

7.2 LMM 28/02/2023 - SUPPORTING THE GREATER NEWCASTLE (HUNTER) OFFSHORE WIND ZONE

MOTION:

That City of Newcastle:

1. Welcomes the recent announcement by the Albanese Federal Government of its intent to establish Australia's second offshore wind zone off the coast of Newcastle.
2. Notes that the Greater Newcastle (Hunter) offshore wind projects can help decarbonise the economy with year-round clean energy generation and drive regional jobs and growth, with a need for skills in engineering and construction, as well as strong transferable skills from other sectors including high-voltage electrical, logistics and maritime offshore work.
3. Acknowledges City of Newcastle's long history of supporting and implementing renewable energy projects, including becoming the first local government in NSW to move to 100 per cent renewable electricity and was once home to Australia's first large scale, land-based single wind turbine at Kooragang Island.
4. Notes that a local offshore wind industry offers many potential benefits for Newcastle such as unlocking billions in new investment in renewable energy infrastructure and may pave the way for our city to become the renewable energy hub for the Asia-Pacific region.
5. Provides a detailed, supportive submission, noting that consultation on this proposal is now open until 28 April 2023, while strongly reiterating that development of such a zone must be done with guarantees in place that would preference the employment of local workers and use of local materials for the benefit of our local communities.

BACKGROUND:



Offshore wind farms drive new jobs and investment for Newcastle

City of Newcastle has welcomed the prospect of unlocking billions of dollars of investment and hundreds of local jobs after the Federal Government opened consultation into establishing Australia's second offshore wind zone off the coast of Newcastle.

The announcement was made by Climate Change and Energy Minister Chris Bowen during a visit to Newcastle today.

Lord Mayor Nuatali Nelmes said a renewable energy industry built on large-scale offshore wind farms would offer a sustainable new future for Newcastle, which was once home to Australia's first large scale, land-based single wind turbine at Kooragang Island.

"City of Newcastle has a long history of supporting and implementing renewable energy projects, including becoming the first local government in NSW to move to 100 per cent renewable electricity," Cr Nelmes said.

"We are committed to transitioning towards a low carbon economy to ensure future generations can continue to enjoy our city and region, and believe that a mix of renewables, including offshore wind, is essential to achieving this target.

"Offshore wind also provides the perfect opportunity to diversify Newcastle's economy by pivoting thousands of jobs in the local manufacturing, construction, maritime, transport and logistics industries into the renewable energy sector.

"In addition, the accessibility of the Port of Newcastle and our existing local skills base would allow offshore wind to precipitate the emergence of a new renewable energy industry in Newcastle and the Hunter.

"This can unlock billions in new investment in renewable energy infrastructure and pave the way for our city to become the renewable energy hub for the Asia-Pacific region."

Cr Nelmes said the offshore wind industry offers many potential benefits for Newcastle but was mindful of the need for measures to be put in place to protect and deliver local jobs, and consider any potential impacts on visual amenity and our marine environment.

"With the correct legislative and regulatory framework, offshore wind along the coast of Newcastle has the potential to play a significant role in sustaining our state's future energy needs, and provide a significant boost to the local economy," Cr Nelmes said.

"However, its development must be done with guarantees in place that it would preference the employment of local workers and use of local materials for the benefit of our communities."

Correspondence from the Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water

Dear Newcastle City Council,

The Hon Chris Bowen MP, Minister for Climate Change and Energy has proposed an area in the Commonwealth waters off the Hunter, New South Wales for offshore renewable energy projects, such as offshore wind.

Hunter offshore wind projects can help decarbonise the economy with year-round clean energy generation and drive regional jobs growth, with a need for skills in engineering and construction, as well strong transferable skills from other sectors including high-voltage electrical, logistics and offshore work.

Consultation on this proposal is now open and we seek your feedback on the proposal and how offshore renewable energy projects could share the area with other users and interests. Your feedback will help inform the Minister's decision on whether the proposed area is suitable for offshore renewable energy.

We encourage your feedback through a submission in our Consultation Hub. Submissions close at 11:59 PM on 28 April 2023. For the Minister to consider your submission, it must be provided through the Consultation Hub by this deadline.

A number of supporting documents are available on the Consultation Hub.

These provide background of the offshore renewable energy consultation and declaration process, as well additional information on the Hunter area.

If the announcement or consultation process raises any questions that are not answered by information provided on the consultation hub, our team is hosting seven community information sessions throughout the Central Coast, Lake Macquarie, Newcastle and Port Stephens areas. Details of these sessions are below:

Town	Time and Date	Location
Wamberal	2.00pm – 4.00pm	Breakers Country Club
	Monday 6 March 2023	64 Dover Road, Wamberal NSW 2260
Doyalson	10.30am – 12.30pm	The Doylo
	Tuesday 7 March 2023	80 Pacific Highway, Doyalson NSW 2262
Swansea	4.00pm – 6.00pm	Swansea RSL
	Tuesday 7 March 2023	5 Bridge Street, Swansea NSW 2281
Newcastle City	12.00pm – 2.00pm	Newcastle City Library
	Wednesday 8 March 2023	War Memorial Cultural Centre 15 Laman Street, Newcastle 2300
Merewether, Newcastle	4.00pm – 7.00pm	Bar Beach Bowling Club
	Wednesday 8 March 2023	29 Kilgour Ave, Merewether NSW 2291
Hawks Nest	11.00am – 1.00pm	Hawks Nest Community Centre
	Thursday 9 March 2023	71 Booner Street, Hawks Nest, NSW 2324
Nelson Bay	5.00pm – 7.00pm	Nelson Bay Bowling Club
	Thursday 9 March 2023	1 Stockton St, Nelson Bay NSW 2315

If you have further questions, we are also happy to meet in-person while our team is on the ground in the region between 6 to 10 March, or virtually in the following weeks. Please get in touch with our team via offshorerenewables@dcceew.gov.au to discuss a meeting.

We have also scheduled a meeting with your council on Wednesday 8 March at 11AM. We look forward to meeting to answer any questions you may have.

The Offshore Renewable Energy Team

Offshore Renewable Energy | Adaption and New Industries Division

Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water
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RELATED PREVIOUS DECISIONS:

- LMM: 8/12/2020 – NEWCASTLE OFFSHORE WIND
- LMM: 13/12/2022 – 2022 UNITED NATIONS CLIMATE CHANGE CONFERENCE
- LMM: 23/08/2022 – STATE ELECTION PRIORITIES