



Statement from Mayor Nathan Hersey:

South Gippsland Shire Council acknowledges yesterday's announcement and is pleased to note that some of our concerns have been acknowledged.

Council made a submission to the Federal Government in October, outlining numerous concerns about coastal and environmental impact, visual amenity, proximity to Wilsons Promontory and our coastal communities and the need for housing supply to accommodate workers and growth associated with any future project.

Although it is positive to see that the approved offshore wind zone is further from our coastal communities and Wilsons Promontory than originally indicated, a greater level of clear information and engagement with our Council and community is required.

The extent of the so called 'extensive' engagement with our South Gippsland community comprised of online engagement and one in-person information session, not held in any of our coastal communities.

We look forward to meaningful conversations and engagement following yesterday's announcement.

Wilsons Promontory, or The Prom as it is known to all Victorians, is a national treasure that attracts over 500,000 visitors each year. It offers a pristine, untouched environment and boasts one of the richest marine ecosystems off the coast of Australia – rivalling that of the Great Barrier Reef. Our community were not pleased to see this part of the coastline originally in scope of the propose areas. The change is welcome, however, Minister Bowen has clearly not ruled out a return of the originally proposed area to the offshore wind zone in the future.

We still need to know more about the declared zones including the proposed flyway passage to ensure that there will be no adverse impacts on this precious and sensitive marine environment.

We also need to know how the other concerns that were outlined in our submission will be addressed. We would like assurances that proposed 'on land' transmission routes will be placed underground and we seek clarification on the impacts for our local communities, especially as housing and infrastructure along our coastline is already limited or at capacity.