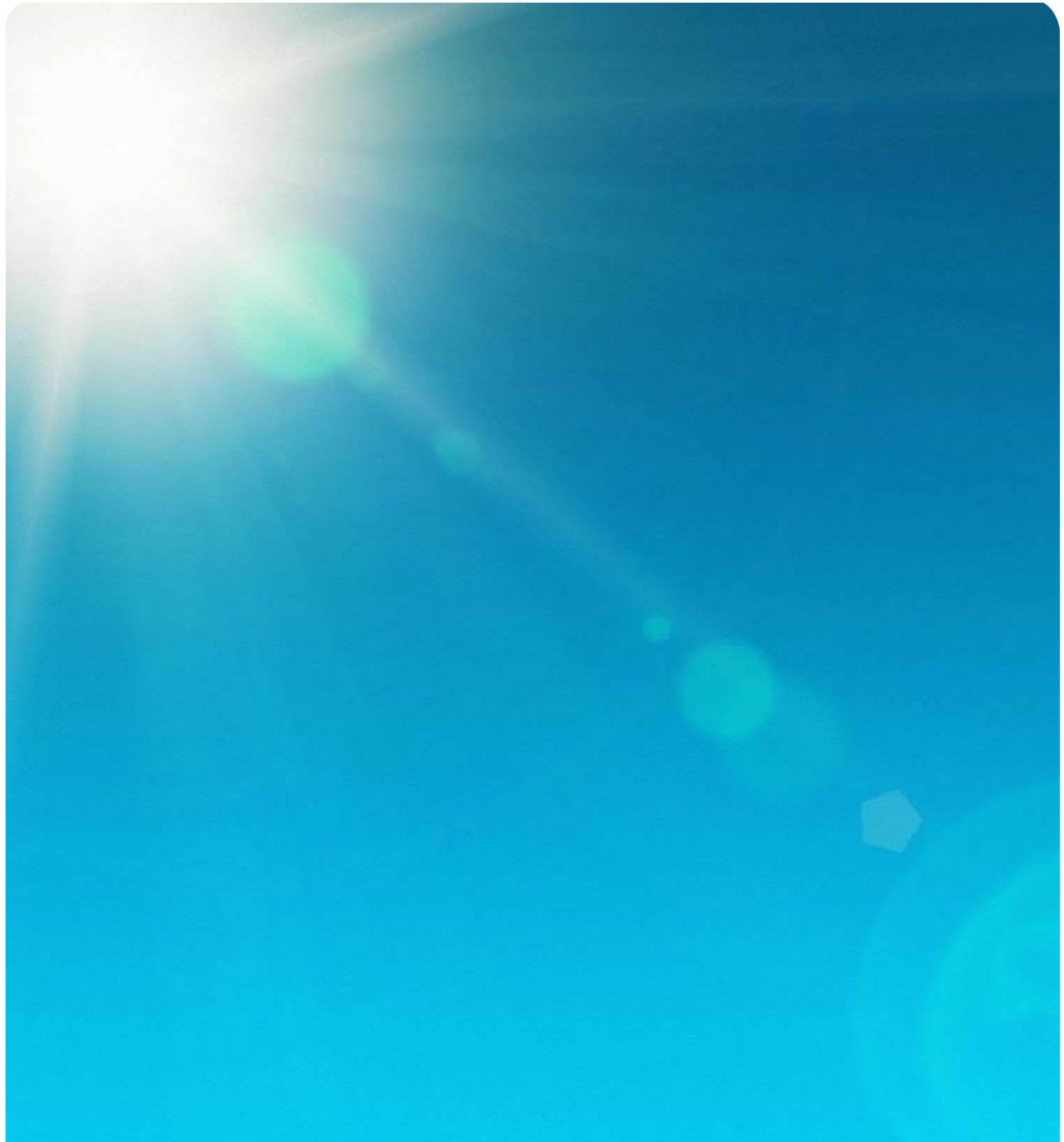


March 2022

Appendix F – Stakeholder Consultation Report

Australia-Asia PowerLink Environmental Impact Statement



Sun Cable Australia-Asia PowerLink (AAPowerLink) Consultation Report

Prepared by True North Strategic Communication
2022

Version No.	Issue Date	Prepared by:	Approved by:	Approval Date
V1	15 Dec 2021	Jane Munday	Claire Butler	15 Dec 2021
V2	24 Dec 21	Jane Munday	Elena Madden	9 January 2022
V3	31 January 2022	Jane Munday	Elena Madden	31 January 2022
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Recipients are responsible for eliminating all superseded documents in their possession

Consultation statement

True North Strategic Communication is guided by the principles of good community engagement, based on people's level of interest and concern as outlined by the International Association for Public Participation (IAP2).

Our role is to provide stakeholders and the general public with objective information so they can provide informed feedback on consultation projects. We give people the opportunity to provide input that is balanced and reflective of the range of community views to independently provide the best possible guidance to decision makers.

Our practice reflects professional standards and ethical standards for human research including anonymity, confidentiality, record storage and keeping people informed.

Table of Contents

Table of Contents	2
Abbreviations and terminology	3
Executive Summary	4
1 Standards and statutory framework	8
2 Stakeholder engagement	9
2.1 Methodology	10
2.1.1 Constraints.....	10
2.1.2 Objectives	10
2.1.3 Methods	16
2.1.4 Materials.....	17
2.1.5 Consultation with Aboriginal people	18
2.1.6 Ongoing engagement	19
2.1.7 Timelines for consultation	20
3 Key findings	21
3.1 Feedback	21
4 Recommendations and gap analysis	54
5 Conclusion	55
Attachments: Materials used during consultation	56

Abbreviations and terminology

AAPA	Aboriginal Areas Protection Authority
AAPowerLink	Australia-Asia PowerLink
AFANT	Amateur Fishermen’s Association of the NT
DCA	Development Consent Authority
CDP	Community Development Program
DCMC	Department of the Chief Minister and Cabinet
DHAC	Darwin Harbour Advisory Committee
DIPL	Department of Infrastructure, Planning and Logistics
DITT	Department of Industry, Tourism and Trade
ECNT	Environment Centre of the Northern Territory
EIS	Environmental Impact Statement
HMP	Heritage Management Plan
IAIA	International Association for Impact Assessment
IAP2	International Association for Public Participation
ICN	Industry Capability Network
JCAC	Julalikari Council Aboriginal Corporation
LDC	Larrakia Development Corporation
LDC	Land Development Corporation
LNAC	Larrakia Nation Aboriginal Corporation
MBANT	Master Builders Association of the Northern Territory
NAILSMA	North Australian Indigenous Land and Seas Management Alliance
NLC	Northern Land Council
NT	Northern Territory
NTEPA	Northern Territory Environment Protection Authority
NTG	Northern Territory Government
Plan	Planning Action Network
SIA	Social Impact Assessment
SIMP	Social Impact Management Plan
TIA	Traffic Impact Assessment
TAFE	Technical and Further Education
ToR	Terms of Reference (issued by the NTEPA)
VET	Vocational Education and Training

Executive Summary

True North was engaged by Sun Cable in mid-2020 to provide support to the company's proposed communication and community engagement for the Northern Territory component of the Australia-Asia PowerLink (AAPowerLink) Project. True North was engaged separately by Sun Cable in late 2020 to coordinate consultation for the project's Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) and to prepare a Social Impact Assessment (SIA).

True North prepared a stakeholder engagement and communication strategy in March 2021, outlining key stakeholders likely to be impacted, interested or influential during project planning and delivery. A scoping study for the SIA identified likely key issues and positive and negative impacts from the project, which in turn informed stakeholder consultation priorities and methods.

The objectives of stakeholder consultation for the EIS were to:

- provide all community and other stakeholders with timely, accurate and relevant information
- tailor consultation methods and communication materials to the needs of diverse stakeholders, including culturally-appropriate consultation for Aboriginal stakeholders
- inform scoping and project planning through the life cycle of the project
- provide Sun Cable and regulators with confidence that the community's attitudes, beliefs, values and concerns are well-understood
- inform balanced decision-making by giving equal weight to community knowledge and technical studies
- provide feedback to stakeholders on how their input influenced regulatory and project decisions.

The Northern Land Council (NLC) has a statutory role to represent the interests of Native Title Holders and Traditional Owners. This includes identifying rights holders, obtaining input to agreement-making and ensuring affected peoples provide free, prior and informed consent to activities on their traditional lands and seas.

In scheduling consultation, priority was given to directly affected stakeholders, in particular Native Title Holders for the site of the proposed Solar Precinct on Powell Creek Station. Initial NLC meetings scheduled for late 2020 were delayed until March 2021, at the family's request, due to the death of a respected Traditional Owner. The NLC organised meetings for Powell Creek Native Title Holders and neighbouring estate groups in Tennant Creek, Elliott and Katherine. While in Tennant Creek, Sun Cable CEO David Griffin addressed a meeting of business and community leaders.

Consultation was then further delayed, both by COVID-19 travel restrictions and planning for a significant variation to the project, accepted by the NTEPA in August 2021. The relocation of a substantial part of the project from Middle Arm to Gunn Point Peninsula required revised stakeholder mapping and an expanded project footprint. Consultation materials were amended to cover Sun Cable's proposed use of a utilities corridor in the rural area and a converter station and land-sea connection at Murrumujuk, near Gunn Point Beach.

Sun Cable staff met with key stakeholders affected by these project changes before the Notice of Significant Variation was lodged with the Northern Territory Environment Protection Authority NTEPA.

The variation went on public exhibition in August 2021. Final Terms of Reference were published by the NTEPA in November 2021.

Sun Cable achieved substantial key milestones in September and October of 2021, including agreements with the Singapore and Indonesian Governments and the appointment of its Integrated Project Delivery Team. During this period, Sun Cable and True North staff, along with Mark Stoyles Consulting, embarked on an intensive round of EIS-focussed consultation. Starting in October 2021, fieldwork included public information sessions in Darwin, Tennant Creek, Katherine, Elliott and Marlinja, as well as meetings and dedicated interviews.

Additional consultation by Sun Cable and environmental consultancy EcOz in 2021, included discussions with pastoralists and Northern Territory Government staff as part of project planning, technical studies and preparing a Territory Benefit Plan. Sun Cable briefed industry groups such as the NT Chamber of Commerce, Manufacturing Council and Energy Club.

Dedicated consultation by Mark Stoyles Consulting included key informant interviews with many training and employment providers for a workforce development plan.

Dedicated consultation with Traditional Owners and Native Title Holders included:

- an estimated 33 days in the field with paid cultural monitors for ecological surveys and the cultural heritage surveys on Powell Creek, Gunn Point and the Litchfield utilities corridor
- Sun Cable meetings with the Northern Land Council (NLC), Central Land Council (CLC), Tiwi Land Council (TLC), Larrakia representative bodies and individuals and families with ties to affected areas
- dedicated meetings by the Northern Land Council (NLC) to inform Indigenous Land Use Agreement (ILUA) negotiations
- a site visit for Traditional Owners organised by the NLC and Sun Cable in April 2021 to discuss the final location and boundaries of the Solar Precinct footprint
- a briefing of the Mantiyupwi Clan Estate in Darwin and on the Tiwi Islands to discuss Tiwi cultural connections to the Gunn Point Peninsula and the subsea cable route
- lodgement of the AAPowerLink Project Authority Certificates with the Aboriginal Areas Protection Authority (AAPA) after extensive consultation and review (additional sacred sites clearances will be conducted by the NLC to satisfy ILUA requirements)
- site visits with family groups to view a Technology Research Station on Powell Creek Station, including work being done by local companies (this work was approved separately and is not covered by the EIS).

Sun Cable is planning a number of strategic initiatives to manage the social and economic impacts of the Project. These include:

- A Regional (Aboriginal) Legacy Strategy to outline how the Project will deliver lasting, intergenerational benefits throughout the life of the Project
- A Territory Benefit Plan and specific communication strategy, including non-statutory community and strategic investments.

Continued stakeholder engagement includes:

- consultation by the NLC with Native Title Holders as part of negotiation for several ILUAs
- discussions with AAPA, NLC and Aboriginal custodians about the Authority Certificate process
- working with the NLC on consultation along the proposed corridor
- Sun Cable consultation with other stakeholders along the railway corridor
- Sun Cable is working towards a voluntary engagement agreement with key Larrakia organisations to maximise benefits in the Darwin region
- presentations to a range of local government, community and business groups, including regional industry forums, such as in the Katherine and Big Rivers region
- working with existing governance structures, such as the Barkly Regional Deal and community planning in Elliott
- identifying relevant events Sun Cable can attend or present to in 2022, including the Katherine and Barkly Major Projects Conference (May 2022)
- key agency briefings and public consultation associated with the draft EIS lodgement and subsequent supplementary process.

Key issues raised

This consultation report outlines the key issues raised during research for the EIS and SIA, while also drawing on Sun Cable records of its meetings. Some of the most frequently raised issues were:

- expectations of jobs, training and local and regional business participation
- the challenges of skills shortages throughout the Northern Territory as a major constraint to business
- opportunities and barriers to Aboriginal participation and how barriers might be addressed
- housing shortages in the public and commercial markets, which act as severe constraints on addressing disadvantage and growing regional populations
- community expectations that Sun Cable will contribute to energy security, in particular for towns and communities in the project's footprint (the technical and financial barriers to this were explained)
- general support for renewable energy as an emerging economic sector and for its potential to attract new industrial development to Darwin, while decarbonising existing industry and domestic networks
- opportunities for research and development in the Territory to build regional and industry expertise in renewable energy and intercontinental grid transmission systems
- challenges with industry participation on legacy projects, and expectations of benefits for the Territory and the regions
- cumulative impacts, with a number of major projects progressing in the Barkly and Katherine/Big Rivers regions on similar timelines
- community perspectives on how Sun Cable's AAPowerLink Project might leave a multi-generational legacy in the regions in which it operates
- concerns about land-clearing.

True North Strategic Communication's engagement was guided by the Northern Territory Environment Protection Authority's (NT EPA) guidance for proponents on stakeholder engagement (2021) and by

the core values and quality assurance standards of the International Association for Public Participation (IAP2).

The consultation report includes a gap analysis to guide ongoing engagement by Sun Cable. Recommendations from this analysis are covered in the Social Impact Management Plan (see Attachment 3).

This consultation report will inform:

- qualitative data analysis for the SIA and Stage One of a workforce development plan
- the impact assessment process by the Northern Territory Government
- ongoing engagement and social performance by Sun Cable, including preparation of the Territory Benefit Plan.

1 Standards and statutory framework

The primary standards guiding consultation and social research for the Australia-Asia PowerLink (AAPowerLink) Project are:

- *Stakeholder Engagement and Consultation: Environmental impact assessment guidance for proponents* (NTEPA 2021). The guideline adopts as best practice the IAP2 principles for stakeholder engagement. It outlines expected formal feedback processes for projects on public exhibition and encourages proactive approaches to early engagement during preparation of environmental impact statements, starting at the scoping phase. The guideline defines engagement as including ‘communication, dialogue, listening and responding’ (see Section 2 for more detail).
- International Association for Impact Assessment (IAIA), *Social Impact Assessment Principles* (Vanclay, 2003) and *Guidance* (Vanclay et al. 2015), which are regarded as leading practice for social impact assessment and public participation.
- International Association for Public Participation (IAP2) *Core Values, Spectrum of Participation and Quality Assurance Standard* (2015) which are regarded as industry best practice for public participation (or community and stakeholder engagement) (see www.iap2.org.au).

2 Stakeholder engagement

A requirement to consult was a key aspect of the Statement of Reasons and Terms of Reference issued by the NTEPA in January 2021.

The objects of the Northern Territory *Environment Protection Act 2019* (sections 3(d) and 3(e)) expressively:

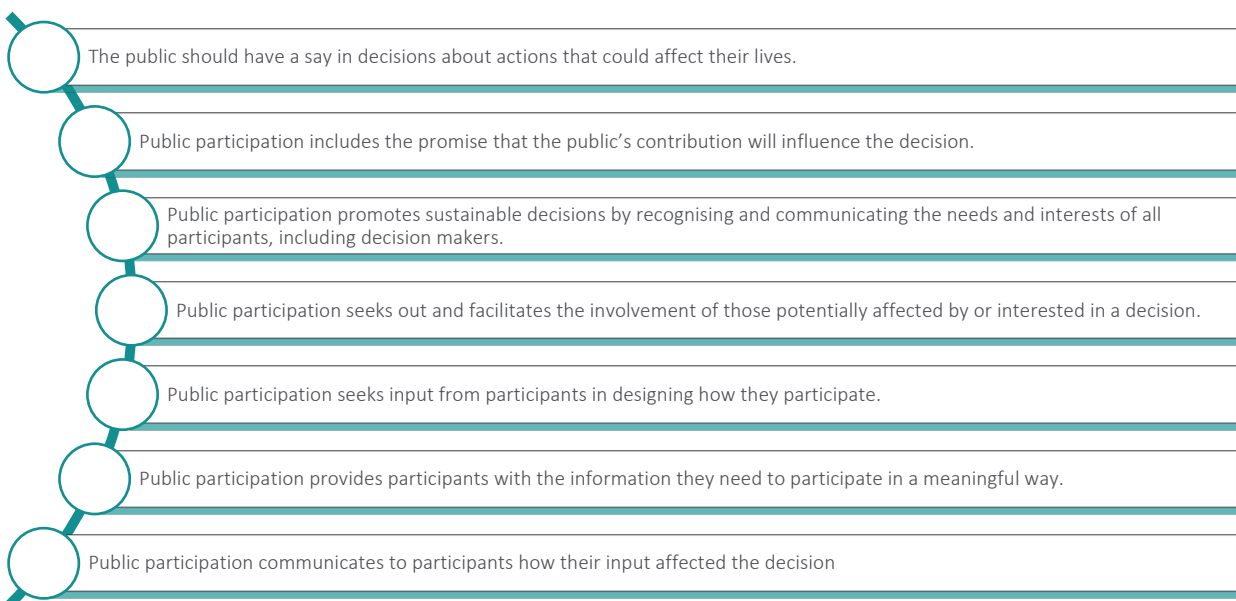
- provide for “broad community involvement during the process of environmental impact assessment and environmental approval;
- recognise “the role that Aboriginal people have as stewards of their country as conferred under their traditions and recognised in law, and the importance of participation by Aboriginal people and communities in environmental decision making process”.

The Northern Territory EPA’s *Stakeholder Engagement and Consultation Guidance for Proponents* (updated January 2021) recognises that stakeholder consultation is an important component of social, cultural and health impact assessments, over and above formal opportunities for feedback on documents placed on public exhibition.

The guidance note stipulates that a purpose of impact assessment in the Northern Territory is to involve the community in planning for projects. This requires a proactive approach to early stakeholder engagement, in order to identify and address issues “before key decisions are made and when alternatives are still an option” (p.8).

“The NTEPA considers that both proponents and the community benefit from respectful decisions, deeper dialogue, and collaborative decisions that result from ongoing stakeholder engagement rather than being limited to specific consultation activities.”

The guidance note recommends that proponents adopt the International Association for Public Participation (IAP2) core values as principles for best practice stakeholder engagement. These core values are shown in Fig 2-1 below.



IAP2 Core values

2.1 Methodology

Sun Cable engaged True North in mid-2020 to prepare an engagement and communication strategy for the proposed AAPowerLink Project. The strategy included compiling background information on key communities along the route of the project. In late 2020, Sun Cable engaged True North to coordinate community consultation and a social impact assessment (SIA) for the project's Environmental Impact Statement (EIS), including the first stages of a workforce development strategy.

True North prepared a consultation strategy and scoping report for the EIS in March 2021 that identified likely key issues, a methodology for our proposed research, key stakeholders and consultation objectives.

Stakeholder mapping identified key interested, impacted or influential stakeholders. The engagement strategy suggested engagement approaches commensurate with stakeholders' predicted level of interest, influence or sensitivity to impacts. It outlined key messages, consultation materials, an internal question and answer sheet and a topic guide for interviews.

Consequently, engagement was at the IAP2 levels of:

- **inform:** proactive communication about the Project to ensure interested and impacted stakeholders were aware of the Project, the regulatory processes and how they could seek briefings and provide feedback
- **consult:** we proactively contacted those stakeholders we felt most likely to have an interest in the Project to seek their insights and perspectives
- **culturally appropriate participation:** for traditional owners, more participatory methods were used, such as visits to country and involvement in cultural heritage and ecological surveys.

2.1.1 Constraints

Major constraints had to be navigated in implementing the consultation program for the EIS, namely:

- the COVID-19 pandemic, which made it difficult for interstate team members to travel to the Northern Territory and interrupted regional consultation;
- substantial delays in NLC-organised meetings, including a delay of several months due to 'sorry business' after the death of a senior Traditional Owner;
- a further delay of several months after the Northern Territory Government suggested Sun Cable relocate much of the Project from Middle Arm to Murrumujuk to avoid congestion with other projects proposed for Middle Arm.

However, Sun Cable now has a substantial engagement and Indigenous Affairs team in its Darwin office and is implementing a comprehensive program of ongoing engagement.

2.1.2 Objectives

Early and meaningful engagement is an authentic process of involving people in solutions and decisions, listening to understand their perspectives, providing an honest account of their input and taking seriously the lived experience of communities (Munday 2020). The objectives of consultation for the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) and Social Impact Assessment (SIA) of the Project were to:

- provide all community and other stakeholders with timely, accurate and relevant information
- tailor consultation methods and communication materials to the needs of diverse stakeholders, including culturally-appropriate consultation for Aboriginal stakeholders
- inform scoping and project planning through the life cycle of the project
- provide Sun Cable and regulators with confidence that the community’s attitudes, beliefs, values and concerns are well-understood
- inform balanced decision-making by giving equal weight to community knowledge and technical studies
- provide feedback to stakeholders on how their input influenced regulatory and project decisions.

The key stakeholder groups consulted to date are described below (consultation is ongoing).



- **Native Title Holders and neighbouring estate groups of the Powell Creek project site**
Meetings attended by True North include:
 - o Formal Native Title Holder meetings in Tennant Creek, Elliott and Katherine in March 2021
- **Residents living in communities near the project footprint**

- Community meetings and public information displays in the Greater Darwin Area (x5), Katherine (x2), Tennant Creek (x2) Elliott (x2) and Marlinja (x1) publicised with newspaper advertisements, flyers and direct mail.

- **Aboriginal organisations**

Engagement with traditional owners for cultural heritage surveys is reported on separately in the Heritage Impact Assessment at Appendix 8. Statutory consultation for agreement-making is covered by Northern Land Council coordinated meetings. Sun Cable has met with and provided project briefings to many Aboriginal groups and is preparing a Regional (Aboriginal) Legacy Strategy. Meetings held for the EIS and SIA included:

- Northern Land Council
- Central Land Council
- Tiwi Land Council (Chairman and staff)
- The Mantiyupwi Association and clan estate on the Tiwi Islands
- Larrakia Development Corporation
- Larrakia Nation Aboriginal Corporation
- Ironbark Aboriginal Corporation
- Julalikari Council Aboriginal Corporation
- Anyinginyi Aboriginal Corporation
- Papulu Apparr-Kari Aboriginal Corporation (Language Centre)
- Community meetings in Tennant Creek, Elliott and Marlinja to ensure consultation reached all interested residents
- Warumungu Patta Group (Traditional Owners of Tennant Creek)
- Karguru (Julalikari) seed bank and nursery
- NAILSMA (North Australian Indigenous Land and Seas Management Alliance)
- Chris Neade (NLC Executive Council, Elliott Local Authority, proposed Kulumindini Aboriginal Corporation)
- Rick Fletcher, formerly Regional Manager, NLC Katherine
- Durduga Tree Point Aboriginal Association
- First Nations Clean Energy Network
- NT Indigenous Business Network (NTIBN – planned for February)
- Some individual family groups in Darwin and the Barkly.

Environmental, renewable energy and community groups

- Environment Centre of the NT (ECNT)
- Arid Lands Environment Centre
- Desert Knowledge Australia
- Charles Darwin University
- Ekistica
- Planning Action Network (PLan)
- Original Power
- Darwin Harbour Advisory Committee (DHAC)
- Bart Irwin, NT Field and Game Association

- Sun Cable staff attended the inaugural First Nations Clean Energy Forum in Alice Springs in November and plan to meet with the Alice Springs Future Grid Committee in 2022.

The Amateur Fishermen’s Association of the NT (AFANT) was contacted and sent material.

Local Government

- Tennant Creek Mayor, Deputy Mayor and CEO
- Litchfield Mayors (before and after municipal elections) and CEO
- Elliott: Ray Hocking (Regional Manager) and Bob Bagnall (Chair of Elliott Local Authority)
- City of Darwin staff and elected members.

Several other councils were contacted and offered briefings, however the consultation period followed shortly after municipal elections and some meetings have been deferred until 2022, including Litchfield.

- Government departments

Sun Cable has regular liaison with a Project Control Group (PCG) in Darwin, which was established to facilitate development of the AAPowerLink. Membership consists of key Sun Cable personnel and NTG agencies that administer the various legislation relevant to the Project. Sun Cable also briefed many government agencies in 2021 regarding the Notice of Significant Variation.

Sun Cable and True North have met with key government departments in Darwin, Tennant Creek and Katherine, including:

- Government Coordination Group (Barkly)
- Barkly Regional Deal Backbone Team in Tennant Creek
- Department of the Chief Minister
- NT Department of Industry Tourism and Trade
- NT Department of Infrastructure, Planning and Logistics
- NT Department of Education
- NT Department of Families, Housing and Communities
- National Indigenous Australians Agency (NIAA)
- Northern Territory Police (Tennant Creek and Elliott)
- Member for Barkly Steve Edgington and Advisor Ronald Plummer
- Department of Industry, Tourism and Trade (Katherine)
- Department of the Chief Minister (Katherine)

In addition, Sun Cable has met with the following:

- Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet
- Department of Industry, Science, Energy and Resources
- Department of Agriculture, Water and Environment (DAWE)
- Parks Australia

- Commonwealth Department of Defence
- Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade
- Services Australia
- Charles Darwin University
- Member for Nelson, Gerard Maley
- Aboriginal Areas Protection Authority (AAPA)
- Office of the Chief Minister (Alice Springs)
- Major Projects Group
- NT Department of Infrastructure, Planning and Logistics (DIPL)
- NT Department of Environment, Parks and Water Security (DEPWS)
- NT Department of Attorney-General and Justice (DAGJ)
- Conservation Land Corporation
- NT Land Corporation
- Land Development Corporation
- AustralAsia Railway Corporation (AARC)
- AusIndustry
- NT Heritage Branch
- NT Department of Families, Housing and Communities
- NT Department of Corporate and Digital Development
- NT Utilities Commission
- Territory Generation
- Power and Water Corporation
- Top End Health Service
- Sun Cable staff took part in the NIAA Minister Wyatt's National Roadmap for Indigenous Skills, Jobs and Wealth Creation Energy Roundtable discussion in September 2021.

- **Industry and tourism bodies**

Sun Cable has presented to several industry bodies over the past year including members of the Energy Club (twice) and Northern Territory Chamber of Commerce. An update was provided to the Alice Springs Chamber of Commerce Executive Committee. Sun Cable regularly meets with the Industry Capability Network (ICN) NT and has met with the NT Hydrogen Cluster, Manufacturing Council and the Advanced Manufacturing Growth Centre NT.

As part of its development activities, Sun Cable continues to meet with groups such as Darwin Port, the AustralAsia Railway Corporation and transport and logistics companies. Sun Cable also meets regularly with other major projects and operators including Sea Farms, Santos, INPEX, Origin, Empire Energy, Desert Bloom, Top End Energy and other proponents in the Darwin and Barkly regions.

Dedicated SIA interviews by True North have included:

- the Northern Territory Chamber of Commerce
- Master Builders' Association of the NT

- Extractive Industries Association of the NT
- ICN NT (Industry Capability Network)
- Real Estate Institute of the Northern Territory (REINT)
- Battery Hill Mining Centre/Tourism Information Centre

- **Individual businesses**

Many individual businesses attended industry group briefings and two briefings in Tennant Creek. SIA interviews were conducted with several businesses in Tennant Creek, Renner Springs and Katherine. Other businesses attended public information sessions and provided capability statements. A proposed business briefing in Katherine was deferred until 2022 on advice from Northern Territory Government and the Katherine Resource Services Association and is likely to take place in early 2022. Some businesses have been working with Sun Cable on its test sites in the Barkly, including PPP Contracting from Elliott and T&J Electrical from Tennant Creek.

Training and employment providers

Mark Stoyles spoke to training and employment providers in Darwin, Katherine, Tennant Creek and Alice Springs while preparing Stage One of a workforce development strategy. These include:

- Charles Darwin University, Alice Springs, Darwin and Katherine
- MAX Employment
- Juno Centre
- Palmerston Youth Skills Centre
- Saltbush Vocational Training and Employment Centre (VTEC)
- Saltbush Social Enterprises
- Salvation Army JobActive
- WISE Employment
- Department of Industry Tourism and Trade
- National Indigenous Australians Agency
- Kalano Community Association
- RISE Ventures
- Katherine High School
- NT Education Registered Training Organisation
- Northern Territory Chamber of Commerce, Katherine and Darwin
- Industry Skills Advisory Council of the NT

Consultation included a briefing of the Barkly Regional Deal workforce development group in Tennant Creek. Additional SIA interviews included:

- Saltbush Social Enterprises (Tennant Creek and Alice Springs)
- RN Employment Services (Elliott)
- Maisie Floyd, Department of Education in Tennant Creek
- Andrew Oliver, Juno Centre in Tennant Creek
- Peter Oxford, Group Training NT in Tennant Creek

- Debbie Paylor, Industry Skills Advisory Council of the NT
- Kevin Gaskin, Elliott School Principal
- Remote School Attendance Team in Elliott

- **Pastoral properties**

James Beale of Consolidated Pastoral was interviewed for the SIA. Other pastoralists have been consulted by Sun Cable and will be part of dedicated consultation for the railway corridor.

- **General public**

A much larger group was kept informed of project developments by maintaining a project database and emailing updates and fact sheets at key project milestones. A stakeholder register, maintained in conjunction with Sun Cable, was used to keep track of key issues raised, queries and follow up actions. The database will be updated throughout development of the Project to ensure timely communication of updates. Several hundred subscribers have also opted in for updates via the Sun Cable website.

2.1.3 Methods



Methods used to provide information and seek feedback included:

- briefings and meetings with key stakeholders, community and industry groups to outline the project, respond to questions and listen to feedback, including Government Coordination meetings, Barkly Regional Deal workforce development committee (generally attended by both Sun Cable and True North)
- workshops with Northern Territory Government departments (Sun Cable)
- Sun Cable has worked with the NT Industry Capability Network (ICN) to provide information on the ICN Project Gateway site on the AAPowerLink Project and separate ancillary projects (a proposed manufacturing facility at East Arm and battery on East Arm)
- key informant interviews with specific stakeholders to elicit insights, local and specialist knowledge (generally True North and Mark Stoyles Consulting)
- interviews to inform development of the workforce development strategy and skills audit (Mark Stoyles Consulting)
- public information sessions, primarily designed to reach stakeholders who may have been unaware of the project (12 sessions between 22 September and 4 November at shopping

centres and public places in the Greater Darwin Region, Katherine, Tennant Creek, Elliott and Marlinja which were advertised in local media, by email and the distribution of community posters)

- industry briefings (NT Chamber of Commerce, Manufacturers’ Council and Energy Club)
- attendance at conferences, such as the First Nations Clean Energy Conference in Alice Springs in November 2021.

The consultation strategy envisaged briefings of all local governments along the route. However, local government elections were held in August 2021 and the Elliott Local Authority disbanded. Therefore, offers to brief councils and the Elliott Local Authority have been mostly postponed until early 2022. The City of Darwin was briefed in November. The Mayors (before and after the municipal elections) and CEO of Litchfield Council were briefed twice. Barkly Regional Council’s CEO, Mayor and Deputy Mayor and members of Elliott’s disbanded Local Authority were briefed in October and November.

Wider briefings with businesses and renewable energy stakeholders were proposed for all regional locations in October and November. However, this clashed with COVID-19 travel restrictions for senior Sun Cable staff, several conferences in Darwin and Alice Springs and a busy consultation period on other policies and projects. The briefings will be scheduled progressively in 2022 as design and procurement planning progresses.

Other challenges were experienced with key people being unavailable to meet, the short notice of some meetings, the importance of respecting the role of the Northern Land Council in identifying and coordinating meetings with Native Title Holders, COVID-19 travel restrictions and reliance at times on third parties to communicate information on meetings.

2.1.4 Materials



Consultation was supported by a fact sheet, presentation materials, maps, visual diagrams and frequently asked questions to ensure consistent messaging by all staff. Fact sheets and media releases were added to Sun Cable’s website at www.suncable.sg.

This material was revised in September 2021 in response to significant project changes. Tools and tactics included:

- a stakeholder database to keep all stakeholders informed of project developments, including media releases, information on the EIS variation and how to provide feedback
- a revised fact sheet available in hard copy, emailed to the stakeholder database and placed on Sun Cable’s website (see attachment)

- PowerPoint presentations tailored to the needs of different stakeholders, including plain English and more visual presentations for Aboriginal audiences
- laminated maps and renders of the proposed power poles for public displays
- banners including graphics of the project, overhead cables and subsea cabling laying
- flyers to promote public displays distributed electronically, by hard copy, on social media and as newspaper advertisements (see attached examples)
- a poster with more visual explanations of the project.

A feedback form, including privacy notice, was made available at community information sessions, inviting people to provide feedback or opt in to the stakeholder database to be kept informed but people preferred to comment verbally.

True North took detailed notes of meetings, which are incorporated in the matrix in Section 3. All direct quotes have been checked with stakeholders before being made public. Some asked that their comments be included anonymously.

2.1.5 Consultation with Aboriginal people



Sun Cable recognises the importance of proactive, respectful and inclusive consultation with Aboriginal people connected to the land and seas on which the Project will operate. The company has prioritised NLC-organised meetings with Native Title Holders and neighbouring estate groups ahead of public consultation. Dedicated consultation with Traditional Owners and Native Title Holders included:

- an estimated 33 days in the field with paid cultural monitors for ecological surveys and the cultural heritage surveys on Powell Creek, Gunn Point and the Litchfield utilities corridor
- Sun Cable meetings with the Northern Land Council (NLC), Central Land Council (CLC), Tiwi Land Council (TLC), Larrakia representative bodies and individuals and families with ties to affected areas
- dedicated meetings by the Northern Land Council (NLC) to inform Indigenous Land Use Agreement (ILUA) negotiations
- a site visit for Traditional Owners organised by the NLC and Sun Cable in April 2021 to discuss the final location and boundaries of the Solar Precinct footprint

- a briefing of the Mantiyupwi Clan Estate in Darwin and on the Tiwi Islands to discuss Tiwi cultural connections to the Gunn Point Peninsula and the subsea cable route
- lodgement of the AAPowerLink Project Authority Certificates with the Aboriginal Areas Protection Authority (AAPA) after extensive consultation and review (additional sacred sites clearances will be conducted by the NLC to satisfy ILUA requirements)
- site visits with family groups to view a Technology Research Station on Powell Creek Station, including work being done by local companies (this work was approved separately and is not covered by the EIS)
- ongoing meetings by Sun Cable’s Aboriginal Affairs team with families and individuals.

2.1.6 Ongoing engagement

Sun Cable is planning a number of strategic initiatives to manage the social and economic impacts of the Project. These include:

- A Regional (Aboriginal) Legacy Strategy to outline how the Project will deliver lasting, intergenerational benefits throughout the life of the Project
- A Territory Benefit Plan and specific communication strategy, including non-statutory community and strategic investments.

Sun Cable’s engagement strategy will ensure ongoing communication with key regions and stakeholders involved in or affected by development of the Project, in line with the Social Impact Management Plan (SIMP) (see Attachment B).

- continued consultation by the NLC with Native Title Holders as part of ILUA negotiations
- discussions with AAPA, NLC and Aboriginal custodians about the Authority Certificate process
- working with the NLC on consultation along the proposed corridor
- Sun Cable consultation with other stakeholders along the railway corridor
- Sun Cable is working towards a voluntary engagement agreement with key Larrakia organisations to maximise benefits in the Darwin region
- transparent communication with businesses and industry groups, including briefings and presentations
- working with existing governance structures, such as the Barkly Regional Deal and community planning in Elliott
- identifying relevant events Sun Cable can attend or present to in 2022, including the Katherine and Barkly Major Projects Conference (May 2022)
- key agency briefings and public consultation associated with the draft EIS lodgement and subsequent supplementary process
- identifying regional events and community forums
- liaising with expert and community groups on key issues throughout the project life cycle, such as workforce development, rehabilitation and decommissioning
- distribution of project information, such as updates, media releases and the Project’s website
- maintaining a database of stakeholder engagement, questions asked and responses
- maintaining a Sun Cable community issues register

- incorporating feedback into decision-making to ensure timely feedback and responses and identification of emerging issues.

2.1.7 Timelines for consultation

Relevant statutory timelines:

October 2020	Sun Cable referral: NTEPA decision to accept Sun Cable’s proponent-initiated referral at the level of an Environmental Impact Assessment, Statement of Reasons and Draft Terms of Reference placed on public exhibition until 27 November 2020, with 12 submissions received.
January 2021	Final Terms of Reference published by the NTEPA outlining what studies must cover.
August 2021	Notice of Significant variation: NTEPA decision to accept significant variation of the proposal.
September 2021	Public comments on the revised Draft Terms of Reference closed on 13 September, with 8 submissions received.
November 2021	Final Terms of Reference published.
March 2022	EIS due to be lodged , with a further statutory period for public review and feedback.

Once the EIS is lodged, it will be accompanied by a plain English fact sheet providing a summary of study findings, with a focus on issues raised during consultation.

3 Key findings

3.1 Feedback

The following is a summary of issues raised and comments made by targeted stakeholders during interviews.



Issues raised during consultation extended from direct feedback about Sun Cable’s proposed activities to complaints about many existing systemic issues affecting people’s daily lives:

- comments that the project will generate wealth for its owners and energy for Singapore, but people expect to see social and economic benefits for those in the project footprint which is occupied by some of Australia’s most disadvantaged people
- expectations that Sun Cable’s approach to community benefits would include energy solutions for communities, homelands and businesses in the Northern Territory – maybe in the shape of pilot projects – rather than exporting all the benefits of the project (Sun Cable explained the technical and financial constraints – see SIA for discussion of this issue)
- many stakeholders contrasted the many jobs available with the project, with high unemployment levels and poverty in the Barkly
- however, equally strong concerns were expressed regarding crippling skills shortages across all sectors and challenges in recruiting and retaining Aboriginal workers
- while the Northern Territory Government sees major projects as growing the Territory’s population and employment levels, a key constraint was seen as chronic public, government and private housing shortages which may be exacerbated by the Project
- overcrowded public housing remains a key grievance and barrier to education and jobs
- general support for renewable energy as an emerging economic sector and for its potential to attract new industrial development to Darwin, while decarbonising existing industry and domestic networks
- opportunities for research and development in the Territory to build regional and industry expertise in renewable energy and intercontinental grid transmission systems
- challenges with industry participation on legacy projects, and expectations of benefits for the Territory and the regions

- cumulative impacts, with a number of major projects progressing in the Barkly and Katherine/Big Rivers regions on similar timelines
- community perspectives on how Sun Cable's AAPowerLink Project might leave a multi-generational legacy in the regions in which it operates
- concern about the extent of land clearing, with some willingness to accept this as long as benefits from the project are equitably distributed.

Summary of consultation by topic

Topics covered	Detail	Raised by	Addressed in EIS
Interview topics: economic			
Contributing to the Territory’s renewable energy targets	<p>There was strong support across the board for renewable energy and positive comments about Sun Cable’s potential contribution to ‘green energy’ developments on Middle Arm and the proposed lower emissions hub. At public information sessions, many people discussed their solar rooftop systems. The NT Government’s renewable energy goals were widely supported.</p> <p>Many stakeholders raised concerns about climate change and the need to move away from fossil fuels.</p> <p>Some queried how Sun Cable’s power would be connected to the Darwin-Katherine Integrated System (DKIS), how would a cable connect to Middle Arm, the scalability of the project and whether it would lower prices and improve reliability.</p> <p>The main negative issue was cynicism in the business community about whether the project would actually happen.</p>	<p>Environment Centre NT (ECNT);</p> <p>Public sessions</p>	<p>Economic section of SIA</p> <p>Greenhouse Gas Abatement Plan, Appendix 15 of EIS</p>
Contributing to energy security and affordability for regional communities, homelands and businesses	<p>One of the most frequently raised issues was how Sun Cable might contribute to more reliable and cheaper power for the Territory, including Darwin, Tennant Creek and communities and homelands along the route.</p> <p>A recurrent theme, particularly at public information sessions, was ‘what’s in it for the Territory’. The Chamber of Commerce raised the need to reduce costs for energy-dependent businesses.</p> <p>Barkly Regional Council said its biggest operating cost was providing power to council facilities. Mayor Jeff McLaughlin asked how Sun Cable might help with energy security and affordability in the Barkly.</p> <p>“There are six communities and 48 outstations and roadhouses that are run on diesel. You are a wholesaler, you are buying in bulk. Could an outstation be one of your test projects?” (Jeff McLaughlin)</p> <p>Most stakeholders – from Aboriginal organisations to the Environment Centre and government departments – asked whether Sun Cable could supply power to nearby towns, homelands and businesses to replace diesel or reticulated power systems. Reticulated power often fails and requires people to buy power cards. In Marlinja, residents said this can be difficult during flooding, when access to Elliott is cut off.</p> <p>Power is seen as expensive and unreliable. Julalikari Council Aboriginal Corporation has a strong focus on improving social housing and reducing energy costs, including rooftop solar.</p>	<p>ECNT;</p> <p>Original Power;</p> <p>Anyinginyi Aboriginal Corporation;</p> <p>Julalikari Council Aboriginal Corporation (JCAC);</p> <p>Barkly Mayor;</p> <p>Dept of Families, Housing and Communities;</p> <p>Chamber of Commerce;</p> <p>Office of the Chief Minister;</p> <p>Public sessions</p>	<p>SIA – People and Communities;</p> <p>Social Infrastructure and Services</p>

	<p>The Environment Centre of the NT (submission and interview) supports a move to renewables. However, because of the extent of land clearing, philosophical support for the Sun Cable project is conditional on seeing tangible and enduring benefits for communities.</p> <p>Original Power is a not-for-profit Aboriginal community organisation set up to help Aboriginal people determine what happens on their country, with a strong focus on renewables. Projects include rooftop solar in Tennant Creek and Marlinja and a micro-grid pilot at Borroloola.</p> <p>In Alice Springs, formerly a ‘solar city’, there is a strong push for renewable energy solutions. A Future Grid committee is led by the Intyalheme Centre for Future Energy.</p> <p>When the technical and cost barriers were explained (converting DC to AC current), there remained an expectation by many that Sun Cable should harness its “brainpower and technological expertise” to provide solutions to communities living in poverty.</p> <p>Stakeholder suggestions included donating second hand solar panels, sponsoring use of 5B technology for pilot plants and micro-grids and collaborative capacity-building with the many renewable energy researchers and providers in the Territory.</p>		
<p>Competing with smaller solar projects</p>	<p>Concerns were expressed by some of the smaller solar projects along the Darwin-Katherine Integrated System (DKIS) that Sun Cable may compete and make their smaller projects unviable. There is also frustration at delays connecting these projects to the DKIS.</p>	<p>Criticism at an industry dinner; Public sessions</p>	<p>SIA – Economies and Jobs Section</p>
<p>Opportunities for multi-generational jobs</p>	<p>The key focus of most stakeholders, particularly in the Barkly region, was jobs for young people. A key issue throughout is how to create a pathway to reduce the gap between widespread skills shortages and jobs vacancies and the ‘wicked problem’ of persistently high Aboriginal unemployment and disengagement (see below).</p> <p>The intergenerational aspect of the 70-year project was seen as an opportunity to build a legacy through slow and patient skills development (see below for discussion on jobs for Aboriginal people).</p>	<p>Widespread</p>	<p>SIA – Economies and Jobs section</p>
<p>Barriers to Aboriginal employment</p>	<p>Several stakeholders commented that barriers to Aboriginal employment were not skills shortages but an inability to access opportunities, poor motivation, not valuing western conceptions of ‘work’, and family and cultural barriers to working 9-5 jobs and FIFO rosters.</p> <p>Unemployment data doesn’t tell the full story, as many potential jobseekers – particularly young people - are ‘disengaged’ and not registered with Centrelink.</p> <p>Employers expressed frustration at taking on Aboriginal staff with retention rates of a few days to a few months or trying unsuccessfully to recruit Aboriginal people. This was across the</p>	<p>Widely raised issue in Barkly interviews</p>	<p>SIA – Local Workforce Strategy</p>

	<p>board: Government, local government, pastoralists, businesses, roadhouses and service providers.</p> <p>This appeared to be particularly frustrating in Elliott, where stakeholders described well-educated young people, a good school and no shortage of skills:</p> <p>“Everyone is keen. They work for a while. Then stop... It’s not a skills shortage, it’s a lack of drive.” (Tim Cross AUSProjects)</p> <p>Some of the barriers cited were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • family pressures and commitments • a lot of people don’t like commuting away from family • disengaged young people who see no benefit in registering to work • cultural issues, such as not working on other groups’ country • overcrowded housing (makes it hard to sleep or keep private property, workers are expected to share wages with family) • mobility and transience between towns • people who don’t have birth certificates or can’t get a white card as they don’t have an address • multi-generational unemployment, so few role models • peer group pressure on young people not to work • loss of driver’s licences, particularly for drink-driving • criminal histories • a prevalence of foetal alcohol spectrum disorders (FASD) • literacy and numeracy • racism in the workplace eroding acceptance and confidence • substance abuse and domestic violence • small businesses don’t have the HR resources to invest in developing a long-term sustainable workforce (although many service providers meet this need) • a lack of heavy machinery to train on • football carnivals are a major cause of absenteeism, as well as sorry business and funerals, which often go for a long time • daily travel to work could be a problem because people don’t have access to a vehicle • long absences from home could create jealousy issues and worry about how families were getting on • general criticisms of the Australian Government’s Community Development Program and the unintended consequences of the recent removal of mutual obligation requirements • COVID-19 payments were seen as having reduced the incentive to work, while mandatory vaccination requirements were leading to the loss of skilled staff. 		
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	<p>“If anyone in Tennant Creek wants work, there is work. If they want work, they are already working. It’s about people who have never worked, and picking them up.” (business group)</p> <p>“Some of those kids who did the white card [preparing to work in the construction industry] were very bright, but they are not interested at all. They didn’t last. There’s a group or mob culture, peer group pressure. ‘Why do you want to go and do white man’s stuff.’ You have to get the whole peer group.” (Peter Oxford, Juno Program Manager, GTNT)</p> <p>As one employer commented: “Work isn’t central to Aboriginal life, the way it is for non-Aboriginal people. Cultural obligations will always take precedence: family, football, sorry business and funerals... People don’t want to commit to ‘kartiya’ (non-Aboriginal) hours.”</p> <p>“We don’t look at what the community wants but what we think they want... They want jobs but they want jobs that are meaningful. Flexibility is important (but costly).”</p> <p>“Elliott kids are well-behaved, polite and smart. They go away to school, come back and there’s nothing to do.”</p> <p>“The people who turn up regularly (at employment service) are the older men, in their 30s to 50s. One man comes every day but it’s hard finding him work because he has a criminal history.”</p> <p>“We have some young ones on the books, but just a handful. There’s a lot of young people, 15 to 18, who are the biggest problem around town. People either don’t come back (from school) or if they do, they are in limbo. They don’t know what to do. They don’t want to be on Centrelink so they are left in a rut. Half of them end up in the justice system.”</p> <p>“Skills isn’t the barrier. The guys around here (Elliott) have amazing skills. They have Cert IVs in Civil Construction... They have skills for all the entry level roles that Sun Cable could look for. It’s getting that engagement back that’s the barrier.”</p> <p>There were frequent references to the Jemena experience with the Northern Gas Pipeline, with comments that a lot of people were trained but ended up with no jobs.</p>		
<p>Ideas for breaking down barriers to Aboriginal employment</p>	<p>There was evidence of many positive initiatives in the Barkly both under the Barkly Regional Deal with within the Department of Education. CDU recently completed a Jobs Strategy, due to be released shortly by the Barkly Regional Deal Workforce Development Group.</p> <p>Mentoring, support and creating the right work environment were seen as essential ingredients of success. Karen Sheldon gave the example of the Karen Sheldon Group Indigenous incubator in operating the Catering Services at the Howard Springs Centre for National Resilience. By the end of 2021, more than half of the kitchen staff of 80 were from a highly</p>	<p>Widely raised in Barkly interviews</p> <p>Karen Sheldon, Saltbush</p>	<p>SIA – Economies and Jobs Section Local Workforce Strategy</p>

	<p>disadvantaged local Indigenous cohort. Many had moved up into supervisory roles and taken on leadership and management training as well as employability and traditional hospitality skills training, supported by Karen Sheldon Training and the intensive Saltbush Mentoring Program providing critical on and off the job support.</p> <p>Suggestions in interviews included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Providing multi-faceted opportunities: from social enterprises to capacity building to supporting talented young people who might eventually move into management positions and business ownership. • Flexible work arrangements, such as casual work that allows for cultural obligations or starting with a few hours a week to build skills and confidence. • Working with families and communities to help them envisage what jobs are like and to get buy-in: “Communities need to want young people to be working with you.” • cultural awareness training and a zero tolerance attitude to racism, to provide a comfortable workplace (see comments from Tony Miles below) • importance of career advisers and mentors • school-based training rather than block-training away from home • less reliance on interstate boarding schools and more local options to complete secondary school • careers advisers in schools and a proposed careers hub in Tennant Creek • provide support and safety in numbers, best achieved by bringing on a team of workers • online jobs portal and skills passport (see workforce development report) • people learn best on the job, when they are shown what to do • transition from 3-4 hours a day to 8 hours, it takes time to get used to full-time work • talk to the Barkly work camp (Correctional Services) • addressing family issues, such as money management, reliable housing and transport to work • need to work with the whole family • discussion about a potential railway connection between Tennant Creek and Powell Creek (given it is on the railway line and a siding will be needed) to make it easy to commute to site. <p>“It depends on who you hire. Mature age people are more set in their ways. The idea of an 8 to 4, five days a week job is a foreign concept (for some). It requires flexible working arrangements to keep people, but this is hard to do.”</p> <p>“There are young people who want to work, but work has to be designed to suit their capacity.”</p>		
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	<p>Julalikari Council Aboriginal Corporation (JCAC) is working with Indigenous Business Australia (IBA) and Centrecorp to invest in businesses and build commercial capacity. The Chair of the Corporation, Linda Turner, said JCAC's focus was on young people and getting them work in Aboriginal-owned businesses, which Sun Cable could support through local procurement.</p> <p>PPP is an Aboriginal-owned company based in Elliott by Susey Kidd and Gordon Jackson. The company does civil and maintenance work, like earthmoving and fencing. Gordon has been working with gas exploration companies such as Origin, and siteworks for Sun Cable. He suggested the best way to train young people is in their own community.</p> <p>“If you want to encourage people, you need to have someone dedicated to working with that mob.” (Aboriginal leader)</p> <p>The need to provide career pathways from schools: “There are five jobs for every student but students don't know what is available.” (Andrew Oliver, Juno Centre)</p> <p>“There's only a handful of people who are job ready for a project like this. The rest need training and development. Give young people the lead times and what they need to do to be ready, like white cards, ochre cards and first aid training... Most people's skills are at entry level, it's a long-term project....” (Tony Miles)</p> <p>The importance of starting with small steps and short-term goals.</p> <p>“Creating pathways requires a case management approach with each individual student.” (Andrew Oliver, Juno Centre)</p> <p>“It's better to start people with a few hours and a few days a week rather than throwing them into full-time work, which just sets them up to fail... We have to start small, start building them up now.” (Peter Oxford, GTNT)</p> <p>“For long-term unemployed people, it's a big leap to enter the workforce for the first time. It is unrealistic to expect them to move straight into a full-time, 40-hour a week job.”</p> <p>“Show people what jobs are available, let them work alongside you so they can make an informed decision about working in the industry.” (John Jansen, NARMCO)</p> <p>“People don't want to know you until they know what jobs are available. Big projects like this spark interest. There are a lot of family members around. Not only are they closer to country, but they get to make money on country. That will spark interest...”.</p> <p>People had been following posts by Gordon Jackson (PPP) on his Facebook site.</p>		
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<p>School attendance</p>	<p>There is a rapid drop-out rate at Tennant Creek High School in the final years.</p> <p>Elliott school has 74 students and goes to Year 9. The school has high attendance rates and a strong Remote Aboriginal Attendance team [known as ‘yellow shirts’].</p> <p>The day we visited, a large number of teaching and council staff were absent, partly because of a funeral out of town, which had affected attendance rates.</p> <p>Parents say boarding school for some students isn’t successful because they become homesick, miss their family and come back to the community where there is nothing for them to engage in. Parents would like to see and support the notion of a boarding school in Tennant Creek. It is only two hours away and the young people could come home more easily, especially on weekends. Also, many family members regularly move between Elliott and Tennant Creek.</p> <p>The four main reasons given to the Yellow Shirt team for some children not coming to school were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • dirty clothes (the school now provides uniforms) • they didn’t have food to bring to school (the school now has a nutrition program that caters for all students) • kids were bullied at school (there are always two staff in the playground on duty at recess and lunch and in the classroom a teacher and minimum of at least one teacher’s aide to provide a safe learning environment) • they are too tired due to loud music and late nights. <p>Another reason is attendance at activities such as the July show circuit.</p> <p>The Elliott School’s virtues are Smart Brain (make good choices); Kind Heart (make sure everyone is safe and happy); Strong Voice (being proud of yourself, family, community and school).</p> <p>Marlinja has about 20 students. Elliott and Marlinja were described as two well-functioning schools in the Barkly.</p>	<p>Principal, Elliott School; Remote Attendance team; Training providers; Public sessions</p>	<p>SIA – Economies and Jobs Section</p> <p>Local Workforce Strategy</p>
<p>Education pathways from schools</p>	<p>Suggestions included working with schools to provide pathways from education to jobs and making education more relevant to jobs available.</p> <p>A group of women in Elliott said it would be better for children to complete their schooling either in Elliott or Tennant Creek, where they can stay close to family.</p> <p>There were calls for a TAFE in Tennant Creek, more VET and school-based trade training programs, where young people can try job placements and see what work suits them.</p>	<p>Karl Herzog; Businesses; Public sessions</p>	<p>SIA – Economies and Jobs</p>
<p>Rosters and wages</p>	<p>Employers suggested it is best to pay workers weekly as large payments can disappear quickly due to family commitments, although one commented that this increased absenteeism.</p> <p>“Weekly pay cycles are best. With monthly payments, for many people the money will be gone after a week. Some</p>	<p>Employers and service providers</p>	<p>SIA – Economies and Jobs</p>

	<p>people think that means they are drinking every day, but it also means they will be going without food every day. And money goes on gambling, which is very big in Elliott. By Day 4, their pay will be gone.” (employer)</p> <p>“It’s best to work Monday to Friday then come home for a weekend. That’s more normal than working two weeks on, one week off. A lot of jobs are away. If something happens, you want to be able to get back to family quickly... People won’t work at the shop because they have to work seven days. No one will work when the football is on.”</p>		
<p>Skills shortages and labour market challenges</p>	<p>Skills shortages, particularly trades, were a recurrent theme: from Darwin to Katherine and the Barkly. An inability to attract and retain staff was cited as a limiting factor to economic development and as a risk for local companies and projects such as Sun Cable. Skills shortages have created high vacancy rates in government, local government and small businesses, compounded by COVID-19 travel restrictions. This affects service delivery: from the Elliott library being closed for months to restaurants closing some nights due to staff shortages to businesses not tendering for work.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • government, local government, businesses and NGOs report substantial vacancies and difficulties attracting tradespeople, management staff, service providers and labourers; • motel managers and staff working long shifts without relief and unable to open restaurants or service rooms due to staff shortages; • COVID-19 has compounded existing stressors, as Territory businesses traditionally have relied on locums and FIFO workers; • Industry groups note a substantial decline in skilled migration and called for its resumption to address chronic and widespread skills shortages • an apparent strong reliance on transient workers and locums has compounded the problem, given COVID-19 border closures; • small businesses don’t have the infrastructure to develop a long-term sustainable workforce, they are only as viable as the next contract they win; • it takes time to build workforce capacity. <p>In Katherine and Tennant Creek, skills shortages have been compounded by housing scarcity. An additional issue cited in the Barkly is the town’s negative image.</p> <p>“A key issue is getting staff, given the image of Tennant Creek. If people search for Tennant Creek, they read that the supermarket burnt down, there’s a two-year wait for childcare, that people are getting robbed.” (Jared Baldwin, Remote Concrete)</p> <p>The Mayor of Barkly Regional Council, Jeff McLaughlin, outlined his vision for a town where people want to stay. He</p>	<p>Businesses; Chamber of Commerce; ISACNT; Public sessions</p>	<p>SIA - Economies and Jobs</p> <p>Local Workforce Strategy</p>

	<p>suggested the importance of investing in young people while they are still at high school, particularly trades.</p> <p>The President of the Chamber of Commerce, Karen Sheldon, said it would be important for groups such as the Chamber to work with employment providers to build human capital in the region to “take advantage of the Indigenous employment and business opportunities that are opening up”.</p> <p>“There are some big projects on the horizon. Tennant Creek is ideally placed. We don’t want to be caught unprepared in two years’ time.” (Steve Edgington, Member for Barkly)</p> <p>Several stakeholders called for accredited training in Tennant Creek. Tennant Creek needs to create its own tradespeople. When people go away, they disengage. However, the Chamber of Commerce said small numbers can make the economies of scale for VET and trade training challenging. The Chamber has a key focus on workforce development in the regions and is working closely with CDU and Batchelor Institute of Indigenous Tertiary Education (BIITE).</p> <p>The Chamber of Commerce wants a greater focus on skilled migration to address skills shortages.</p> <p>“Other jurisdictions are spending lots of money. It will be difficult to convince workers to relocate when they are close to family and facilities. The government’s ‘work, stay, play’ campaign isn’t sufficient.” (Greg Ireland)</p> <p>“There will be a tight labour market post-COVID. Some businesses are finding it too hard and are likely to close their doors.” (Greg Ireland)</p> <p>The Industry Skills Advisory Council (ISACNT) described mapping not just skills gaps but also shared competencies that can cut across jobs and occupations. This may create portable skills in the labour market that are accessible to multiple industries.</p> <p>(see more in Local Workforce Strategy report)</p>		
<p>Maximising regional industry participation and economic sustainability (Barkly and Greater Darwin)</p>	<p>There are strong expectations that the project will prioritise local industry participation. Many Barkly businesses have experience of supplying and working with major projects, but they are often short-lived, making it hard to invest in business growth or apprentices. There was also cynicism that many businesses don’t live up to their espoused commitments.</p> <p>A key focus of the Barkly Regional Deal (a tripartite agreement between the three levels of government) is business growth and skills development. There are plans for a business hub to provide business support and host a full-time representative of the NT Indigenous Business Network.</p> <p>Opportunities in the Barkly include agribusiness, oil and gas, mining, a common user mining processing plant, agribusiness, renewable energy projects such as Sun Cable and Blooming</p>	<p>Dept of Industry, Tourism and Trade (DITT); Businesses; Chamber of Commerce; ICN; Larrakia Development Corporation; Member for Barkly</p>	<p>SIA - Economies and Jobs</p>

	<p>Desert hydrogen, and a pending feasibility study for a multi-modal facility and rail terminal.</p> <p>Some of the issues raised:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cynicism by many that Tier 1 contractors will draw on existing partnerships and bring interstate companies into the region; • Many local businesses have the capabilities but not the capacity for big packages of work. They need plenty of lead-time to compete for tenders and success may require packaging tenders in a way that suits local businesses; • Not all businesses are prepared for the bigger projects. Many are local ‘mum and dad’, service-driven businesses that don’t necessarily want to get bigger. They are preoccupied with looking after their existing clientele; • A lot of people are waiting for the opportunities; they need to see what they are; • Tight deadlines tend to focus on expediency and fast delivery rather than the extra time and cost needed to mentor, employ and train Aboriginal people, especially the long-term unemployed or disadvantaged (Pat Brahim, Chair, Patta Group); • Setting targets for Aboriginal employment can penalise companies unable to meet these targets, lead to fraud, or subvert the intent of policies if positions are filled by Aboriginal people from elsewhere; • The importance of capability mapping to understand what businesses exist and how they might work together to win work; • A wariness towards commitments by big companies to use local contractors, which are often not kept, unrealistic timelines for orders, 90-day payment terms and not understanding the context of local service delivery. • Local content needs to be built into tenders and enforced. Tier 1 companies often have their own contractors. Tier 1 and 2 contractors might have the best of intentions but engaging with small businesses is hard work. • Local companies may not be able to meet the standards required of Tier 1 contractors, such as Federal Safety Accreditation. • Sun Cable needs to engage with people on the ground, have an office that people can walk into and regular two-way communication, such as a reference group. <p>The NT Chamber of Commerce and ICN now have joint positions in Nhulunbuy and Katherine (also covering Tennant Creek). ICN promotes the opportunities, while the Chamber provides support to businesses so they can make the most of</p>		
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	<p>these opportunities. DITT maintains a database of regional small business capability.</p> <p>Key feedback from business is “what’s in it for the Territory” in terms of exports and carbon offsets, says CEO Greg Ireland. Value for the Territory means the capacity to grow rather than the domination of FIFO workforces. The Chamber is generally supportive of the project but wants to see long-term tangible benefits.</p> <p>There is some cynicism from business about technical and logistics aspects of the project. Projects such as Sun Cable, Fortune Agribusiness and Arafura Resources will provide opportunities in the region for decades. There will be some attrition but that’s part of the ‘cycle of life’: some businesses will use the opportunity to grow, others will become takeover targets, Greg Ireland suggests.</p> <p>“To be ready, Tennant Creek businesses need to know how do they participate, what skills are needed and the terms of their involvement so they can prepare.” (Greg Ireland)</p> <p>“Given there is still some uncertainty about the project proceeding, business needs to have confidence before they invest. It’s a brave business that would invest in something before it occurs.” (Greg Ireland)</p> <p>Interstate companies are often dismissive of local capabilities, centralised procurement offices are interstate and they use existing contractors, suggests Kevin Peters of the Industry Capability Network NT (ICN NT). He cites local construction company Sitzler as best practice use of the ICN’s Project Gateway to maximise local content, including posting Request for Tender documents so local companies can link with prime contractors.</p> <p>“The best advice is to be transparent and communicate so people are aware of opportunities and can start planning.” (Kevin Peters, ICN)</p> <p>“Technology alone isn’t enough. You need to spend time on the ground to understand local business capabilities.” (Kevin Peters)</p> <p>“Territory Benefit Plans are a great and necessary part of the project.” (Steve Edgington, Member for Barkly)</p> <p>“I think an important part of major projects is to ensure governance structures on the ground are closely connected with high level structures to ensure accurate information is shared and that open, two-way communication exists at the local level.” (Steve Edgington)</p>		
<p>Business opportunities</p>	<p>Specific business opportunities were often raised, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • use of the Renner Springs Desert Inn for contractor accommodation, for fuel and as a depot on the Stuart Highway that is close to site 	<p>Renner Springs Desert Inn; JCAC; Businesses</p>	<p>SIA – Economies and Jobs</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • potential to boost tourism in Tennant Creek if workers visit the town, perhaps for niche tours of old mine sites • potential for development in Elliott to provide services to Sun Cable and other mining and oil and gas companies working in the region (see below) • the Tennant Creek IGA, owned by IBA and Julalikari, provides supplies to many institutions, remote communities and pastoral properties and would be keen to discuss providing services to Sun Cable. <p>Several businesses provided capability statements and outlines of their local knowledge and experience. Sun Cable visited some Barkly companies to discuss capabilities, local experience in maintaining an Aboriginal workforce and the regional context. In general, businesses were advised that the start of procurement was some time away and that they should register with the NT Industry Capability Network (ICN).</p>		
<p>Displacement or crowding out of other businesses opportunities</p>	<p>The project may cause detriment to existing local businesses, including loss of staff to better paid project positions, workers taking up flights and short-term accommodation, inflationary pressure or bringing large companies to the Barkly to compete with existing businesses.</p> <p>Local businesses would benefit from contractors and workers using local accommodation, e.g. Tennant Creek and Renner Springs. However, the relatively limited accommodation means that saturating capacity would displace both tourism and other workers.</p> <p>The Chamber of Commerce commented that there had been concern that Sun Cable’s use of the railway corridor or any attempts to expand the corridor could displace other opportunities or be challenged by Native Title claims.</p>	<p>Karl Herzog; Businesses; Chamber of Commerce</p>	<p>SIA – Economies and Jobs</p>
<p>Displacing or crowding out of other economic sectors - tourism</p>	<p>Karl Herzog is on the Barkly Tourism Advisory Group and manager of the Battery Hill Visitor Information Centre. He described tourism in the Barkly as “struggling”. The past two years of COVID travel restrictions has “knocked it on the head”. Other factors are a lack of reasonably priced air connections, staffing issues and negative publicity about the town.</p> <p>Tourism operators aim to get tourists to stay for ‘more than a night’. Some tourist attractions (such as independent mine tour operators) have closed because of higher insurance and low demand.</p> <p>Anecdotally, ‘grey nomads’ (or self-drive tourists) remain strong between Easter and September but they tend to avoid Tennant Creek and opt for caravan parks and road houses along the Stuart Highway. Short-term accommodation is also taken by contractors and government staff.</p> <p>The Barkly Regional Deal is attempting to address social issues in Tennant Creek. There is potential for more tourist accommodation at Devil’s Marbles.</p>	<p>Karl Herzog; DITT; Chamber of Commerce</p>	<p>SIA – Economies and Jobs</p>

	<p>Tourist operators wouldn't want tourism disrupted by Sun Cable taking up the town's short-term accommodation, but Sun Cable offers a potential benefit if workers want to do niche tours of Tennant Creek and Battery Hill on their days off. There used to be tours of the old mines and Nyunkka Nyunyu is trying to set up cultural tours based on a bush food experience.</p> <p>The Chamber of Commerce mentioned studies for the Beetaloo Strategic Regional Environmental Baseline Assessment (SREBA), highlighting substantial likely increases of industrial traffic on the Stuart Highway for onshore oil and gas development, which could be compounded by traffic for projects such as Sun Cable. This would likely slow traffic flow and cause frustration for tourists.</p>		
<p>Displacing or crowding out of other economic sectors - pastoral</p>	<p>Consolidated Pastoral didn't feel Sun Cable would have a major impact on pastoral activities on Powell Creek and Newcastle Waters stations as long as the following activities were avoided:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • care not to transport seeds and weeds • quarantining workers to the project footprint, so they don't disrupt station activities • advance notice of key activities that could affect access, mustering or grazing or degrade access tracks • not encouraging increased visits to Lake Woods as the station takes responsibility for land management and maintenance. <p>Newcastle Waters draws its staff largely from interstate and Aboriginal workers from the Real Jobs Program run by the NT Cattlemen's Association. It's always hard finding good people, but the station didn't feel it was likely to lose staff to the project.</p> <p>During separate consultation along the railway corridor, all landholders with cattle operations commented on potential impacts on mustering. Most were positive about the project and willing to talk further about the prospect of the Overhead Transmission Line (OHTL) passing over parts of their leases.</p>	<p>Consolidated Pastoral Company</p>	<p>SIA – Economies and Jobs</p>
<p>Displacing or crowding out of other economic sectors – resource extraction</p>	<p>Sun Cable has talked to Top End Energy, the new manager of an Exploration Permit near the Solar Precinct EP(A) 256. The company is negotiating with the NLC regarding an exploration agreement and plans seismic studies for initial work programs in late 2022. Should exploration proceed, the company believes both projects can co-exist.</p> <p>Sun Cable has met with Empire Energy, which holds EP 169, near Lake Woods. The only overlap with the AAPowerLink Project is existing access tracks and proposed all-weather bituminised track. Lake Woods is classified as a 'no go zone' under the Petroleum Reserve Block Policy of the <i>Petroleum Act</i>. Empire Energy, which acquired EP 169 from Pangaea, has no operations planned for the area and raised no concerns about the AAPowerLink Project.</p>	<p>Oil and gas companies</p>	<p>SIA – Economies and Jobs</p>

<p>Regional economic development</p>	<p>Fostering regional economic development meant considering the durability of promised benefits. Many stakeholders raised the good intent but short-term nature of benefits from the Northern Gas Pipeline.</p> <p>“There isn’t an economic model for regional investment (similar to the WA Royalties for the Regions approach). The NTG’s focus is investment attraction not regional economic development, so there is likely to be a leakage of expenditure from the regions.” (David Malone, MBANT)</p>	<p>Businesses, Master Builders Association of the NT (MBANT)</p>	<p>SIA – Economies and Jobs</p>
<p>Maximising Aboriginal businesses and enterprise participation</p>	<p>The best Aboriginal employment outcomes will come through flexibility, strong mentoring, working with families and supporting businesses with a good track record of employing Aboriginal people, including Aboriginal businesses.</p> <p>Aboriginal-owned PPP Contracting in Elliott was cited as “having a knack” for employing and retaining Aboriginal staff.</p> <p>Aboriginal businesses often want to remain small, to look after family, and benefit from business advisers or business hubs that can provide back office support, mentoring, bookkeeping, access to business growth advice, governance systems and support preparing tenders.</p> <p>Julalikari Council Aboriginal Corporation is looking to purchase more local businesses and stressed the importance of Sun Cable ‘buying local’ and providing sufficient notice of procurement needs. JCAC could run training programs in partnership with employers such as Sun Cable.</p> <p>“The proposed Barkly Business Hub is intended to provide a one-stop-shop to support start-up or existing small businesses and help them grow, if that is their strategy.</p> <p>“A lot of Aboriginal people want to start businesses. But at the grassroots, people just don’t know what they don’t know. The average person on the street doesn’t know how to register a company, how to set up a governance structure. They need help with managing invoices, doing their BAS... They need to be properly supported... at the grassroots level... walking side by side with them for the next five years... or you are setting people up to fail.” (Steve Edgington, Member for Barkly)</p> <p>The ICN has developed an online Aboriginal business locator, supported by the Power and Water Corporation.</p> <p>However, some Aboriginal groups commented on previous commitments to Aboriginal participation not being met. The Larrakia Development Corporation expects to see a genuine commitment to award contracts to Aboriginal corporations and enterprises and a commitment by Sun Cable to enforcing compliance with commitments. Early engagement is important. Winning contracts is a more tangible measure of success than Memorandums of Understanding.</p> <p>Larrakia Nation Aboriginal Corporation wants to ensure obligations to Aboriginal participation cascade from prime</p>	<p>Member for Barkly; NARMCO; Businesses; ICN NT; DITT; JCAC; Larrakia Development Corporation; Larrakia Nation Aboriginal Corporation</p>	<p>SIA – Economies and Jobs</p>

	contractors to ensure lower tier contractors are held accountable.		
Changes of land use	<p>While the extent of economic development in the Barkly was generally seen as a positive, including by Consolidated Pastoral, there are concerns that the combination of horticulture, mining, oil and gas and renewable projects could lead to a change of predominant land use. The land around Powell Creek was described as good hunting and grazing country.</p> <p>Members of the public commented that renewable energy, along with horticultural development, could impact on pastoralism as an economic sector and way of life.</p>	Consolidated Pastoral Company; Public sessions	SIA- Economies and Jobs
Agreement-making contributes to Aboriginal economic development	<p>Several stakeholders, including Traditional Owners, commented that they didn't want to see payments of cash royalties, which can just divide communities. They wanted to see royalties from Sun Cable, mining and oil and gas projects invested in local trusts or corporations with a focus on economic development.</p> <p>"Royalties cause problems. We want to do things differently." (Marlinja meeting)</p> <p>"Whenever there are royalty payments, there is an influx of drinking and gambling." (Comment in Elliott meeting)</p> <p>Elliott was seen as having enormous potential, being mid-way between Darwin and Alice Springs and close to prospective mining, gas exploration and the Sun Cable project.</p> <p>The Kulumindini ('our bond') Aboriginal Corporation is exploring investment opportunities, such as accommodation, which local people felt was badly needed in Elliott. However, one stakeholder warned that opportunities are mobile and service centres may instead get built in Daly Waters or around roadhouses on the highway.</p> <p>"The Intervention came along, it didn't deliver much. We were supposed to be one of the growth towns." (Chris Neade, Elliott)</p> <p>"Kids go to Alice Springs and Darwin. When they finish school, they come back and there are no jobs. (Just the school, the clinic and the council)" (Chris Neade, Elliott)</p> <p>"It would be great to see the community that is closest to the solar farm get the benefits. They are interested in businesses such as a caravan park and a motel." (Karl Herzog)</p> <p>"It's OK for people to be trained in jobs, but they need to become bosses. If you want to make an impact, leave a pathway for the future." (Karl Herzog)</p> <p>Suggestions included a locally-owned accommodation centre for service providers and contractors, a store (the cost of goods at the roadhouses was seen as too high and they don't sell clothes), perhaps shared serviced offices, an art gallery</p>	Chris Neade; NARMCO; Karl Herzog; Barkly Regional Deal; Kargugu Seedbank; Patta Aboriginal Corporation; Dept of Education; Public sessions	SIA – Economies and Jobs

	<p>and tourism ventures, training facilities and upgraded sports facilities (e.g. oval and golf course). There are plans to set up a ranger group with an office in North Camp.</p> <p>Other ideas for community benefits:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a swimming pool in Elliott • contribution to housing • band equipment for young people • plant trees to improve the Elliott streetscape (there's the old Julalikari CDP nursery at RN Employment Services – see also Karguru) • better meals in the aged care centre for old people (they want damper and kangaroo tails instead of frozen food and noodles) • a visitors' park on the old football oval at North Camp. <p>The Barkly Regional Deal in November 2021 was coordinating community planning in Elliott.</p> <p>The Julalikari Council Aboriginal Corporation (JCAC) in Tennant Creek is negotiating a Local Decision-Making Framework with the Northern Territory Government.</p> <p>Sun Cable has entered into an agreement with the Northern Land Council in relation to support for community development activities.</p> <p>Several stakeholders commented on the importance of benefits for the entire Barkly, beyond negotiated statutory benefits such as Indigenous Land Use Agreements. The McArthur River Mine community benefits trust was cited as a good example.</p> <p>“What sort of legacy will you leave? You are taking a lot of land that will never come back to countrymen?” (Pat Brahim, Chair, Patta Group)</p> <p>Some raised the potential for Traditional Owners to take equity in the project, however there were also comments that this didn't deliver benefits with the railway.</p> <p>Karguru (part of Julalikari) runs a seed bank and biodiversity register. It has partnered with the Juno training centre on a Food Ladder project, provides bushfoods to local cafes, does cultural tours and is providing plants for the new cultural centre and proposed streetscaping of Tennant Creek. William Martin from Karguru would like Sun Cable's support for seed gathering on the Solar Precinct site and could provide help with land management and a nursery.</p> <p>There was enthusiasm for working on country jobs, in particular a ranger group.</p> <p>“Land management is the easiest job to get people into. We can offer conservation land management at Juno. Trade Training Centres offer trades. We could make fences for Sun Cable. Year 12s are doing Cert II in agriculture, helping with</p>		
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	<p>fencing, putting in water supplies, controlling weeds, looking after vegetation.” (Andrew Oliver, Juno Centre)</p> <p>Other suggestions included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • governance training for Aboriginal corporations • a bus and fuel (to get workers to work) • leaving the accommodation camp as a legacy <p>A waste disposal service is needed in Elliott, which could be a business opportunity.</p>		
Social enterprises	Social enterprises were seen as a way to help the long-term unemployed, but high dropout rates and additional costs need to be factored in to the cost of running them.	Jared Baldwin, Remote Concrete	SIA – Economies and Jobs
Diversified economy	Competitively priced renewable energy will support diversified economic sectors.	NTG	SIA – Economies and Jobs
Boost to advanced manufacturing	Government stakeholders saw the availability of large amounts of renewable industry as supporting advanced manufacturing in the Territory, particularly at Middle Arm.	NTG	SIA – Economies and Jobs
Accountability for commitments	Some Tennant Creek businesses felt large companies previously hadn’t met their commitments and Sun Cable’s contractors should be answerable for promises made.	Businesses	SIA - economies and Jobs
Interview topics: People and communities			
Enhanced quality of life	<p>More people working would be good for the community and contribute wages.</p> <p>Economic activity has declined in Elliott over the past 20 years, shops and businesses have closed, there is no accommodation, the pub sells only takeaway, the cost of goods in the roadhouse is high and much shopping has to be done in Tennant Creek or Katherine. Improved services and facilities would be good for residents.</p> <p>Elliott was seen as a town with the potential to be “really special”. It has well-educated children and a high level of skills, retains strong culture and language and has low levels of property crime.</p> <p>There were concerns that the elders with cultural authority are disappearing. People are very mobile, travelling up and down the highway for jobs and to see family. Local enterprises with community ‘buy in’ might revitalise the town, attract tourists and generate long-term jobs.</p>	Kevin Gaskin; Bob Bagnall; Chris Neade; Ray Hocking; Karan Hayward	SIA – People and Communities
Addressing disadvantage and reducing poverty	President of the NT Chamber of Commerce, Karen Sheldon, at a Chamber function, welcomed the ‘exciting’ project “in our extensive and very sunny little Barkly region”, saying that “these types of projects give us the opportunity to work for social change”. She noted that Sun Cable would be working in an area with some of the world’s most disadvantaged Australians and there were large gaps between the ‘haves’ and the ‘have nots’.	Anyinginyi Health Aboriginal Corporation; Karen Sheldon	SIA – People and Communities

	This sentiment expressed strongly by Tony Miles from Anyinginyi Health Aboriginal Corporation (see below under 'legacy issues').		
Reduced community cohesion	<p>Several stakeholders commented on jealousy issues over who gets benefits, including divisions over the 'right' traditional owners, distribution of royalty payments and other benefits, and disagreements over who spoke for country in both the Barkly and on Gunn Point Peninsula.</p> <p>There is a complex demographic in Elliott, with people from different language groups drawn to the town as they left pastoral properties as far back as the 1960s. Many outside groups have married in. There was conflict in the past between families in north and south camps (from northern and southern pastoral properties respectively) and disagreements over royalty payments.</p> <p>Opportunities for benefits from the project could exacerbate jealousies, especially if some families miss out on benefits.</p>	Aboriginal stakeholders in the Barkly and Gunn Point; NT Police	SIA – People and communities
Increased crime and anti-social behaviour	<p>Increased disposable income for workers could lead to increased drug and alcohol consumption and alcohol-fuelled violence. Police report that their main work around Elliott is domestic violence and traffic offences, both of which may increase with alcohol consumption.</p> <p>Stakeholders commented on low levels of property crime, rubbish and graffiti in Elliott.</p> <p>However, high levels of alcohol abuse and property crime in Tennant Creek were described by many stakeholders as detracting from the town's image and liveability.</p> <p>The problem with crime, vandalism and young people roaming the streets at night was so bad that the Chair of Julalikari, Linda Turner, and a group of grandmothers set up the Jurnkkurakurr Volunteers in early 2021. They work with Police and the Julalikari Night Patrol to combat anti-social behaviour.</p> <p>Police suggested that royalty payments often exacerbate conflict between families and substance abuse.</p>	NT Police; Public sessions; Businesses; Jared Baldwin; JCAC	SIA – People and Communities
Alcohol abuse	<p>Alcohol-related crime, including domestic violence, assaults, vandalism and drink-driving was raised frequently. Tennant Creek leaders are trying to combat alcohol-related crime, with attendant issues such as absenteeism, unsupervised children roaming the streets at night and likely a high incidence of foetal alcohol spectrum disorders (FASD).</p> <p>Stakeholders cited concerns with grog-running (from as far away as Mount Isa) and secondary alcohol sales.</p> <p>Elliott Police experience people driving to Dunmarra (100 km to the north) to buy takeaway alcohol, which creates additional road safety risks. While alcohol is a problem in Elliott, crime is generally low and caused by 'blow ins' from Tennant Creek.</p>	NT Police; JCAC; Dept of Families, Housing and Communities;	SIA – People and Communities

	In October 2021, Elliott was implementing a six-pack takeaway permit under the town's alcohol management plan to reduce grog-running and drinking camps.		
Road safety	<p>Traffic duties on the Stuart Highway are a key aspect of the Elliott Police workload. There are often rollovers, particularly with caravans.</p> <p>NT Police suggest increased industrial traffic and workers commuting to site could impact on road safety, particularly if additional fuel or chemicals were being transported to site. Police would need training and equipment to respond.</p> <p>Police suggested flying workers to site was safer than workers driving in.</p> <p>Newcastle Waters would not want to see workers accessing areas of Powell Creek outside the Project footprint, due to the risk of collisions with cattle trucks and cows and degrading access tracks.</p> <p>"We are liable for anything that happens to anyone on our lease and for the safety of our teams. If we have people driving around and we don't know where they are and someone hits a road train or a cow." (pastoralist)</p>	NT Police; Consolidated Pastoral Company	SIA – People and Communities Traffic Impact Statement, Byrne Consulting
Reduced volunteering	<p>Karl Herzog outlined a time in the 70s, 80s and 90s that he described as the town's heyday, when there were strong sporting and service clubs. After the mines and meatworks closed, much of the town's population left. Volunteers are now a "dying breed" and hard to find for everything from the National Trust to emergency services, tour guides, the RSL, St John Ambulance, the bowls and golf clubs.</p> <p>"It's just down to the diehards. People would love to have these (services) but they don't volunteer." (Karl Herzog)</p>	Karl Herzog	SIA – People and Communities
Enhanced safety and wellbeing	Benefits from the project, including wages and Sun Cable's community investment, may contribute to community wellbeing.	Public sessions	SIA – People and Communities
Reduced sense of place	<p>Worker behaviour, a changed demographic composition and the presence of a large external workforce may impact on existing amenity and sense of place and should be strictly controlled. Stakeholders suggested this is best achieved by quarantining any FIFO staff in the accommodation village, minimising worker traffic across Powell Creek and flying workers in to a project air strip.</p> <p>Police suggested it was best to have a controlled 'wet' canteen, to prevent workers going to nearby roadhouses to drink or grog-running.</p>	NT Police; Consolidated Pastoral Company; Dept of Families, Housing and Communities	SIA – People and Communities
Reduced safety and wellbeing	Where a large group of outside workers is living near an Aboriginal community, it's important to have protocols to minimise the risk of real or perceived negative interactions that impact on children and families and community harmony and wellbeing.	Dept of Families, Housing and Communities; Anyinginyi	SIA – People and Communities

	<p>“Mining camps have some very strict rules and workers (adhere to them) because they don’t want to lose their job.” (Barb Kelly)</p> <p>Racism and bullying in the workplace could erode worker wellbeing.</p>		
Workplace health and safety	<p>Mental health issues for workers, particularly when living away from home and working FIFO rosters for weeks at a time.</p> <p>“It’s one of those sorts of jobs where, if workers do have some fragility in their coping mechanisms, (it’s harder to disguise than in day-to-day jobs).” (Barb Kelly)</p> <p>Some pastoralists during separate consultation for the railway corridor raised safety issues in relation to the Overhead Transmission Line affecting aviation but felt this could be addressed with good communication and safety. Several commented that they already work around powerlines. One suggested installing ‘balls’ on the wires, so they are more visible.</p>	Dept of Families; Pastoralists	SIA – People and Communities
Public health issues: EMFs and radiation	<p>Public health impacts were raised in only one meeting, the Native Title meeting in Elliott. Questions covered safety on site, the risk of electromagnetic fields, would there be radiation and what would be on site.</p> <p>Some pastoralists for the OHTL consultation asked about the impacts of the wires and any risk of radiation of assets. Several requested protection of their assets from any material impact from the lines.</p>	Public sessions; Pastoralists	EIS - Human Health Assessment
Interview topics: Social infrastructure and services			
Housing and accommodation shortages	<p>Stakeholders referred to chronic housing shortages in the Barkly. A shortage of government employee housing constrains the recruitment of service providers. Scarce, overcrowded and dilapidated social housing was cited as a key barrier to sustainable employment and education.</p> <p>The high costs and scarcity of private rental and privately owned properties were seen as a key constraint to attracting and retaining workers and families to live in Katherine and Tennant Creek. Jemena, which operates the Northern Gas Pipeline, purchased a six-bedroom house to accommodate staff.</p> <p>“A key issue in attracting staff in Tennant Creek is a lack of housing. It’s significant. It reduces our ability to get staff, although I could get as many recruits as I want. There is a real shortage of four-bedroom houses, which puts pressure on government staff. Territory Families has 11 vacancies (but only two houses).”</p> <p>In Elliott, apart from a new house in South Camp, the only new housing in the past 25 years was 10 Government Employee Houses (intended to free up existing houses). In addition, there is no short-term accommodation. Many</p>	Raised by most stakeholders, particularly in Katherine and the Barkly	SIA – Social Infrastructure and Services

	<p>service providers and contractors thus commute from the Renner Springs roadhouse, often for weeks.</p> <p>David Malone, the CEO of the Master Builders Association of the NT commented that the decline of regional areas has seen population decline and little investment in the private housing market. As the private sector leaves towns like Tennant Creek, Elliott and Katherine, the private housing stock has been taken up by government and NGO service providers. The lack of housing and accommodation is a key constraint for projects such as Defence and the Tindal airbase in Katherine. Government doesn't have the money to invest in the social infrastructure needed to support major projects and the private sector doesn't have the certainty.</p> <p>“Pioneer’ projects in remote regions such Sun Cable need to provide social infrastructure that would be available in cities, such as housing, health and schools, as a ‘public good’” (David Malone)</p> <p>As an incentive for the private sector to provide this social infrastructure, governments need to provide tax breaks, such as accelerated depreciation, David Malone said.</p> <p>Housing and accommodation shortages in Katherine, Tennant Creek and Alice Springs is a deterrent to the government’s goal of population growth. Workers are also likely to be drawn from Alice Springs, which is also facing a housing shortage.</p> <p>With the potential economic activity in the Daly, Beetaloo and Elliott areas, one solution may be a new population centre catering for oil and gas, agricultural projects and tourism. However, David Malone commented that this shouldn't be a single purpose use (like mining towns) but needed to leave a legacy in the region.</p>		
<p>Pressure on quality and accessibility of health services</p>	<p>Sun Cable will need to provide its own medical services. Clinics are generally at capacity and struggling with staff. They tend to rely on agency nurses. Epenarra closed recently due to staff shortages.</p>	<p>Elliott stakeholders</p>	<p>SIA – Social Infrastructure and Services</p>
<p>Transport</p>	<p>Elliott has a sealed 1100-metre runway, which is the closest runway to Powell Creek. It just needs windsock lights.</p> <p>Pastoral properties operate helicopters and light planes.</p> <p>Parts of the Stuart Highway are in poor condition. A stretch north of Elliott has a 60 km/h restricted speed zone.</p>	<p>NT Police; Consolidated Pastoral Company; Member for Barkly</p>	<p>SIA – Social Infrastructure and Services</p>
<p>Existing utilities</p>	<p>Tim Cross from AUSProjects, which has the essential services maintenance contract in Elliott, suggests the town’s bore water supply contains calcium but otherwise is good. The town relies on septic sewerage systems. Power is generated from a combination of diesel and gas and is sufficient for current demand.</p>	<p>AUSProjects</p>	<p>n/a</p>

Emergency services	<p>Issues raised by NT Police included the remoteness of the location, which would be problematic for any emergency responses. Other issues included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> increased industrial traffic and risks from the transport of chemicals would have policing and road safety implications any increase in the police workload may necessitate additional staff and put pressure on aging infrastructure (the police station is demountable buildings and seen as not fit-for-purpose) Sun Cable would need to be self-sufficient for firefighting. There is an Elliott Fire and Emergency Response Group (FERG) captained by school principal Kevin Gaskin with five volunteers. But major incidents require a response from Tennant Creek's two permanent staff It would be better to fly workers into site than have them driving to site. 	NT Police	SIA – Social Infrastructure and Services
Interview topics: Culture and cultural heritage			
Disturbance to sacred sites	<p>An issue raised in most meetings with Traditional Owners and Native Title Holders was the importance of protecting sacred sites and taking the right people out on country.</p> <p>On Gunn Point, this included the importance of not disturbing Tiwi gravesites.</p> <p>Some Tiwi people asked about seismic tests and whether the cable would disturb any cultural heritage on the sea floor.</p> <p>(See Heritage Impact Assessment for comments by Powell Creek traditional owners).</p>	Aboriginal stakeholders in Darwin, Tiwi Islands and the Barkly; Darwin Harbour Advisory Group (DHAC)	SIA – Cultural Identity Heritage Impact Assessment (Appendix 8)
Reduced cultural ties to the land	<p>Reduced access to country inhibits cultural activities and visits to traditional lands.</p> <p>The importance of spending time on country was raised in several meetings. Traditional Owners referred to looking after country for their children and future generations.</p> <p>Members of the Mantiyupwi clan on the Tiwi Islands expressed strong connections to the Gunn Point area and were particularly concerned about any disturbance to burial sites.</p> <p>(See Heritage Impact Assessment)</p>	Aboriginal stakeholders, including Tiwi people, Northern Land Council (NLC)	SIA – Cultural Identity Heritage Impact Assessment (Appendix 8)
Enhanced cultural ties	<p>Sun Cable's use of rangers, support of seed collection and social enterprises may enhance the status of traditional ecological knowledge.</p> <p>Sun Cable's use of local people for cultural awareness training of staff could enhance the retention of cultural knowledge and languages.</p> <p>Potential sponsorship of cultural activities.</p>	Karan Hayward; William Martin; Aboriginal stakeholders	SIA – Cultural Identity

Loss of European and WWII heritage	Sun Cable’s presence and sponsorship may provide a boost to preservation of historic sites, such as the old Newcastle Waters township (promoted by ‘Mates of Murrانji), however police and Consolidated Pastoral suggested increased patronage of sites, such as the heritage-listed Powell Creek telegraph station could also lead to damage. (See comments by Traditional Owners on the significance of the Powell Creek Telegraph Station in the Heritage Impact Assessment)	Consolidated Pastoral Company; NT Police	SIA – Cultural Identity Heritage Impact Assessment (Appendix 8)
Strengthening of culture	The importance of cultural respect and protocols for going onto country. Papulu Apparr-Kari has worked on several projects to revive language and traditional ecological knowledge, including dictionaries and books on biocultural knowledge in collaboration with elders. Karan Hayward suggested working with community leaders and students, such as the Elliott multimedia centre, to tell the story of Sun Cable and run cultural awareness courses for staff.	Karan Hayward, Papulu Apparr-Kari (Language Centre)	SIA – Cultural Identity
Interview topics: Environment			
Land clearing	The key environmental concern was the extent of land-clearing, with 12,000 hectares to be cleared on Powell Creek as well as the utilities corridor and converter site at Murrumujuk. Environmental groups were supportive of renewable energy projects such as Sun Cable but concerned at the extent of clearing for the Project and the cumulative impacts of clearing across the Territory.	ECNT; Public sessions	SIA – Healthy Country EIS Chapters on terrestrial ecology (5) and greenhouse gas emissions (Appendix 15)
Conservation zones	Concerns were raised about the project going through a portion of the Black Jungle Conservation Reserve and the implications of this. (SC: <i>One of the advantages of the large poles is that they can avoid having to dig a trench through culturally or ecologically sensitive areas.</i>) The ECNT queried the impact of subsea cables traversing the Oceanic Shoals Marine Park and suggested briefing the North Australia Marine Parks Authority.	Bart Irwin, NT Field and Game, ECNT	SIA – Healthy Country EIS – terrestrial and marine ecology chapters
Reduced biodiversity	Reduced biodiversity through land-clearing or increased presence of people at Powell Creek, e.g. disturbance of rookeries at Lake Woods or goanna, emus, bush turkeys or kangaroos in the project footprint. “West of Lake Woods is a popular hunting area. Lake Woods is a significant bird rookery when there is water in the lake, particularly pelicans. It’s like stepping into a David Attenborough Show, there are thousands of birds on the turkey’s nest dam. “There’s goanna on the red soil and cattle grazing and kangaroos on the black soil, also echidnas and bush turkeys.	Aboriginal stakeholders; Former resident	SIA – Healthy country EIS – Terrestrial ecology chapters

	<p>“A keen avenue for recreation in Elliott is hunting on foot for goanna, bush turkey, emus and kangaroos. Families go out in vehicles. I wouldn’t like to see reduced capacity (for hunting).” (former resident)</p> <p>A question at the Elliott Native Title meeting was what would happen to the wildlife at Powell Creek, would animals be relocated and would Sun Cable use rangers?</p>		
Bird strike	<p>Deaths and injuries of birds flying into the overhead transmission cable, including magpie geese, broilga, jabiru and pelicans flying between water courses along the utilities corridor. Magpie geese gather around mango farms on either side of the Arnhem Highway and fly between reserves. There is a major flyway from Quambi Lagoon (a waterfowl hunting area) on Koolpinyah Station to the Howard River flood plain.</p> <p>Also, would bird strike cause power outages.</p>	Bart Irwin, NT Field and Game	<p>SIA – Healthy Country</p> <p>EIS – Terrestrial Ecology</p>
Dredging and trenching	<p>There were questions about the level of trenching and dredging, how this would impact on fishing and how the cables would avoid oil and gas pipelines in the harbour. Comments were made that fishing and commercial vessels’ anchors could disturb cabling, including a spot where ships anchor outside the entrance to Darwin Harbour.</p> <p><i>(Sun Cable: Would trench across the beach at Gunn Point and shallow areas of Shoal Bay, but would lie on the seafloor for much of the route. Would avoid high value fishing spots)</i></p>	DHAC; NAILSMA; Public sessions	<p>EIS Project Description</p> <p>SIA – healthy country</p>
Weeds	<p>Concerns raised about the potential introduction of ‘weeds and seeds’ to both the Powell Creek site and utilities corridor as a result of clearing and project activities, including Gamba and Mission Grass.</p>	Bart Irwin; Consolidated Pastoral Company	EIS – Appendix 18 on Weeds Management
Fires	<p>Pastoralists report major issues with bushfires, both from lightning and fires lit deliberately or accidentally along the Stuart Highway. Issues from this includes damage to grazing land and the natural environment, reduced productivity and substantial staff resources fighting fires.</p> <p>Sun Cable would be expected to manage the risk of fires and be self-sufficient in responding.</p>	Consolidated Pastoral Company	SIA – Healthy country
Gunn Point	<p>No issues were raised regarding Sun Cable’s impacts on biodiversity at Gunn Point, except to check that the project wouldn’t impact on conservation zones and an area of monsoon vine thicket (discussed using maps). People visiting information displays commented that public access to Gunn Point Beach has increased since Gunn Point Road was upgraded.</p> <p>The Gunn Point beach area was described as busy and ‘run down’, with numerous 4WD access tracks creating erosion of the foreshore. Many campers leave their piles of rubbish (despite signs asking campers to take their rubbish away). Campers often fish from the beach. When asked about</p>	Public comments	SIA – Healthy country

	<p>favourite fishing spots, no concerns were expressed about the nearshore subsea cable route.</p> <p>Tiwi stakeholders, who share with Larrakia people customary connections with Gunn Point, discussed potential opportunities for ranger-led land and sea management at Gunn Point.</p>		
Rehabilitation and offsets	<p>There were some queries about rehabilitation of the corridor after installation of the overhead power lines, at the Murrumujuk converter site and at the solar site at the end of its 70-year life. Also, several questions about potential offsets for land clearing, opportunities to provide carbon offsets and opportunities for ranger groups in land management. Ranger groups are a major employer in remote areas and jobs on country tend to be the easiest to recruit to.</p>	<p>NAILSMA; JCAC; Andrew Oliver; Chris Neade; Public sessions</p>	<p>EIS – Chapter 2 Proposal description; Greenhouse Gas Abatement Plan SIMP</p>
Waste and disposal of panels	<p>Concerns about how panels and batteries are disposed of and any environmental implications from waste. Questions about how long they last.</p> <p>(Sun Cable is preparing a study on the disposal of batteries and panels, which would include recycling and repurposing. No panels will be disposed of in land fill.)</p>	<p>Public sessions</p>	<p>EIS – Chapter 2 Proposal description</p>
Interview topics: living environment (amenity issues)			
Reduced access	<p>Elliott people wanted reassurance that the project wouldn't reduce access to hunting areas on Powell Creek.</p> <p>In Litchfield, stakeholders wanted reassurance that the utilities corridor wouldn't block access roads to properties. Sun Cable provided assurance on this.</p> <p>During public information sessions, many people checked maps for the location of the utilities corridor and distance to their properties. Most seemed unaware that the utilities corridor had been set aside. No specific concerns were raised, although some made disparaging comments about large projects threatening their rural way of life.</p> <p>During consultation along the railway corridor (a separate scope of work), a landowner was concerned about the impact of the OHTL on mustering operations, particularly in areas where cattle need to be moved across the railway easement.</p>	<p>Public sessions; Litchfield Council</p>	<p>SIA – Living environment</p>
Reduced amenity	<p>There is potential for disruption to the environs, particularly homesteads and outstations because of increased traffic, dust, noise and lights at night. This wasn't raised by any stakeholders, but there is uncertainty with this finding due to limited pastoral interviews.</p> <p>There were questions about the visual impacts of the overhead transmission line poles and why the cables couldn't go underground, for both aesthetic reasons and to avoid disruption. Stakeholders generally accepted the explanation that it was more expensive and disruptive to the environment to underground the cables and that underground cables also lose more energy than overhead lines.</p>	<p>Public sessions</p>	<p>SIA – Living environment</p> <p>EIS – Chapters and Appendices on Air Quality, Traffic, Atmospheric Processes</p>

	From the separate consultation with pastoralists along the railway corridor, one person expressed concern that a field of solar panels will heat up the surrounding area ('heat island' effect) (<i>SC: ecological studies show this is highly unlikely</i>).		
Worker behaviour	Stakeholders raised the importance of strict codes of conduct for workers, to ensure they don't detract from the quality of life of communities and pastoralists through poor behaviour, visiting nearby recreational or heritage sites, driving off access roads or hunting.	NT Police; Consolidated Pastoral Company; Dept of Families	SIA – Living environment
Interview topic: Having a voice and a say in governance			
Free, prior and informed consent	<p>The Northern Land Council has a statutory responsibility to identify Aboriginal people with rights to speak for country and negotiate for compensation for disturbance to Aboriginal or Native Title Land.</p> <p>Some stakeholders raised reservations about the NLC's records and whether the right people were being included in these statutory processes. This is an issue for the NLC to resolve, however, it did appear some of the criticism was due to historic issues and confusion resulting from Sun Cable's earlier interest in Karlantijipa Land Trust country (in the Central Land Council's area).</p> <p>While Larrakia and Tiwi people may not be able to negotiate for statutory benefits, such as royalties or an ILUA, they were nonetheless keen to get benefits from the project, including contracts. (<i>Sun Cable confirmed it was keen to ensure benefits for everyone.</i>)</p> <p>Several meetings were held with the NLC to discuss the processes for engagement and SIA, timelines and work on ILUA negotiations and community development as separate processes. The NLC wants to see a best practice SIA for this project.</p>	Aboriginal stakeholders; Northern Land Council	<p>SIA – Having a voice</p> <p>Sun Cable Remote (Aboriginal) Engagement Strategy</p> <p>Separate NLC consultation</p>
Consultation	<p>There was some criticism of delayed consultation, whether the NLC had identified the right traditional owners and anger from traditional owners for an earlier proposed site that wasn't proceeded with.</p> <p>It was made clear that it was the land councils' statutory role to identify traditional owners, coordinate engagement and agreement-making and the Aboriginal Areas Protection Authority's role to work with custodians to identify and protect sacred sites. Cultural monitors worked on ecological and cultural heritage surveys.</p> <p>Sun Cable's general approach was to respect these statutory processes, then supplement land council consultation with general community consultation and specific interviews for this Social Impact Assessment.</p> <p>There were delays to consultation beyond the control of Sun Cable, including a delay of several months after the death of a respected elder, then another delay of several months due to</p>	Land Councils, Aboriginal stakeholders, NARMCO	SIA – Having a voice

	<p>the relocation of part of the project from Middle Arm to Murrumujuk. Consultation was at times disrupted by COVID-19 travel restrictions.</p> <p>Stakeholders warned of the danger of consultation being skewed by the views of strong families and suggested it was important to reach all families affected by the project.</p> <p>“You need to get in on the ground floor, be talking to people right from the start.” (John Jansen, NARMCO)</p> <p>Comments were made that too many mining companies had made promises over the years, which hadn’t been kept, while onshore gas companies didn’t have a permanent presence in the region. It was suggested by several people that Sun Cable should have local offices and staff.</p> <p>A key challenge, particularly given the compressed timeframe, is consulting and negotiating with so many disparate groups. The Sun Cable project is a linear project affecting many land tenures and groups and two very different regions at either end (the Barkly and Greater Darwin). Consultation for much of the project, including the railway corridor, will continue into 2022.</p> <p>Some families, especially on land where Native Title had been extinguished, were reluctant to work through the NLC and wanted to talk direct to Sun Cable but this was rarely a straight-forward issue.</p> <p>It was suggested that meetings on country were better than meeting in Tennant Creek, to avoid confusion about who could speak for country (a site visit was subsequently arranged).</p> <p>Tiwi people wanted recognition of longstanding connections to parts of Gunn Point, which includes many burial sites. Tiwi, Wulna and Larrakia Traditional Owners were included in cultural heritage surveys of this area (see Heritage Impact Assessment).</p>		
Communication	<p>Original Power suggested running education sessions with communities about solar power.</p> <p>The Papulu Apparr-Kari (Language Centre) in Tennant Creek suggested working with the Elliott School’s multi-media centre to develop materials on the project. The language centre runs the bilingual education program in Elliott and has produced books in Jingulu and Mudburra to preserve language and biocultural knowledge about plants and animals.</p> <p>Local schools would be interested in working with Sun Cable to produce materials on solar power and the project.</p>	Karan Hayward, Original Power	SIA – Having a voice
Sustainability of decisions	<p>Several stakeholders suggested that ideas and solutions have to come from the community to be sustainable. This extends from employment to harnessing communities’ hopes and aspirations to delivering legacy benefits. Too often, ideas are</p>	Maisie Floyd (Education), Rick Fletcher	SIA – Having a voice

	<p>imposed by (well-meaning) outsiders, so lack local buy-in and context.</p> <p>Julalikari is negotiating a Local Decision-Making Agreement with the Northern Territory Government.</p> <p>Government needs to re-engage with communities with place-based conversations and get buy-in by exploring what Aboriginal people really want.</p> <p>“You have to find the community’s energy and work with it.” (Rick Fletcher)</p> <p>“People need to have ownership of investments or they won’t value them. When communities can apply their own funds to things they need and it has buy-in, it adds to wellbeing and pride.” (Barb Kelly)</p> <p>“Ideas have to come from the community to be sustainable.”</p> <p>“People need to see themselves as working for Sun Cable for jobs to be sustainable. You need to meet with people, listen to them and plan with them.”</p> <p>Community-driven planning is intended to be part of the Barkly Regional Deal, which may inform future community development or community investments.</p>	<p>Barbara Kelly (Families), JCAC</p>	
General issues			
	<p>Where will the panels be made and where do the components come from? How much comes from China?</p> <p>What is their longevity?</p> <p>How will they be disposed of?</p> <p>To what extent will Australian materials be used?</p> <p>Issues around security of the cables and redundancy should one fail. Protection of the cables at the entrance to Darwin Harbour where ships often anchor.</p> <p>How will the cable get over the Timor Trench? (<i>Sun Cable: it will be laid on the sea floor</i>)</p> <p>How will the panels be cleaned and how much water will this use?</p> <p>Where will the workers’ accommodation camp be? Will there be one battery or lots of batteries? Some questions about what will be on the site, but minimal.</p> <p>Where is the money coming from? Who owns the company?</p> <p>Questions about the involvement of the Singapore and Indonesian Governments, levels of Australian Government support.</p> <p>Lots of technical questions, what materials would be used in construction of the poles and cables.</p>	<p>Public sessions</p>	<p>Communication materials</p> <p>Project Description</p>

	<p>A lot of questions about the timing of the project, procurement, how to get a job or win tenders.</p> <p>Could bilbies tunnel under the solar panels?</p> <p>In the Barkly: would earth tremors affect the panels?</p> <p>On the Tiwi Islands: would tremors impact on the cables?</p> <p>Litchfield: Could cables withstand cyclones?</p> <p>Similarities with other large renewable projects, e.g. the Asian Renewable Energy Hub in the East Pilbara.</p> <p>Questions about whether Sun Cable was paying for use of the railway corridor.</p>		
Cumulative			
<p>Cumulative</p>	<p>Other projects around Powell Creek/Newcastle Waters include sand mining, onshore oil and gas exploration, Encounter Minerals and BHP's copper exploration on the other side of the highway. Further afield is Fortune Agribusiness's proposal for Singleton Station, Arafura Resources' Nolans rare earths project near Aileron and Verdant Resources' proposed Ammaroo phosphate project near Ampilatawatja. On the one hand, Consolidated Pastoral saw these investments as good for the Territory's economy. On the other, these and other solar projects could substantially change the dominant use of land for pastoral activities.</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">"If the proof of the solar concept is successful, what's the limit for other pastoralists? These are quite large tracts of land. What comes after Sun Cable? How do they maintain what has been developed, how do they make the area more attractive to people living here and who want to continue living here?" (pastoralist)</p> <p>In Tennant Creek, there was cautious optimism that the many proposals on the drawing board would be good for the town, as long as locals win contracts and can get staff. Projects include construction under the Barkly Regional Deal, gold mining, a common user processing centre, a feasibility study for a logistics facility, solar and hydrogen renewable energy projects.</p> <p>In Katherine, government and business commented that there was an over-supply of big projects in the immediate pipeline and a shortage of labour. Current projects include upgrades at the Tindal Airbase, a proposed cotton gin and Seafarms' Sea Dragon project at Legune Station. The ability to capitalise on opportunities from Sun Cable to some extent will depend on sequencing of the various projects.</p> <p>In the Top End, the key cumulative impact raised was the progressive industrialisation of Middle Arm.</p> <p>A general cumulative impact is land clearing from multiple renewable energy, agribusiness and onshore oil and gas projects.</p>	<p>Public sessions; Consolidated Pastoral Company; Chamber of Commerce; Office of the Chief Minister Alice Springs; Member for Barkly; DITT in Tennant Creek and Katherine</p>	<p>EIS and SIA – cumulative impacts</p>

<p>Legacy issues</p>	<p>Asked about potential legacy projects, stakeholders suggested jobs and a long-term legacy of skills development, addressing poverty and finding solutions for energy insecurity.</p> <p>“This project has the vision and ability to lead the way in ensuring major projects enhance the regions that host them, rather than just leaving ugly scars as has happened in the past” (Karen Sheldon).</p> <p>As Tony Miles puts it, the image of Sun Cable will be influenced by the company’s contribution to the lives of people living in poverty along the overhead transmission line route and Sun Cable:</p> <p>“being aware that this huge solar farm powering a super city thousands of miles away is almost science fiction. But all along that pathway are some of the most disadvantaged people in the world and those power cables... for the local person whose country it goes through, what is the image of Sun Cable? There is the big contrast between the super city, the science fiction and right in their pathway are Aboriginal people in terrible housing conditions who can’t even get access to reliable power. You can see the image in your mind of what it looks like. A satirical cartoon of a township next to a super city all lit up.”</p> <p>“The best community benefit would be to somehow support increased use of power in Elliott as part of a mutual benefit. Given Sun Cable is the expert in this, why not have a mini-site in Elliott? If you have all this brainpower and technology associated with the project, there must be some way to create a sustainable community. Obviously, with the cost of air conditioning, power is expensive.” (Barb Kelly)</p> <p>People felt Jemena had failed to leave a legacy from the Northern Gas Pipeline. Pat Brahim, of the Warumungu Patta Group (Traditional Owners of Tennant Creek) and former CEO of JCAC, suggested the best legacy would be long-term skills development whereas those from Jemena were short-term:</p> <p>“They talked about jobs and skills required. But it was just labouring jobs. What we get is a big hole in the ground and a pipeline going through our country. People got ILUAs because it was part of their country... from a legacy point of view, we want something to benefit everyone... it is the people who are skilled who get the jobs. We need to look at the people who are in the school system now... people working to look after country who aren’t Native Title Holders should be included in discussions.” (Pat Brahim)</p> <p>Sun Cable is talking to relevant stakeholders about legacy research and development activities that would build regional expertise in renewable energy systems. The company plans to sponsor a centre for renewable excellence in the Territory.</p>	<p>Pat Brahim (Patta Group); Tony Miles (Anyinginyi); Dept of Families; Businesses; Government departments</p>	<p>SIA – People and communities</p>
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See the Social Impact Management Plan (SIMP) at Attachment B to the SIA for a discussion of how positive and negative impacts will be mitigated or enhanced.

4 Recommendations and gap analysis

For many stakeholders the EIS consultation was their first contact with Sun Cable regarding the project. It was made clear that the EIS meetings were only the first step in Sun Cable's ongoing communication and consultation on the project.

Best practice consultation for Aboriginal communities in particular suggests the importance of building on established relationships and networks, being able to spend time in a community, and providing the time and resources for people to adequately consider information and provide feedback.

The COVID-19 pandemic presented challenges for Sun Cable personnel in travelling to the Territory and to regional areas during 2020 and 2021. This issue, along with sorry business and other constraints, delayed some key consultation. Sun Cable has recruited several Territorians as staff and consultants to support development of the Project and now has an internal team to implement a comprehensive ongoing engagement strategy.

Gap analysis has identified a number of stakeholders who were unavailable in the EIS consultation timeframe. Sun Cable staff will follow up with these stakeholders, as well as maintaining relationships with those already met with.

Key recommendations arising from initial consultation:

- participative approaches to community planning (where possible through existing governance mechanisms)
- develop and implement a stakeholder engagement strategy to support project development and implementation and the recommendations of the attached Social Impact Management Plan (SIMP) and Sun Cable's Territory Benefit Plan
- review and update the workforce development plan closer to the start of construction, incorporating collaboration with key employment and training providers, support services and land councils
- prepare an events calendar to identify events Sun Cable can attend, present at or sponsor: such as regional forums, the July show circuit, October Business Month
- a community investment strategy to provide community-level funding for sporting, arts and community initiatives (complementing Sun Cable's proposed Indigenous Land Use Agreements and Territory Benefit Plan)
- industry events coordinated with the NT Chamber of Commerce and ICN at the appropriate times to provide more detailed information on likely procurement packaging and standards expected of contractors
- close liaison with Aboriginal businesses to match packages to local capabilities and aspirations
- regular community updates to keep people informed
- work with those with cultural authority, schools and the Language Centre to produce project information in a culturally appropriate format, including in language
- greater use of visual material (including animations) to explain how solar energy is produced and dispatched throughout the solar system.
- explore with affected communities whether they want to establish reference groups as a way of listening to community questions and reporting back
- closer to the start of work, open a shopfront in Elliott and/or Tennant Creek to make it easier for local people to ask questions and seek jobs.

5 Conclusion

Engagement in general would suggest support for Sun Cable's proposed AAPowerLink project, despite some reservations on issues such as land clearing. However, for some, this support is conditional on seeing immediate and legacy benefits delivered to those people and communities most affected by the project, particularly in the Barkly region.

The aim of consultation was to provide stakeholders and the general community with information on the project, listen to their local knowledge, feed this into the planning and approvals process and, where possible, provide responses to concerns raised.

We thank the many people who provided the gift of their time and valuable insights. The issues raised were wide-ranging and have informed Sun Cable's project design and community benefits focus.

While many issues reflected systemic deficits that are beyond Sun Cable's ability to address, consultation for the AAPowerLink Project has built a rich picture of community sensitivities, aspirations and local context. This has informed other Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) studies, in particular the Social Impact Assessment (SIA).

The final stage of consultation will be to prepare a summary document and organise feedback sessions in early 2022 to show how issues have been addressed in the EIS.

Attachments: Materials used during consultation

Community Information September 2021

Australia-Asia PowerLink (AAPowerLink)

Who is Sun Cable?

Sun Cable is an Australian-founded, world-leading renewable energy company. Our vision is to see the Indo-Pacific region powered by renewable energy, harnessing Australia's high-quality solar resource.

We are creating a renewable and sustainable energy export industry and reducing global greenhouse gas emissions.

Overview of the Project

Sun Cable is proposing to build a renewable energy transmission system called the Australia-Asia PowerLink (AAPowerLink), which will include one of the world's largest solar farm and battery systems in the Barkly Region of the Northern Territory.

The project will generate, store and transmit renewable electricity to Australian and Asian markets.

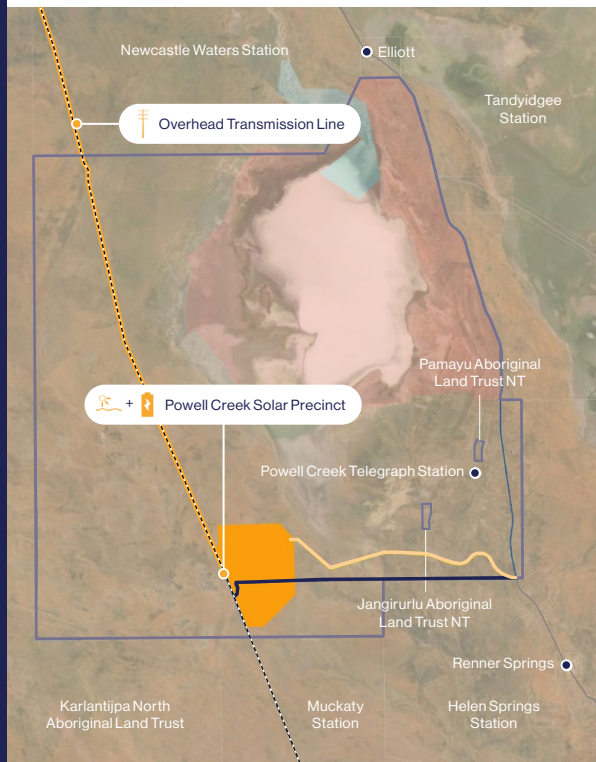
The AAPowerLink has Major Project Status with the Northern Territory and Australian Governments and the initiative is on Infrastructure Australia's Priority Listing.



Northern Territory Project Area



- | | |
|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| — Highway | ○ Powell Creek Station |
| — Coastal Waters limit | ○ Cadastre |
| — Oceanic Shoals Marine Park | ● Project Area |
| — Alice Springs to Darwin Railway | ● National Parks |
| — Proposed Gravel Access Road | ● Lake Woods Conservation Area |
| — Proposed Bitumen Access Road | ● Longreach Waterhole Protected Area |



Powell Creek Solar Precinct

Respect for Communities in Which We Operate

Sun Cable will consult and work with the communities in which we operate to identify and create benefits for the region.

We pay our respects to the Traditional Owners of the land where our project will operate. In the Northern Territory this is from Powell Creek to the Arafura Sea and all the land in between.

Key Locations

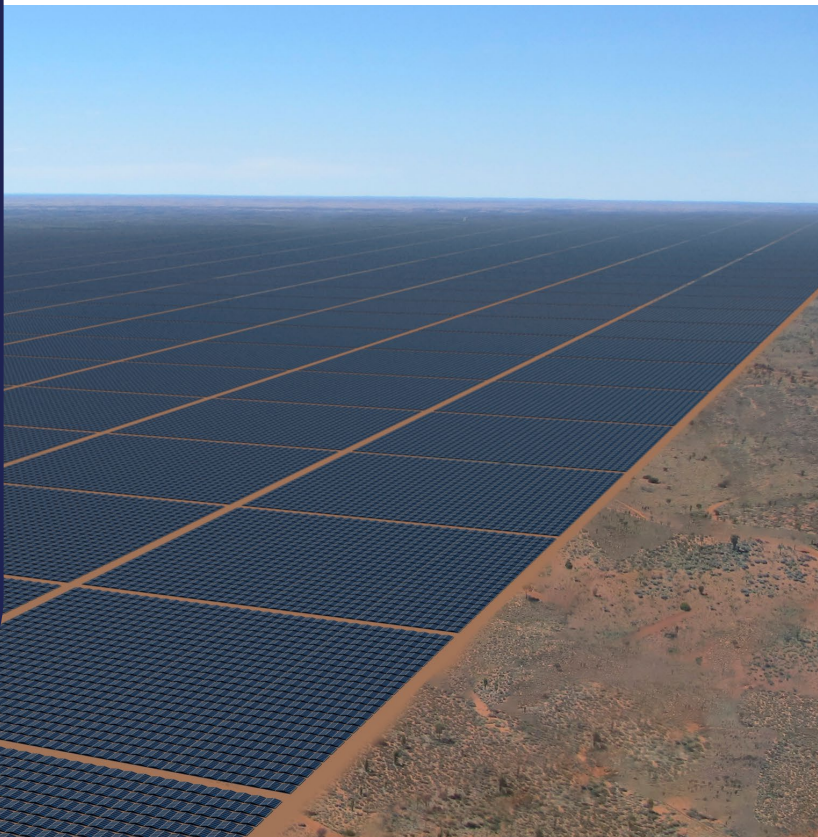
The proposed location for the solar farm and battery precinct is 12,000 hectares of land on Powell Creek Station, about 70 kilometres south-west of Elliott.

The Powell Creek site was selected as Sun Cable's preferred site because it:

- is one of the most consistently sunny places on earth
- has very flat land suitable for solar panels
- is close to railway corridor for transmission of electricity and transport of equipment.

From Powell Creek, approximately 800 kilometres of overhead transmission line will follow the railway corridor to Livingstone, south of Darwin, then travel through the Litchfield Municipality to Murrumujuk, on the Gunn Point Peninsula.

A converter station and battery will be built near Murrumujuk on 55 hectares of land. Underground cables will enter the sea on Murrumujuk beach, and subsea cables will extend all the way to Singapore. Access to the beach will be maintained. There will be no permanent impact to fishing and recreational activities on the beach.





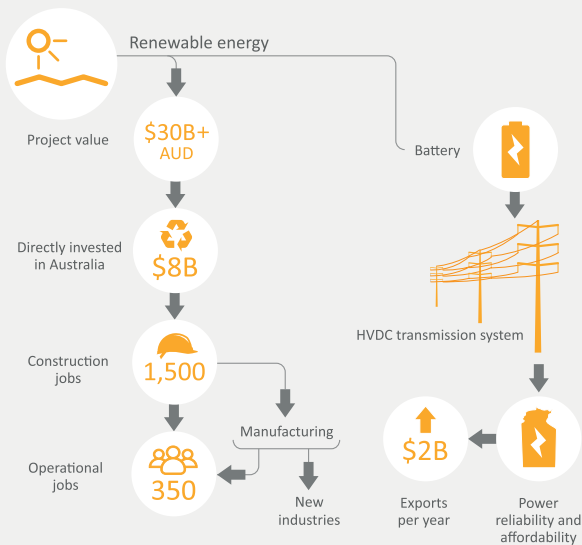
Benefits of the Project

The project will have many regional, Territory, Australia-wide and global benefits. Some of these benefits are:

- provides affordable, reliable power to the NT
- business opportunities for local people
- jobs in construction and operations
- skills training and education support
- a new centre of excellence for renewable energy in the NT
- reduces global greenhouse gas emissions
- it will make Australia a proud world leader in the export of renewable energy, and boost manufacturing and export revenue.

Sun Cable is working with the Northern Land Council to establish an Indigenous Land Use Agreement that will provide benefits to the Traditional Owners of the land on which the project is proposed.

Benefits to the NT



Sun Cable also plans to build a large battery on Middle Arm Peninsula and a solar array manufacturing facility on East Arm Peninsula. More information on these projects can be found on our website.

Exporting the Sun's Energy

The steps in the process:

- capture the sun's energy and produce electricity at a large solar farm
- store this electricity in a giant battery
- convert the electricity to high voltage direct current
- send electricity to Murrumbidgee using poles and wires along the railway corridor and utilities corridor
- provide electricity to the Darwin and Katherine region
- send electricity to Singapore using underwater cables on the seafloor.

Construction

Once all environmental approvals are issued, construction will take up to four years, creating up to 1500 jobs across the footprint of the project. Construction is expected to commence in 2024.

The solar farm and battery at Powell Creek will be built at the same time as the transmission line to Murrumbidgee. Solar arrays will be built in Darwin and transported to Powell Creek by train. Most equipment will come to site by train or road from Darwin.

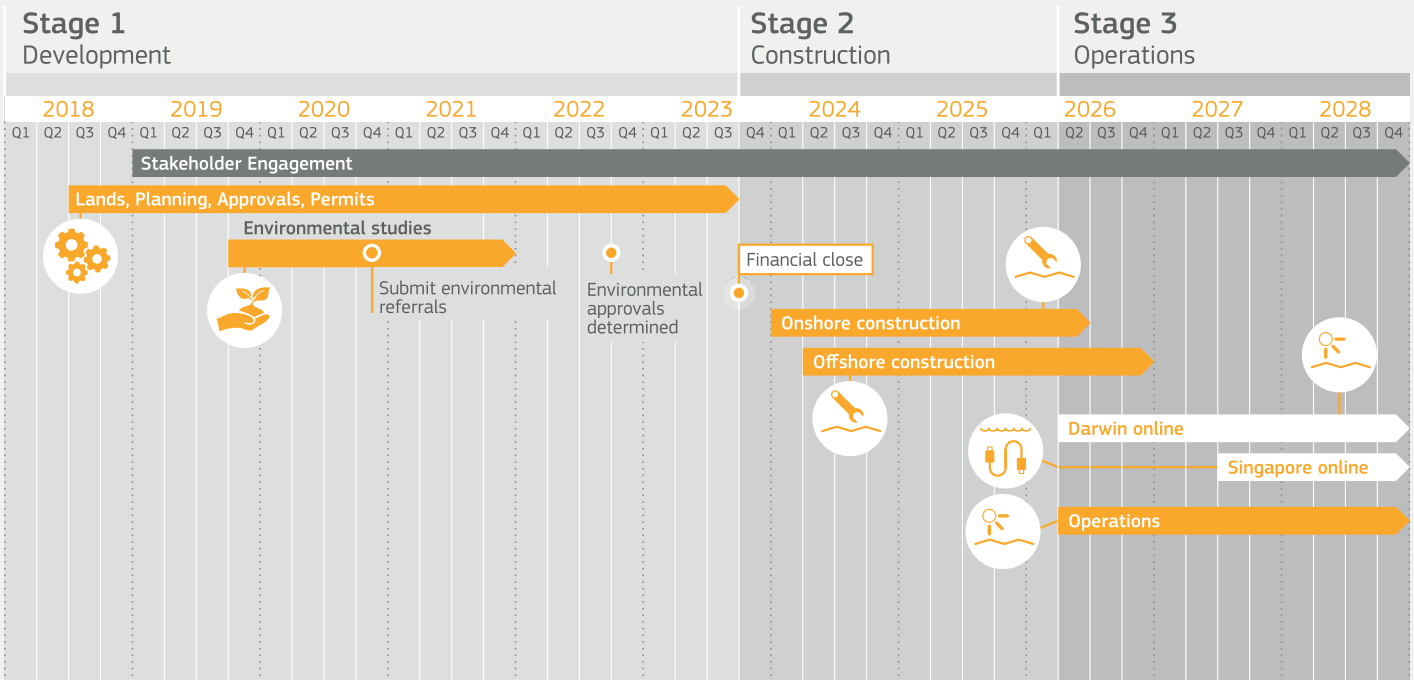
The subsea cables will be laid between Darwin and Singapore, using large specially designed cable-laying ships.

Sustainability

The project is expected to abate a total of 8.6 million tonnes of CO2 equivalent. Of that, 2.5 million tonnes will be abated in Darwin, or nearly 13 per cent of the Northern Territory's total greenhouse gas emissions (based on 2019 levels).

Renewable energy is good for the planet, reducing reliance on fossil fuels for energy production and reducing greenhouse gas emissions. This helps reduce climate change.

Our environmental studies will look for ways to avoid and minimise impacts to environment and heritage values, as well as reduce greenhouse gas emissions during construction.



Environmental and Social Studies

Sun Cable is preparing an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) to further understand how the project could impact on the environment and how we can mitigate those impacts or generate benefits.

Studies include:

- culture and heritage including studies of cultural values and sacred sites
- biodiversity (plants and animals, threatened species)
- surface water (creeks, waterholes, billabongs)
- soils (waste, contamination)
- people's health and quality of life from traffic, noise, dust, visual impact of the towers
- social and economic impacts (accommodation, housing, community cohesion, jobs, economic benefits).



Brush-tailed Mulgara



Greater Bilby

Regulatory Approvals

Sun Cable has to obtain many approvals from the Northern Territory and Commonwealth Governments, then make a final decision to proceed with construction.

Indicative timelines:

- 2020 – submit environmental referrals - complete
- 2021 – submit variation to environmental referrals - complete
- end 2021 - lodge environmental and heritage studies
- 2022 - environmental approvals determined
- 2023, Q4 - financial close
- 2024, Q1 - onshore construction starts
- 2026 - electricity transmission to Darwin commences
- 2027 - electricity transmission to Singapore commences

Consultation

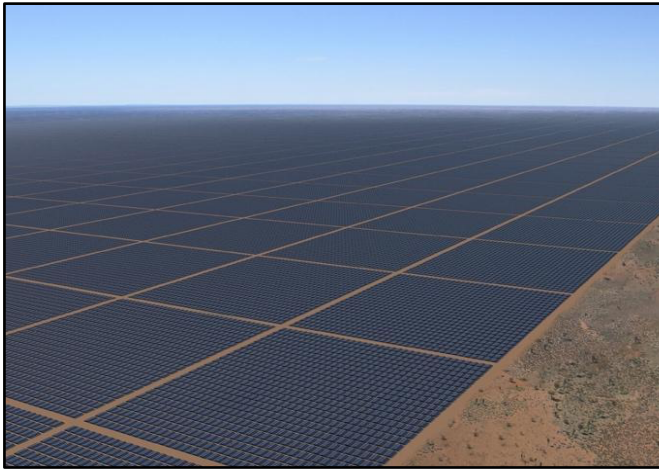
You can get in touch with us at any time to raise issues or ask questions.

- you can visit our website - www.suncable.sg
- you can email us at - info@aapowerlink.sg

Sun Cable will consult with affected communities and stakeholders regularly throughout the project. We will provide summaries and findings of our studies.



SUN CABLE AUSTRALIA-ASIA PowerLink



Darwin Region – Community Consultation

Sun Cable is holding community information stalls to talk about the Australia-Asia PowerLink project (AAPowerLink).

Sun Cable proposes to build a solar farm and battery precinct at Powell Creek, about 70 kilometres south-west of Elliott. This electricity will be sent to Murrumujuk near Gunn Point via overhead transmission lines then to Singapore via underwater cables.

These information stalls provide the opportunity to come and speak with representatives of the project team, ask questions and give feedback.

If you are not able to make these sessions, you can contact the project team on info@aapowerlink.sg or visit www.suncable.sg.

Gateway Shopping Centre

Date Wed 22 Sept
Time 3pm-5pm

Howard Springs IGA

Date Fri 24 Sept
Time 9am-12pm

Freds Pass Market

Date Sat 9 Oct
Time 9am-12pm

Gateway Shopping Centre

Date Sat 23 Oct
Time 11am-2pm

Coolalinga Central

Date Sun 24 Oct
Time 11am-2pm

Sun Cable Australia-Asia PowerLink (AAPowerLink) Project



Sun Cable proposes to build a solar farm and battery precinct at Powell Creek, about 70 kilometres south-west of Kulumindini (Elliott).

This electricity will be sent to Murrumujuk near Gunn Point via overhead transmission lines then to Singapore via underwater cables.

Sun Cable will visit Marlinja on 4 November to provide information on the project and listen to your questions and ideas.

If you are not able to attend this session, you can contact the project team on info@aapowerlink.sg or visit www.suncable.sg.

Marlinja community information session

Where: Community Centre,
Marlinja

Date: Thursday, 4 November 2021

Time: 10 am to 2 pm.

This is a general public meeting and is open to all residents. Drop in any time between 10 and 2.

Sun Cable Australia-Asia PowerLink (AAPowerLink) Project



Sun Cable proposes to build a solar farm and battery precinct at Powell Creek, about 70 kilometres south-west of Elliott. The electricity will be sent to Murrumujuk near Gunn Point via overhead transmission lines, then to Singapore via underwater cables.

Sun Cable will hold community information stalls in Tennant Creek and Elliott in the week starting 18 October. You can find out more about the project, ask questions or provide feedback.

If you are not able to make these sessions, you can contact the project team on info@aapowerlink.sg or visit www.suncable.sg

Monday 18 October, 12-2pm

Tennant Creek, outside the temporary IGA/BP

Wednesday 20 October, 12-2pm

Tennant Creek, Peko Park

Thursday 21 October, 12-2pm

Elliott, outside the Centrelink office

Friday 22 October, 12-2pm

Elliott, outside the Centrelink office

Sun Cable Australia-Asia PowerLink (AAPowerLink) Project



Sun Cable proposes to build a solar farm and battery precinct at Powell Creek, about 70 kilometres south-west of Elliott. The electricity will be sent via overhead transmission lines that follow the railway corridor and a utilities corridor to Murrumujuk near Gunn Point, then travel to Singapore via underwater cables.

Sun Cable will hold community information stalls in Katherine in the week starting 25 October. You can find out more about the project, ask questions or provide feedback.

Monday, 25 October
11am - 2pm

Katherine Shopping Centre

Tuesday, 26 October
11am - 2pm

Katherine Shopping Centre

If you can't make these sessions, feel free to contact the project team on **info@aapowerlink.sg** or visit **www.suncable.sg**

Sun Cable Australia-Asia PowerLink (AAPowerLink) Project



Sun Cable proposes to build a solar farm and battery precinct at Powell Creek, about 70 kilometres south-west of Elliott.

This electricity will be sent to Murrumujuk near Gunn Point via overhead transmission lines then to Singapore via underwater cables.

Sun Cable will provide an update on the project on Monday, 1 November and seek feedback from the Barkly community.

If you are not able to make this briefing, you can contact the project team on info@aapowerlink.sg or visit www.suncable.sg.

Sun Cable briefing

With Jett Street, Head of Territory Affairs

Battery Hill Mining Centre

4.30 pm, Monday 1 November 2021 - followed by light refreshments

RSVP - Attendance is free but please RSVP to jane@truenorthcomm.com.au for catering purposes