials, are as follows (with some examples provided as part of Appendix 3.1 Stakeholder Consultation Report):

- Plain English EIS Summary
- Big Rivers Fact Sheet
- PowerPoint presentations tailored to various audiences
- Infographics, posters, banners
- Computer-generated renders of project components
- Meetings were advertised by word of mouth via engagement staff and flyers were distributed on public notice boards, local community Facebook group pages and via email where appropriate. Transportation was provided in Elliott to assist stakeholders to attend meetings and community information booths were set up in central areas with high foot traffic to support social inclusion and improve accessibility
- Chapter 14 Human Health deals specifically with the impacts on human health related to the Project. It also presents mitigations to reduce the following risks on human health:
  - Elevated PM<sub>10</sub> dust and NO<sub>2</sub> pollutants above assessment criteria levels outside the Project footprint
  - EMF impacting human health including to children, elderly, and those with pacemakers
  - Impacts on emergency services (from EMI with Ultrahigh Frequency (UHF) and other telecommunications and increased demand on services)
  - OHTL posing physical barriers to aircraft including emergency services aircraft and those responding to bushfire
  - Increased risk of bushfires because of OHTL structures increasing lightning strike
  - Cyclones damaging or knocking down OHTL structures and creating a public safety risk
  - Low level humming or buzzing noise.

Chapter 5 Terrestrial Ecosystems discusses the significance of potential impacts to Terrestrial Ecosystems (i.e., flora and fauna) associated with the Project. Further information on livestock and the environment can be found in Chapter 5.

### **3.8.6 Submission: Department of Infrastructure, Planning, and Logistics (DIPL)**

*The DIPL submission notes that cumulative impacts to marine users from the combined impact of the project and the future port development in the Gunn Point Mapping the Futures project have not been included.*

#### **3.8.6.1 Response**

Chapter 12 Land Use and Transport assesses the potential impacts to current and future land uses, utilities, traffic, and transport (including air and marine transport). Since the Draft EIS was lodged, mitigation actions have been considered to reduce cumulative impacts on marine users and the future port development in the *Gunn Point Mapping the Futures* Project.

### 3.8.7 Submission on Local Employment Quotas (ECNT)

*Chapter 13 recognises “the importance of training, capacity-building, and employment for local people”; to this end, ECNT recommends that the proponent consider implementing local employment quotas for the project to concretise the commitment to addressing unemployment in the relevant regions.*

#### 3.8.7.1 Response

Appendix 3.2 SIMP outlines ways to enhance potential positive impacts of the project footprint, particularly on local capacity-building and workforce development. The SIMP presents mitigation actions towards local employment opportunities and capacity-building for locals. Actions included in the SIMP are as follows:

- Develop a Local Workforce Strategy, to be implemented between Q1 2023 to Q4 2029
- Develop and implement a TBP which will provide local workforce targets.

### 3.8.8 Submission on Justice and Engagement: ECNT

*Sun Cable’s early indication that they wish to avoid the predominate frame of exploitative industry practice is welcome but must be supported by tangible commitments. Appendix I of the SIA identifies that numerous stakeholder groups raised concerns with the Project related to energy justice and the nature of benefits that would be experienced by communities residing near the project area.*

*Material and direct benefits must be felt by the communities in and near the Project. Communities along each area of the project, from the solar precinct, along the overhead transmission line, and at the Darwin convertor site, experience a range of socio-economic disadvantages, including, relevantly, energy poverty. It is reasonable that these communities may have an expectation that their energy needs will be addressed by a large-scale solar project on or near their land.*

*It is welcome to see the proponent’s plans for the development of a TBP, Preliminary SIMP, and Regional (Aboriginal) Legacy Strategy, however ECNT expects a more detailed commitment to the affected communities surrounding the nature and extent of benefits they can expect to receive from this development. At the very least, a timeline which details when the contents of these plans may be available should be produced, so that communities currently being engaged in consultation can assess the expected benefits to them whilst they are being consulted.*

#### 3.8.8.1 Response

The Proponent seeks to leverage its expertise to support communities to develop their own energy solutions. The updated Appendix 3.2 SIMP provides details on:

- Developing research-industry partnerships with tertiary education institutions and civil society organisations, as follows:
  - Establish a NT Renewable Centre of Excellence to foster world-class collaboration in research and development activities and knowledge transfer across the renewable energy industry
  - Work with NLC and other organisations to understand how the Project can contribute to achieving energy security.
- Partner with lower scale projects delivering solar energy solutions, within the project footprint to support local-led opportunities.

Appendix 3.2. SIMP provides details on the Regional (Aboriginal) Legacy Strategy which aims to engage and partner with Aboriginal people and community groups to support their development goals and to contribute towards the protection and preservation of their cultural identity and values.



Appendix 3.2 SIMP also presents an overview of the TBP. Establishment of a TBP is the Project's major commitment to address local content risks. The TBP's primary focus is to provide full, fair, and reasonable opportunity for local industry involvement. The NT Government requires all proponents to develop a TBP to outline the contribution a major project can make to the NT and document the strategies to be used to increase local content.

### 3.8.9 Submission: Bobbly Flanagan

*Change the route of the proposed Sun Cable or to have it installed underground minimizing the impact to us as residents and the local flora and fauna. The consultation with the residents on this project has been nil, it was not until our local member brought this to our attention via social media that I was communicated about the proposal, as originally was still under the impression it was going to Middle Arm. I speak for myself and behalf on the residents when I say we are not against development in the NT or the project as a whole, however are strongly against the cable being installed above ground and request it be installed underground from when it leaves the Stuart Highway until it is out of any residential properties, including rural properties proximity.*

#### 3.8.9.1 Response

The Proponent is taking actions to reduce impacts associated with the cable in the rural areas and on flora and fauna. It has also conducted extensive community consultation and engagement, as presented below:

- Chapter 10 Amenity assesses the potential impacts to the amenity of Territorians because of visual impacts, air quality, noise and vibration, light spill and glint associated with the Project. Issues related to the impact of the cable on rural areas are also included in Chapter 3
- Chapter 5 Terrestrial Ecosystems presents the findings of the EIA process undertaken for the Terrestrial environmental quality factor. This chapter focuses on impacts to terrestrial (land-based) habitats – including vegetation and the terrestrial species that utilise these habitats. Further information on flora and fauna is available in Chapter 5.

In addition to Chapter 5, the SIMP Appendix 3.2 presents mitigation actions to reduce the impact on flora and fauna, as follows:

- Collaborate with relevant government, ranger and civil society groups on the rehabilitation and planting of degraded areas and biodiversity within the project footprint
- Develop and implement EMPs
- Strengthen community groups in areas such as land management, ranger groups and commercial services with landscaping, rehabilitation, ecological surveys, seed collection and ongoing environmental monitoring.

Appendix 3.1 Stakeholder Consultation Report documents how the Proponent has increased community knowledge about the Project. It also explores the key community perceptions, concerns and comments that have been raised by stakeholders during the Draft EIS and broader consultation campaign. The report outlines the engagement methods employed and provides an analysis of the key themes that have emerged across the Project's social areas of influence.

### 3.8.10 Submission: Michelle Nicholson

*There are many mango orchards which bring fruit bats & magpie geese & other critters to the area that enjoy the fruit. We currently experience regular power disruptions due to bat and bird impact on power lines. Bats hanging on these lines could cause major disruption to transmission.*

*Constant humming noise from the towers has potential to adversely affect wildlife let alone the humans living close by. The potential adverse effects on humans of high voltage EMFs also remain to be fully evaluated!*

### 3.8.10.1 Response

Chapter 10 Amenity assesses the potential impacts to the amenity of Territorians because of visual impacts, air quality, noise and vibration, light spill and glint associated with the Project. The chapter addresses concerns regarding power outages being caused by bats hanging from the OHTL and from collisions of bats and birds with the OHTL.

Chapter 10 also assesses the potential impacts of noise on humans and the environment associated with the Project. EMF is discussed in Chapter 14.

In addition to Chapter 10, Appendix 3.2 SIMP presents the Stakeholder Engagement Strategy to engage with community members and stakeholders and the communication approach to convey potential impacts associated with noise, light, heat, emissions, and other contaminants.

### 3.8.11 Submission: Matthew James Farmer

*The consultation with the residents on this project has been nil, with regard to other projects in the area such as the mango road upgrade, residents were personally visited and well communicated on the works, pamphlets and project information was attached to residents' properties and community briefings were held. I work away a fair bit, and have been isolated with COVID in QLD, it was not until our local member brought this to our attention via social media that I was communicated about the proposal, as originally was still under the impression it was going to Middle Arm. I speak for myself and behalf on the residents when I say we are not against development in the NT or the project as a whole, however are strongly against the cable being installed above ground and request it be installed underground from when it leaves the Stuart Highway until it is out of any residential properties, including rural properties proximity. Please arrange a meeting with residents and all stakeholders to discuss and derive an agreement.*

*Negative impact on property values due to the large above ground towers supporting the cable being an eye sore and taking the beauty of nature away from the properties in the Elizabeth Valley and other areas on the proposed route.*

#### 3.8.11.1 Response

Appendix 3.1. Stakeholder Consultation Report outlines all engagement activities that the Proponent has undertaken between February and October 2022. The information provided includes the number of stakeholders notified as well as the communication channels used during consultation.

Chapter 10 Amenity assesses the potential impacts to the amenity of Territorians due to visual impacts, air quality, noise and vibration, light spill and glint associated with the Project. The chapter presents measures pertaining to the OHTL being installed underground and OHTL visual amenity impacts. Chapter 10 also considers the potential impact of the Project on housing values.

Appendix 3.2 SIMP considers issues associated with property value. As depicted in the SIMP, the Proponent is collaborating with local authorities to mitigate emerging workforce housing risks.

### 3.8.12 Submission: various anonymous

A series of anonymous submissions from community members were received regarding the potential impacts to recreation, which are provided below:

*Impact on access to recreational fishers, and impact on fish populations in affected areas, including the popular Fenton Patches artificial reef area. Have AFANT been engaged for comment? Additionally, at least one stretch of the Alverly Road section of the Utilities corridor may impact land-based recreational fishers.*



*Fishing: The proponent states that: “The Subsea Cable System is expected to avoid high value fishing areas. Any disruption to recreational fishing is expected to be of a limited scale and duration. Sun Cable is doing further studies to understand whether its activities will impact on commercial fishing operations.” (p.14) It is recommended that any further discussions around the impact on fishing include fishing tourism operators. The appropriate representative body is the NT Guided Fishing Association (NTGFA).*

*Access/recreational use of Gunn Point Beach/Murрумужuk coastal area may be impacted, especially during construction, for recreational visitors including campers, and also residents of Tree Point Community (currently under consultation).*

*Impact on access to recreational fishers, and impact on fish populations in affected areas, including the popular Fenton Patches artificial reef area. Have AFANT been engaged for comment? Additionally, at least one stretch of the Alverly Road section of the Utilities corridor may impact land-based recreational fishers.*

### **3.8.12.1 Response**

The Proponent seeks to protect biodiversity in the project footprint.

Appendix 3.2 SIMP outlines ways to enhance potential positive impacts and to avoid, manage or mitigate the negative effects of the project footprint. It presents mitigations related to:

- Disruption to recreational fishing
- Recreational use of Gunn Point/Murрумужuk Coastal area.

Appendix 3.2 SIMP presents mitigations to reduce potential impacts on the Subsea Cable System in high value fishing areas and Gunn Point/Murрумужuk Coastal area. Action plans show that there is ongoing engagement with respective Councils, community groups, residents, and recreational users to communicate about temporary access restrictions, potential impacts on landscape and changed land use and intended rehabilitation of recreational areas.

Chapter 12 Land Use and Transport and the Chapter 9 Marine Ecosystems also address this issue in more detail.

### **3.8.13 Submission: Anonymous Submitter**

An anonymous community submission was received regarding the EIS consultation process, which is as follows:

*As a resident of Litchfield, on a property along the proposed Over Head Transmission Line (OHTL) corridor, I will firstly state that I have not been personally contacted by Sun Cable as an affected stakeholder. I am disappointed that many affected stakeholders have been contacted so late in the piece, or not at all. However, I will commend Sun Cable for the breadth and detail of their documentation, which has been an interesting and educational read. I do not doubt the efforts they have gone to, and the scope of works, especially in consultation with Traditional Land Owners. That being said, I have been informed that the Wulna Traditional Owners are opposed to this project variation.*

*There are 20 associated documents uploaded to the NT EPA website landing page for the project for the referral stage, and 54 Environmental Impact Study (EIS) documents for the assessment stage, and another 15 other documents, which are all extensive. I have not been able to read them all. It is unlikely that affected residents will have been able to do so either, with only one week's notice before closure of public comment.*

### 3.8.13.1 Response

Appendix 3.1 Stakeholder Consultation Report examines the key community perceptions, concerns and comments that have been raised by stakeholders during the Draft EIS and broader consultation campaign. The report presents findings from engagement with interested parties. In general, stakeholders seemed to have an understanding that solar energy is good for country and Custodians were welcoming of the engagement team.

Additional actions to further strengthen community engagement, are as follows:

- Continue to review and improve a Stakeholder Engagement Strategy
- Implement consultation forums, regular stakeholder briefings, meetings, and public information sessions, as appropriate
- Develop engagement materials for culturally diverse communities taking into consideration different levels of literacy and numeracy. Potential communications using First Nations languages and targeted channels
- Continue and increase communications and site visits with communities across the project footprint to provide stakeholder and community input to planning, risk mitigation and community benefit
- Utilise a customised Stakeholder Management System to manage and track interactions to better understand issues, enhance responsiveness and inform strategic decisions
- Develop a Community Investment Strategy that delivers enduring benefits to host communities
- Proactively engage with stakeholders and community in accordance with local policies
- Continue to work closely with NT and Australian government agencies during project planning and implementation
- Partner with local schools, community organisations and language centres to provide local communities with education, knowledge, and awareness of solar power
- Undertake industry and business briefings
- Develop a Grievance and Dispute Policy to ensure internal and external stakeholders have access to mechanisms to resolve escalated issues during the life of the Project. The policy will enable:
  - Acknowledgement, investigation and documentation of all complaints and grievances
  - Resolution through consensus
  - Advice to complainants of remedial action promptly and documented outcomes
- Develop a Local Workforce Strategy to further engage locals in project development.

### 3.8.14 Submission: Anonymous Submitter

The following anonymous submission was also received regarding stakeholder consultation:

*'The consultation with the residents on this project has been nil, with regard to other projects in the area such as the Mango Road upgrade, residents were personally visited and well communicated on the works, pamphlets and project information was attached to residents' properties and community briefings were held. I speak for myself and behalf on the residents when I say we are not against development in the NT or the project, however, are strongly against the cable being installed above ground and request it be installed underground from when it leaves the Stuart Highway until it is out of any residential properties, including rural properties proximity. 'Can we please arrange a meeting with residents and all stakeholders to discuss and derive an agreement'.*

### 3.8.14.1 Response

Appendix 3.1. Stakeholder Consultation Report outlines all engagement activities that the Proponent has undertaken between February and October 2022 to support the Draft EIS and the key engagement methods employed during the EIS and broader consultation campaign. The information provided includes the number of stakeholders notified as well as the communication channels used. The report also outlines community consultation with the Darwin rural area and provides an analysis of key themes that have emerged across the Project's social areas of influence.

Chapter 10 Amenity provides additional information on technical matters regarding the OHTL.

### 3.8.15 Submission: Brigid Robertson

*I object to overhead powerlines going past my property. If you must use Alverly Rd, put them underground. It will devalue my property and be an eyesore as well as noisy and potential health problems.*

#### 3.8.15.1 Response

Appendix 3.2 SIMP outlines ways to avoid, manage or mitigate the negative effects of the project footprint, such as property value. As per the SIMP, the Proponent will be collaborating with local authorities to consider and mitigate emerging workforce housing risks.

Chapter 10 assesses the potential impacts to the amenity of Territorians because of visual impacts, air quality, noise and vibration, light spill and glint associated with the Project. The chapter covers matters pertaining to the OHTL passing residents' property.

### 3.8.16 Submission: Sharon Scur

*Thank you for the opportunity to make a submission. Greater community consultation should be occurring in relation to this project.*

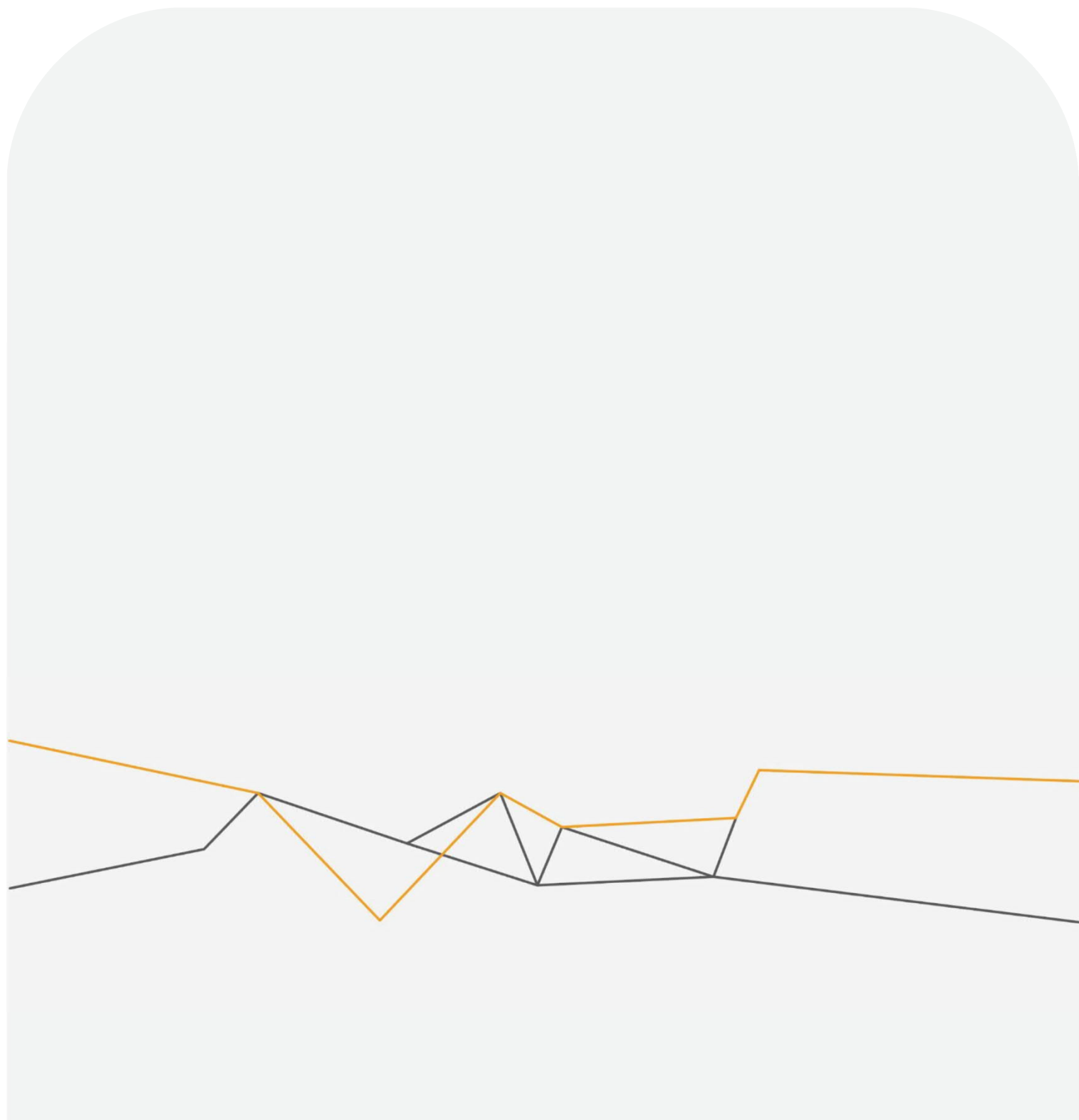
#### 3.8.16.1 Response

Appendix 3.1. Stakeholder Consultation Report outlines all engagement activities that the Proponent has undertaken between February and October 2022 to support the Draft EIS and the key engagement methods employed during the EIS and broader consultation campaign. The information provided includes the number of stakeholders notified as well as the communication channels used during consultation.

## 3.9 Conclusion

This chapter describes how the Proponent will meet the EPA's objective for stakeholder engagement of 'enhancing communities and the economy for the welfare, amenity, and benefit of current and future generations of Territorians' (NT EPA, 2021). It summarises the engagement that has occurred to date, discusses the SIMP and outlines Project commitments to address potential, revised impacts.

The chapter also provides an overview of the social areas of influence and legislative requirements of social impacts and stakeholder engagement. This was followed by an outline and revision of the SIA process. Such revision, resulted in a refined version of the SIMP with a thematic structure that interconnects actions and mitigation measures - connecting with people and culture, protecting and nurturing country and values and delivering enduring benefit. The chapter concludes with responses to community and economy aspects of the NT EPA's Direction and formal submissions raised by stakeholders during the public exhibition period. The Proponent will continue to consult with key stakeholders and communities and refine action plans to have a positive social impact in the NT.



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