

Northern Land Expansion Project Southern Reclamation Area

Project Stage 1 Offset Strategy

Six-Monthly Progress Report on the Performance of NLEP Offsets

EPBC 2012/6558

Brief description

This six-monthly progress report was prepared to address the requirement under Condition 31(e) of the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (Commonwealth) controlled action approval conditions for EPBC 2012/6558. The report presents the implementation status and performance of the Northern Land Expansion Project (NLEP) Southern Reclamation Area (SRA) Project Stage 1 Offset Strategy over the reporting period. This report includes progress against offset objectives, monitoring commitments, performance targets, risks, adaptive management responses, and proposed actions for the next reporting period.

EPBC Act controlled action approval information

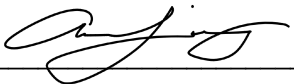
EPBC number	2012/6558
Project name	Port of Gladstone Gatcombe and Golding Cutting Channel Duplication Project, Gladstone, Queensland
Proponent/approval holder and ABN	Gladstone Ports Corporation Limited (ABN 96 263 788 242)
Proposed/approved action	To duplicate the existing Gatcombe and Golding Cutting shipping channel, disposal of capital dredge spoil to land reclamation, and upgrade associated infrastructure in the Port of Gladstone, Queensland. (EPBC Act referral 2012/6558 received on 26 September 2012, and subject to the variations to the action accepted by the Minister for the Environment under Section 156B on 25 March 2019 and 26 August 2020).
Location of the action	Port of Gladstone

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Declaration of accuracy

In making this declaration, I am aware that Section 491 of the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (Cth) (EPBC Act) makes it an offence in certain circumstances to knowingly provide false or misleading information or documents to specified persons who are known to be performing a duty or carrying out a function under the EPBC Act or the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Regulations 2000* (Cth). The offence is punishable on conviction by imprisonment or a fine, or both. I am authorised to bind the approval holder to this declaration and that I have no knowledge of that authorisation being revoked at the time of making this declaration.

Signed  _____

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Date 30 / 09 / 2026

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Terms and definitions

“ADCP” means Acoustic Doppler Current Profiler

“CD Project” means Port of Gladstone Gatcombe and Golding Cutting Channel Duplication Project

“Cth” means Commonwealth

“DCCEEW” means Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water

“EPBC Act” means *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (Cth)

“GPC” means Gladstone Ports Corporation Limited

“ha” means hectares

“LiDAR” means light detection and ranging

“LISST” means Laser In Situ Scattering and Transmissometry

“Minister” means Minister for the Environment and Water

“NEPA” means National Environmental Protection Agency

“NLEP” means Northern Land Expansion Project

“NLEP SRA” means Northern Land Expansion Project Southern Reclamation Area

“Qld” means Queensland

“QPWS” means Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service

“Reef 2050” means Reef 2050 Long-Term Sustainability Plan 2021–2025 (Commonwealth of Australia, 2023)

“TSS” means total suspended solids

“WBRA” means Western Basin Reclamation Area

“WBE” means Western Basin Expansion (now referred to as the NLEP SRA).

1 Introduction

Gladstone Ports Corporation Limited (GPC) commenced construction of a new reclamation area outer bund wall on 17 August 2025, known as the Northern Land Expansion Project Southern Reclamation Area Project (NLEP SRA). It was previously referred to as the Western Basin Expansion (WBE) Southern Reclamation Area. The Project involves the establishment of a new reclamation area spanning 112.12 hectares (ha), positioned alongside the existing Western Basin Reclamation Area (WBRA) (refer Figure 1).

The NLEP SRA, corresponds with Project Stage 1 of the Port of Gladstone Gatcombe and Golding Cutting Channel Duplication Project (CD Project) as defined under the EPBC 2012-6558 approval conditions.



Figure 1: Footprint of the NLEP SRA

2 Purpose of this report

This report provides the first review report for the NLEP SRA Project Stage 1 Offset Strategy as required under Condition 31(e) of EPBC 2012-6558 which states:

“a process for, at the minimum, a biannual review of the Offset Strategy and the performance of offsets for the period of effect of the approval including timeframes for conducting the reviews and for publishing the findings of each review on the website.”

The NLEP Stage 1 Offset Strategy was approved by the Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water (DCCEEW) now known as the National Environmental Protection Agency (NEPA) on 21 March 2025, with implementation activities commencing in March 2026.

This is the first progress report prepared to meet the requirements of Condition 31e and covers the reporting period from March to August 2026. The report provides an update on:

- the project construction activities,
- implementation of the Stage 1 Offset Strategy, including
 - actions completed during the reporting period,
 - monitoring outcomes available at the time of reporting, and
 - planned activities for the next reporting period.

3 Construction update

As of **31 August 2026**, significant progress was made on the construction of the bund wall and associated infrastructure. The key project construction activities completed during the reporting period are summarised below.

Tie-ins at the Southern and Northern Ends

Tie-in works at both the southern and northern ends of the bund wall have been completed. These works established the necessary connections between the newly constructed sections of the bund wall and the existing infrastructure. This provided continuity along the bund alignment and contributed to the overall integrity and closure of the reclamation area.

Closure of the Bund Wall

The bund wall was successfully closed, completing the perimeter of the reclamation area. Closure of the bund wall represents a significant construction milestone and establishes the enclosed area required for subsequent reclamation and associated works.

Construction of the Bund Wall to 5.4m

Construction of the bund wall has progressed to a height of approximately 5.4m. This represents substantial progress towards the required design profile and provides the structural foundation necessary to support the ongoing development and future operation of the reclamation area.

Armour Rock Placement Along the Seaward Side of the Bund Wall

Armour rock was placed along the seaward side of the bund wall. The armour rock provides protection to the exposed seaward face of the bund against wave action, currents and other coastal processes, thereby supporting the long-term stability and integrity of the bund wall.

Procurement and Delivery of Geofabric Material

The required geofabric material was procured and is being delivered to site. The availability of the geofabric provides the materials required for the next stage of construction and supports the continued progression of the bund wall and associated reclamation works in accordance with the construction program.



Figure 2: NLEP bund wall as of 2 September 2026

4 Offset Implementation Progress and Planned Activities

The table below provides an update on the activities undertaken for each of the prescribed matters identified in the Stage 1 Offset Strategy. For the seagrass, macroalgae and the Eastern Curlew offset, it summarises the activities completed during the previous six-month reporting period and provides a forecast of the activities planned to be undertaken over the next 12 months.

The monitoring of the fine sediment generated during the project is currently underway. The monitoring program is being undertaken in accordance with the relevant monitoring requirements, and is intended to determine whether project activities have resulted in the release of fine sediment above established background levels. Following completion of the monitoring period, the monitoring data will be analysed and quality assured, and a Fine Sediment Monitoring Report will be prepared. The report will document the monitoring methodology, results and key findings, and quantify any fine sediment released during the project activities. If the monitoring results indicate that the project has resulted in the release of fine sediment above background levels, a Fine Sediment Offset Plan will be developed. The plan will identify the proposed offset measures in accordance with the offset options and requirements identified in the Stage 1 Offset Strategy. The Fine Sediment Offset Plan will be submitted to NEPA for review and approval prior to implementation.

For the Watermouse, monitoring for the presence and potential occurrence of Watermouse continues to be undertaken in accordance with the approved Watermouse Monitoring Plan. The monitoring program is intended to establish whether Watermouse is present within the relevant areas and to identify any potential impacts associated with the project. Following the completion of the Watermouse Monitoring Program, the results will be assessed to determine whether the project has resulted in a significant residual impact on the species or its habitat. The outcome of this assessment will determine whether an environmental offset is required for the Watermouse. Where the assessment determines that an offset is required, the nature and extent of the required offset will be established in accordance with the applicable regulatory requirements and the commitments outlined in the Stage 1 Offset Strategy. Any required offset measures will then be progressed through the relevant approval and implementation processes.

Table 1: Implementation progress and planned activities for Stage 1 Offset Strategy prescribed matters

Offset	Activities
Eastern Curlew Offset	Key Activities and Progress between March and August 2026 • <u>Development of Scope of Works for Offset Implementation</u> ○ Developed a comprehensive Scope of Works for the engagement of a suitably qualified consultant to implement the environmental offset in accordance with the approved Offset Strategy. ○ The Scope of Works establishes the required objectives, outcomes, methodologies, monitoring and reporting requirements, timeframes, and performance measures to ensure that implementation is consistent with the commitments approved by the relevant regulator. ○ The scope also provides a clear framework for contract management, performance assessment and verification of the environmental outcomes achieved through the offset. • <u>Procurement and Engagement of Preferred Consultant</u> ○ Undertook the procurement process to identify and engage a suitably qualified and experienced consultant to deliver the offset commitments. ○ The process included development and release of procurement documentation, assessment of submissions against the agreed evaluation criteria, clarification and negotiation with proponents, and identification of the preferred consultant. ○ The procurement process was undertaken to ensure that the selected consultant has the appropriate technical capability, experience and resources to deliver the offset in accordance with the approved Offset Strategy and associated regulatory requirements. • <u>Discussions with Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service (QPWS) – Feral Animal Management on Curtis Island</u> ○ Initiated discussions with QPWS regarding opportunities to manage feral animals at Spadely Station on Curtis Island, as part of the broader environmental management and offset objectives. ○ Discussions are focused on understanding existing feral animal pressures, current management activities and priorities, and opportunities for collaboration with QPWS. ○ Further consideration will be given to the feasibility, scope, implementation arrangements and potential environmental benefits of feral animal control activities, including how such activities may contribute to achieving the intended conservation outcomes.

Offset	Activities
	• <u>Maintaining the suitable roost in the Western Basin Reclamation Area</u> ○ Suitable artificial roost sites were maintained in three (3) bunds within the WBRA (Northern bund, Southern bund and Wetland) through the reporting period. ○ Monitoring of Eastern Curlew use of these artificial roosts was conducted monthly. ○ The average count of Eastern Curlew using the artificial roosts in the WBRA over the March-August 2026 period was 22 with a maximum count of 71, noting that this period covers the time when the fewest Eastern Curlew are present in Australia since most migrate to their breeding grounds in the northern hemisphere. ○ The monitoring confirms the ongoing suitability of the artificial roosts. Works planned for the next 12 months • <u>Monitoring of feral animals at Spadely on Curtis Island</u> ○ The Eastern Curlew Offset Strategy requires the frequency of occurrence of feral animals at Spadely to be undertaken once prior to feral animal control and annually thereafter from Year 1 to Year 10 from the time that feral animal control is commenced. ○ The monitoring is to occur within the period mid-October to mid-March when most Eastern Curlew are present and involve four (4) trail cameras recording over a period of two (2) months. • <u>Control of feral animals at Spadely on Curtis Island</u> ○ QPWS will target one round of feral animal control within the first one year. ○ Species to be targeted include wild dog <i>Canis familiaris</i>, European fox <i>Vulpes vulpes</i>, and feral cat <i>Felis catus</i>. • <u>Monitoring feral animals (artificial roost on the WBRA)</u> ○ The Eastern Curlew Offset Strategy requires the frequency of occurrence of feral animals at the artificial roost within the WBRA and/or NLEP-SRA to be undertaken once each year within the period mid-October to mid-March. This is when most Eastern Curlew are present and involve one trail camera recording over a period of two (2) months. • <u>Ongoing long term and behavioural Eastern Curlew Monitoring</u> ○ Continued monitoring of Eastern Curlews in accordance with the Eastern Curlew Monitoring Plan required under Condition 14 of the approval.

Offset	Activities
	○ The monitoring program is designed to establish and maintain an understanding of Eastern Curlew use of the relevant areas and to identify any changes in distribution, abundance or habitat utilisation that may occur during the project lifecycle. ○ Monitoring results will provide an important evidence base for assessing potential impacts on the species and the effectiveness of management measures. ○ The monitoring outcomes will also inform preparation of the Significant Residual Impact Report required under Condition 19, including the assessment of whether significant residual impacts remain and the need for any additional mitigation or offset measures.
Seagrass and macroalgal offset	Key Activities and Progress between March and August 2026 ● <u>Development of Scope of Works for Offset Implementation</u> ○ A detailed Scope of Works was developed for the engagement of a suitably qualified and experienced consultant to implement the seagrass and macroalgae offset in accordance with the approved Offset Strategy. ○ The Scope of Works establishes the key activities, required environmental outcomes, methodologies, monitoring and reporting requirements, performance measures and timeframes for implementation of the offset. ○ The scope was developed to ensure that the implementation activities are directly aligned with the commitments and outcomes specified in the approved Offset Strategy and relevant approval conditions. ○ The Scope of Works also provides a clear framework for contract management, including milestones, deliverables and performance requirements, to enable progress and environmental outcomes to be effectively monitored throughout the implementation period. ● <u>Procurement and Engagement of Preferred Consultant</u> ○ A procurement process was undertaken to identify and engage a suitably qualified consultant with the technical expertise and demonstrated experience required to deliver the seagrass and macroalgae offset. ○ The procurement process involved preparation of the relevant procurement documentation, assessment of consultant submissions against the established evaluation criteria, consideration of technical capability and experience, and engagement with proponents to clarify aspects of their submissions. ○ A preferred consultant was identified to undertake the implementation activities, ○ The engagement will provide the specialist technical capability required to deliver the restoration program, undertake monitoring and reporting, and demonstrate progress against the environmental outcomes established in the approved Offset Strategy. Works planned for the next 12 months

Offset	Activities
	The first year of implementation will focus on establishing the regulatory, technical and operational foundations required to commence and support the longer-term restoration program. Key activities include: • <u>Obtaining Permits and Approvals for Restoration Works</u> ○ The consultant will progress the necessary applications, permits and approvals required to undertake the proposed seagrass and macroalgae restoration activities. ○ This will include confirming the regulatory requirements applicable to the proposed restoration methodologies and ensuring that all necessary approvals are in place before field activities commence. ○ Early progression of the permitting process is important to ensure that restoration activities can be undertaken within the required implementation timeframe and in accordance with relevant environmental and marine management requirements. • <u>Baseline Mapping of Seagrass and Macroalgal Condition</u> ○ Baseline surveys and mapping will be undertaken to establish the existing condition, extent and distribution of seagrass and macroalgal communities within the restoration areas. ○ The baseline information will provide the reference condition against which future restoration progress and ecological outcomes can be assessed. ○ Field validation will be undertaken to verify mapping outputs and characterise relevant ecological attributes, including seagrass meadow condition, cover, species composition and other indicators relevant to the monitoring program. ○ The baseline dataset will also support refinement of restoration locations and methodologies and provide a robust foundation for demonstrating changes in ecological condition over the life of the offset. • <u>Seagrass Flower Collection Events</u> ○ Seagrass flower collection events will be undertaken to obtain viable reproductive material for use in the restoration program. ○ Collection activities will be timed to coincide with the appropriate flowering period and will be undertaken in accordance with relevant permit conditions and approved collection protocols. ○ Collected flowers will be transported to the nursery facility for storage and for supporting the production of material required for subsequent seagrass restoration activities. ○ The collection program will contribute to establishing an adequate supply of suitable seagrass reproductive material while maintaining appropriate environmental safeguards at donor sites. • <u>SeaGrow Nursery Upgrade</u>

Offset	Activities
	○ Upgrades to the SeaGrow Nursery will be undertaken to ensure that the facility has the capacity and appropriate infrastructure to support the seagrass restoration program. ○ The works will focus on improving the nursery's capability to receive, maintain and propagate collected seagrass reproductive material and prepare it for subsequent deployment in restoration areas. ○ The upgrade will establish the operational capacity required to support repeated flower collection and propagation activities and contribute to the long-term delivery of the seagrass restoration program. ● <u>Ongoing Seagrass and Macroalgae Monitoring</u> ○ Monitoring of seagrass and macroalgae communities is continuing in accordance with the Seagrass and Macroalgae Monitoring Plan, as required under Condition 14 of the approval. ○ The monitoring program provides ongoing information on the condition and extent of seagrass and macroalgal communities and assists in identifying any changes that may occur during implementation of the project. ○ Monitoring data will be used to assess trends in ecological condition, identify potential project-related impacts and evaluate the effectiveness of mitigation and management measures. ○ The results will also contribute to the broader evidence base used to assess the achievement of environmental outcomes associated with the offset and to inform adaptive management where required.
Fine Sediment Offset	Key Activities and Progress until August 2026 ● Implementation of the Fine Sediment Monitoring Plan to quantify and assess the release and movement of fine sediment generated during construction of the bund wall. ● The monitoring program is designed to establish baseline conditions, characterise sediment behaviour during construction, and provide data to support the calculation and assessment of the quantity of fine sediment released in accordance with the approved Fine Sediment Monitoring Plan. ● Pre-construction and construction-phase monitoring and data collection were undertaken to establish baseline conditions and capture changes associated with bund wall construction. The monitoring program incorporated multiple complementary data sources, including: ○ Acoustic Doppler Current Profiler (ADCP) data to characterise current velocities, direction and water-column hydrodynamics, which are important for understanding the transport and dispersion of fine sediments. ○ Laser In-Situ Scattering and Transmissometer (LISST) data to measure suspended particle size distribution and concentration, providing information on the characteristics and behaviour of fine sediment within the water column.

Offset	Activities
	○ Water quality monitoring at the Fine Sediment Monitoring Site (FSMO1), including measurements of turbidity and total suspended solids (TSS), to identify changes in suspended sediment concentrations during construction and support the assessment of sediment releases. ○ Drone imagery to provide high-resolution aerial observations of the construction area and surrounding waters, supporting the identification and spatial assessment of visible sediment plumes and changes in coastal conditions. ○ Satellite imagery to provide broader spatial coverage and assist in assessing the extent and movement of sediment plumes beyond the immediate monitoring area. Works planned for the next 12 months • Over the next 12 months, the monitoring datasets collected as part of the Fine Sediment Monitoring Plan will be progressively collated, processed and quality-assured to ensure that the data are complete, reliable and suitable for assessment against the relevant monitoring requirements and performance criteria. • The works will include: ○ Data processing and quality assurance: All monitoring data collected during the reporting period will be compiled and subjected to appropriate quality assurance and quality control procedures. This will include reviewing data completeness, identifying any anomalies or inconsistencies, and confirming that the data have been collected and recorded in accordance with the approved Fine Sediment Monitoring Plan. ○ Data analysis and interpretation: The quality-assured datasets will be analysed to identify trends, changes and potential relationships in fine sediment conditions over the monitoring period. The results will be assessed against the relevant monitoring thresholds, trigger levels and performance criteria established under the Fine Sediment Monitoring Plan. ○ Assessment of monitoring outcomes: The monitoring results will be evaluated to determine whether the project has resulted in any measurable changes in fine sediment conditions and whether the observed results remain consistent with the environmental performance requirements of the EPBC approval. Where relevant, any exceedances, trends or unusual results will be investigated and documented. ○ Reporting: The findings of the monitoring program, including the methodology, quality-assured datasets, analysis, interpretation and any identified exceedances or management responses, will be consolidated into the relevant monitoring report. ○ Regulatory submission: The completed report will be submitted to NEPA in accordance with the reporting requirements specified under Conditions 17 and 19(d) of the EPBC approval. Any recommendations arising from the monitoring results will also be incorporated into future monitoring and management activities, where appropriate.
Watermouse Offset	Key Activities and Progress to August 2026

Offset	Activities
	The Watermouse survey program was progressed during the 2025–26 monitoring period, with activities focused on improving understanding of Watermouse habitat preferences, refining the field survey approach and investigating areas with the greatest likelihood of Watermouse occurrence. Key activities undertaken included: Familiarisation with Watermouse indicators and nesting characteristics: Surveys were undertaken at known and confirmed Watermouse nesting locations as identified in the Watermouse Monitoring Plan to develop familiarity with the key habitat characteristics, nest indicators and other field signs associated with Watermouse presence. Identification of the most likely mangrove zone for Watermouse occurrence: The tidal profile and distribution of mangrove habitat were assessed to identify the mangrove zone considered most likely to support Watermouse nests. Particular attention was given to habitat characteristics and tidal elevation relative to known Watermouse nesting locations, providing a targeted basis for subsequent field searches. Targeted field surveys of potential Watermouse habitat: Comprehensive on-foot field surveys were undertaken across the survey area, with a primary focus on the identified mangrove zone considered to have the greatest potential for Watermouse occurrence. Surveys involved systematic inspection of suitable habitat and areas where Watermouse nests or other evidence of presence could reasonably be expected to occur. Identification and documentation of Sites of Interest (SOIs): Areas displaying characteristics potentially suitable for Watermouse occurrence, or otherwise warranting further investigation, were identified as SOIs. These locations were documented and photographed to provide a record of the habitat conditions and support targeted follow-up monitoring. Deployment of remote trail cameras: Trail cameras were deployed at each identified SOI for a minimum period of 24 hours. Camera deployment was undertaken to supplement the on-foot field surveys and provide an opportunity to detect Watermouse activity or movement that may not be observed during direct field searches. Environmental DNA (eDNA) sampling: eDNA sampling was undertaken concurrently to assist in validating the approved Watermouse survey methodology and to provide an additional, independent method for detecting potential Watermouse presence. The eDNA approach complemented the field-based and remote-camera monitoring methods and provided an additional line of evidence for assessing Watermouse occurrence within the survey area.

Offset	Activities
	Findings from Year 1 of the Survey No Watermouse were detected during the 2025–26 survey period using any of the three (3) monitoring approaches undertaken: - targeted on-foot field surveys; - deployment of trail cameras at identified Sites of Interest; or - concurrent environmental DNA (eDNA) monitoring. The absence of detections across the three (3) complementary survey methods provides no evidence of Watermouse presence within the surveyed areas during the first year of monitoring. Works planned for the next 12 months - The monitoring activities inclusive of targeted on-foot field surveys; and deployment of trail cameras at identified Sites of Interest; will be conducted.

5 Conclusion

Implementation of the Stage 1 Offset Strategy has progressed during the reporting period, with activities undertaken across the prescribed matters in accordance with the relevant commitments and monitoring requirements. The activities completed over the past six (6) months, together with those planned for the next 12 months, demonstrate continued progress towards meeting the environmental commitments associated with the project.

GPC will continue to implement and monitor the commitments of the Stage 1 Offset Strategy and maintain appropriate engagement with the relevant regulatory authorities to ensure that any required offset obligations are identified and addressed in a timely and transparent manner.

The next reporting period will focus on completing the relevant monitoring programs, analysing and reporting the results, undertaking any required residual impact assessments, and progressing any offset measures identified as necessary.

