

Golden Beach Energy Storage Project

Offshore Drilling

The Project

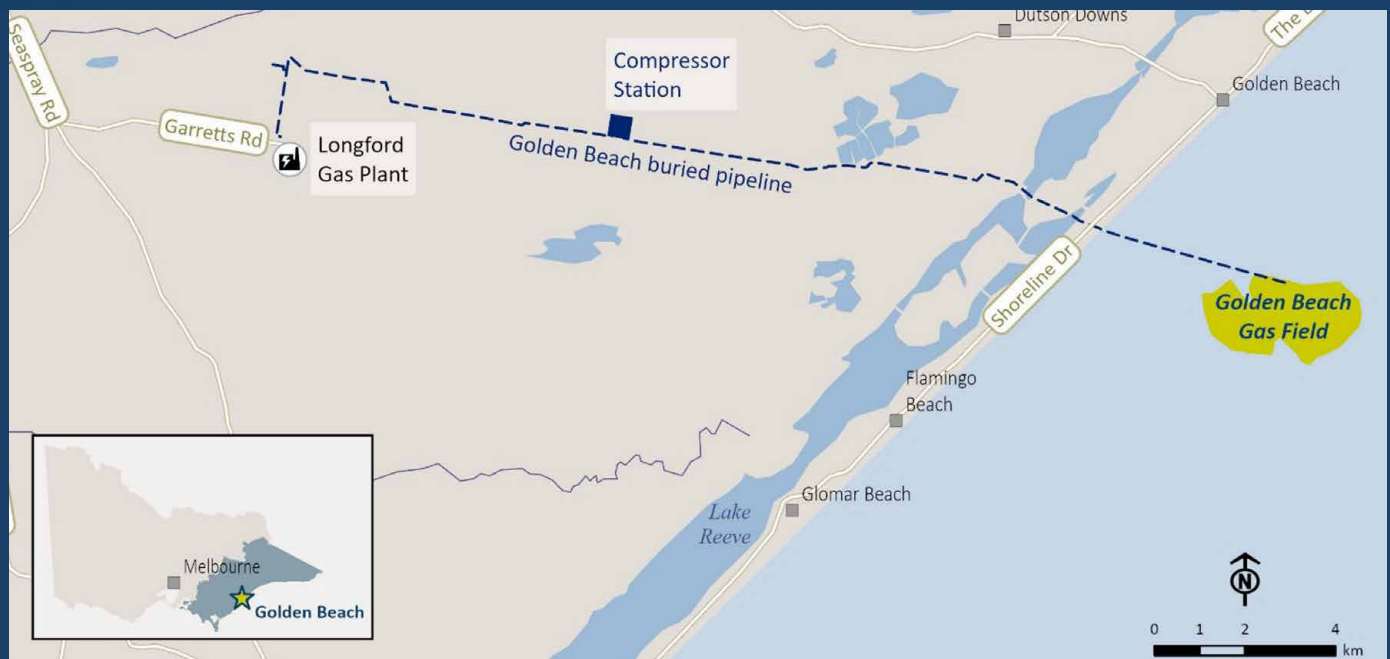
The Golden Beach Energy Storage Project is a strategically located gas storage project being developed by GB Energy.

The project will initially produce natural gas from the Golden Beach Gas Field located in the Gippsland Basin, approximately 4 km offshore from the Ninety Mile Beach coastline in Victoria and close to the township of Golden Beach.

The project will then transition to an underground gas storage facility, providing peak day supply to the east coast energy market. Natural gas will be transported from the storage facility to an onshore processing plant near Longford via an underground pipeline.

Having gas in storage and available for use on peak days will help balance the energy market and ensure security of supply as more renewable energy enters the system.

Figure 1: Project Area – Golden Beach Energy Storage Project



Why Store Gas?

As we move toward a sustainable future, renewable energy sources like wind and solar power are key players in reducing Australia's greenhouse gas emissions. But their intermittent nature can make the energy grid unstable. This is where gas storage projects play a critical role, acting as a crucial partner to help balance and support a consistent energy supply.

GB Energy acknowledges the Gunaikurnai people as the traditional owners in our project area. We recognise their continuing connection to land, waters and sea country. We pay our respect to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures; and to elders past and present.

The Drilling Activities

GB Energy is planning to commence a gas drilling campaign during the second half of 2026. The drilling activity will be in Victorian State waters (Vic/RL1(V) permit), which is just over 4km offshore from the township of Golden Beach, in water depth of approximately 20 meters.

The drilling activities will take approximately 140 days to complete, and will be conducted 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

The timing may vary and is contingent of regulatory approvals, weather and rig / vessel schedules.

Drilling

Drilling of the three wells will be carried out using the Valaris 107 jack-up drilling rig. As this type of rig cannot move on its own, it will be towed into position by up to three support vessels.

Once in place, the rig's legs will be lowered to the seabed, and it will be raised securely above sea level.

The rig will operate in accordance with international safety & environmental standards and will have an approved Safety Case and Environmental Plan.

Well Testing and Flaring

Before the drilling rig departs, each well will be fully tested. This will involve controlled flaring, where gas is safely burned off in intermittent periods at varying rates. During testing, the flare may be bright and produce some noise, which is normal and expected. The total period of flaring is not expected to exceed 24 hours of cumulative flaring for each of the three wells.

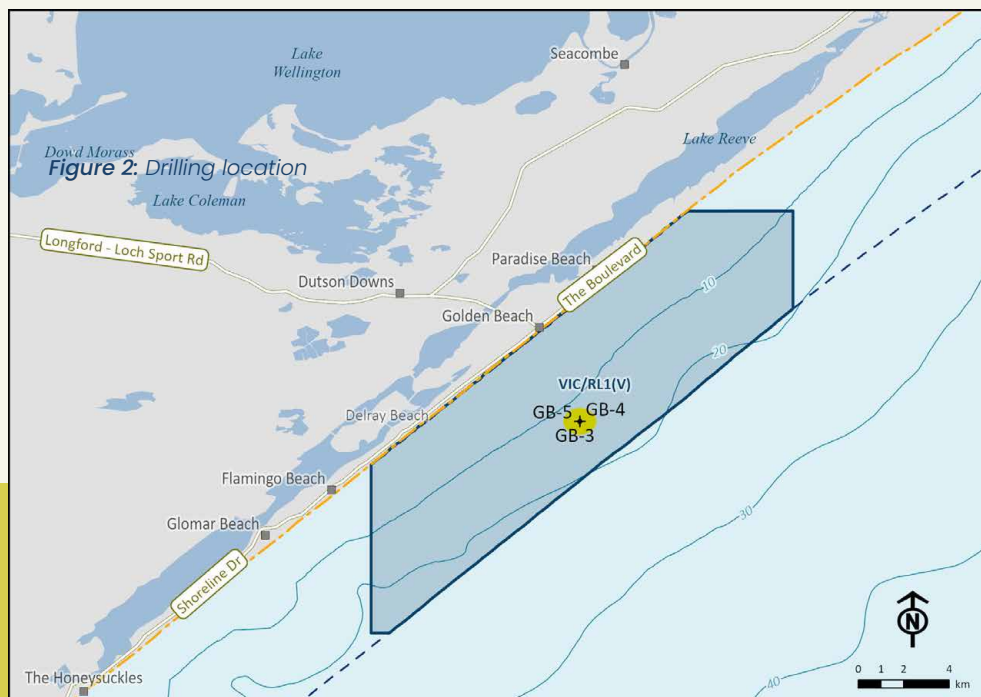
Petroleum Safety Zone and Notice to Mariners

During drilling, a 500-metre Petroleum Safety Zone (PSZ) will be established around the drilling rig in line with Australian offshore safety regulations (the Offshore Petroleum and Greenhouse Gas Storage Act 2010 (Vic)). This zone helps ensure the safety of all vessels and personnel operating in the area.

Details about the rig's location and timing will be shared through official channels, including Notices to Mariners issued by the Australian Hydrographic Office and AUSCOAST warnings from the Australian Maritime Safety Authority. These notices help inform other marine users about temporary changes or restrictions in the area.

The drilling locations are situated within Victorian state waters where commercial fishing activity is limited. As vessels are required to avoid Petroleum Safety Zones, no significant impacts to fishing operations are anticipated.

Closer to the start of drilling, GB Energy will provide further information about the timing of operations and support vessel movements to relevant fishing industry bodies to help ensure clear communication and coordination with local fishers.



Above: Picture from the shoreline showing visual impact of the Valaris 107 jack-up drilling rig during previous drilling at Golden Beach in 2023.

Potential impacts

GB Energy's aim is to minimise environmental and social impacts associated with the proposed drilling activities. To support this, GB Energy has carried out a detailed assessment to identify any potential impacts and consequences on the environment. This assessment considers factors such as the timing, duration, and location of the activities, as well as the environmental values and sensitivities of the surrounding area.

Key potential impacts of the drilling activity are described in Table 1, including a high-level summary of the relevant environmental commitments to minimise these impacts.

Table 1: Offshore Drilling Potential Impacts

Impact	How it will be addressed
Seabed disturbance	• Seabed survey completed to identify any obstructions • Rig move procedures in place
Displacement of Other Marine Users	• Notification to relevant stakeholders of the activity 4 weeks prior to the activity. • Temporary PSZ gazetted in the Victorian Government Gazette.
Planned discharges to the marine environment: sewage waste, treated bilge and deck wash, and cooling water and brine	• Routine discharges and vessel waste treatment systems will meet Maritime Pollution Convention (MARPOL) 73/78 requirements. • Treatment systems are routinely monitored and regularly maintained. • No discharge of oily water exceeding acceptable limit for oil in water content. • Planned chemical discharges assessed and confirmed consistent with the chemical assessment procedure prior to use.
Sound emissions	• Compliance with Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Regulations 2000 (Cth) Part 8 Division 8.1 interacting with cetaceans. • Well testing (flaring) will be kept to a minimal duration, in accordance with the Well Test Plan.
Light emissions	• Lighting will used in accordance with the National Light Pollution Guidelines for Wildlife • Lighting will be minimised to that required for safe navigation and operational requirements. • Well testing (flaring) will be kept to a minimal duration, in accordance with the Well Test Plan
Air emissions	• Air emissions from marine engines meet MARPOL 73/78 requirements and are routinely maintained. • Use of low sulphur content fuel
Discharge of cement	• Low toxicity cement additives are selected for use.
Drilling fluid and cuttings discharges	• Seawater-based fluids used. • Use of low toxicity fluids and additives. • Solids control equipment minimises fluids on cuttings prior to cuttings discharge overboard (i.e. fluids are returned for reuse). • Dynamic seabed and marine environment with rapid dispersion of sediment.
Drilling and completion fluid discharges	• Low toxicity chemical additives are selected for use in drilling, clean-up and completion fluids.

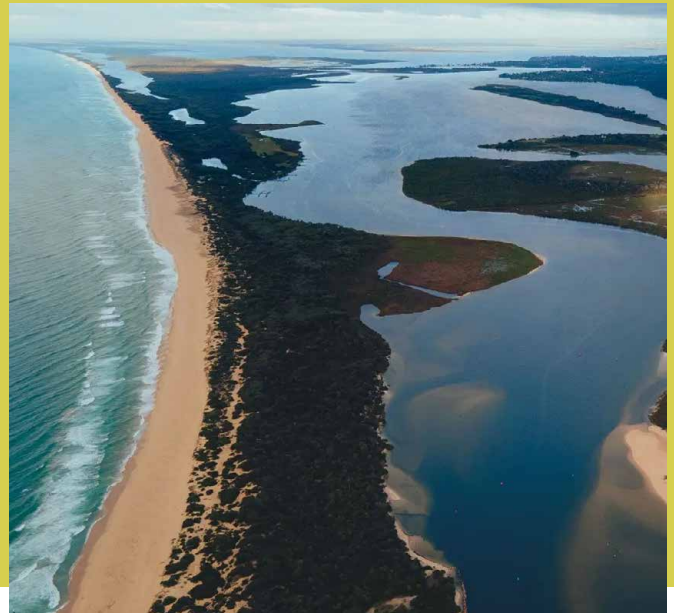
Potential impacts (Continued)

Unplanned Activities	How it will be addressed
Unplanned Wastes and Materials discharge (accidental loss)	• Waste handling, storage and disposal meets MARPOL 73/78 requirements. • Lifting equipment certified and routinely maintained. • Recovery of dropped objects where safe and practicable
Unplanned introduction of invasive marine species	• Ballast Water Management Plan and Certificate. • Biofouling Risk Assessment shows low risk of invasive marine species introduction
Interference with Other Marine Users	• Location within gazetted exclusion zones. • Communicate commencement of activity and exclusion zone to relevant persons via Notice to Mariners and via the Australian Maritime Safety Authority • Vessel crew and navigational equipment will meet rig/ vessel class requirements.
Unplanned interaction with marine fauna (vessel strike)	• Support vessels will comply with Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Regulations 2000 (Cth) Part 8 Division 8.1 interacting with cetaceans. • JUDR will be stationary during drilling activities. • Any injury/mortality of Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999 (Cth)-listed fauna will be reported to the Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water
Accidental release of fuel (vessel collision)	• Location within gazetted exclusion zones. • Communicate commencement of activity and exclusion zone to relevant persons via Notice to Mariners and via the Australian Maritime Safety Authority • Vessel crew and navigational equipment will meet rig/vessel class requirements. • Vessels travel at reduced speeds within PSZ
Loss of well control	• GB Energy wells are predominantly gas therefore oil spills are not applicable. • National regulatory (NOPSEMA) approved well operations management plan will be in place prior to commencement. • Regulatory approved Safety Case will be in place prior to commencement of activity. • Approved drilling and completions procedures will be in place. • Maintenance systems will be in place. • Well control equipment testing.

Local benefits

Whilst the specialised nature of the drilling campaign means that it is unlikely to provide local jobs, subsequent phases (including the construction phase) could create up to 1,000 jobs. Where possible, local contractors and materials will be used.

Once operating, the project will provide around 30 ongoing jobs. There will also be other flow-on benefits for the local community, such as sourcing goods and services locally where possible.



Community Engagement



GB Energy has undertaken multiple rounds of community consultation since the project was first proposed in 2018. More recently, this has included community consultation for the following activities:

- Geophysical investigations Environment Plan – offshore activities are expected to commence Q1 2026
- Regular community information sessions
- Consultation with landowners (including the negotiation of landowner agreements), government agencies and the Wellington Shire Council on the pipeline route has been ongoing since January 2019
- Ongoing collaboration and engagement with Gunaikurnai Land and Water Aboriginal Corporation
- Ongoing engagement via local organisations such as Golden Paradise Beach Ratepayers & Residents Association, community sporting clubs and Men's Shed

- An 1800 number and an inquiry email: info@gbenergy.com.au continues to be available
- Regular updates, newsletters, fact sheets and Q&As are provided on GB Energy's website at www.gbenergy.com.au
- Regular updates are also provided on GB Energy's LinkedIn feed

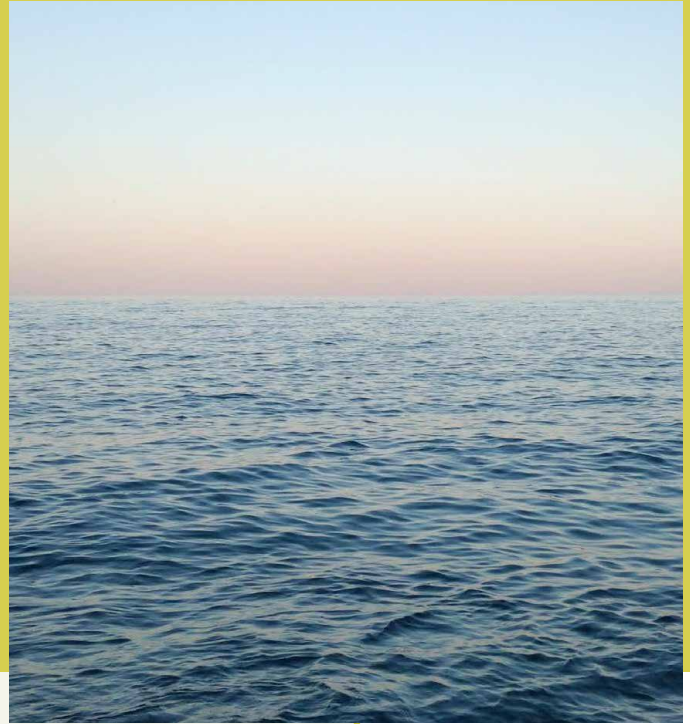
Erin Lord has recently joined the GB Energy team as our local Stakeholder Engagement Manager. Erin joined the GB Energy team in July 2025, following an extensive career with Services Australia, the Royal Flying Doctor Service, Monash University, and roles within the Offshore Wind Sector. Erin is pleased to continue supporting her local community through her current role. Erin is a long-term resident of Sale and has spent many holidays at Seaspray since childhood, developing lasting connections and strong ties to the area.

Please reach out to Erin at info@gbenergy.com.au if you would like to schedule a meeting either in person or by phone. Additionally, Erin will be at Golden Beach Foodworks on the first Thursday of every month from 9:30 to 11:30 am, where informal catch ups and a cuppa are on offer.

Next Steps

GB Energy is planning to submit a Drilling Activity Environmental Plan for approval in early 2026 to the Victorian Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action (DEECA). When the Environmental Plan is approved it will be published on GB Energy's website (gbenergy.com.au) and the Environmental Plan summary will be published on the DEECA website at

[Environment plans - Resources Victoria](#)



Full Project Timeline



Get in Touch

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