

Mayor's Message



*South Gippsland
Shire Council*

I would like to take a step back and consider offshore wind and what it could mean for South Gippsland - should offshore wind in Gippsland go ahead in a significant way.

In December 2022, the Australian Government declared Gippsland as Australia's first offshore wind zone. There had been no previous community or regional discussion or engagement. Since then, 12 feasibility licences have been awarded for potential projects within the declared area.

Council does not approve or facilitate energy projects within our region, that process is a matter for the State Government. Therefore, rather than debating the benefits or limitations of offshore wind, we have recognised that energy transition is underway in Gippsland and recognise that our role is to advocate for benefits to be seen locally.

Council has taken a pragmatic approach to renewable energy. Our focus has been on ensuring the impacts on South Gippsland and our residents are carefully managed, while opportunities for our communities and local economy are accelerated.

South Gippsland is fortunate to have two ports—Barry Beach Marine Terminal and Port Anthony—which are well placed to play important roles in this emerging industry. Council's position on the role of our local ports in supporting the offshore wind industry remains supportive of seeing our local ports being utilised for the offshore wind industry.

Decisions about how, and to what extent, the ports may be used will ultimately involve their owners, the Victorian Government and individual project proponents. However, Council has consistently advocated—and will continue to advocate—for our local ports to play a meaningful role in supporting the deployment of offshore wind infrastructure along the coast of Gippsland.

We want to see local jobs, investment and long-term economic opportunities flow to our region, while ensuring our unique natural environment is carefully considered in all decision-making. That position has not changed.



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Council also recognises the Victorian Government's direction, which identifies the Victorian Renewable Energy Terminal at Hastings as its preferred location for the major construction and assembly of offshore wind infrastructure. This means that South Gippsland is well positioned to secure the significant long-term opportunities associated with operations and maintenance as outlined in the Victorian Offshore Wind Implementation Statement.

Victoria's offshore wind auction is scheduled to open in August 2026 and will seek proposals for an initial two gigawatts of offshore wind capacity. While there are still many unknowns, Council's objective remains clear, regardless of which proponents are ultimately successful: to maximise the long-term benefits for South Gippsland while ensuring development respects our communities, our environment and the industries that already underpin our local economy.

Council will continue working constructively with government, industry and local stakeholders to achieve this outcome, promoting the importance of benefits from new energy projects in Gippsland, provided to Gippsland.