

ITEM NO. 10

**FILE NO: 24/80232
EDRMS NO: PSC2021-04195**

WIND FARM OFF PORT STEPHENS

REPORT OF: BROCK LAMONT - STRATEGY & ENVIRONMENT SECTION
MANAGER
DIRECTORATE: COMMUNITY FUTURES

RECOMMENDATION IS THAT COUNCIL:

- 1) Consider the matter in accordance with the previous resolution and reaffirm Council's position on the matter.

BACKGROUND

The purpose of this report is to respond to a resolution of the previous Council.

Council resolved at its meeting held on 10 October 2023 (Minute No. 230) **(ATTACHMENT 1)**, that the General Manager provide a report to Council seeking the Council's opinion on whether to continue opposing the offshore wind farm, or whether to support it, at the following stages:

- a) When the Environmental Impact Statement has been made available
- b) At the first meeting at the start of the new term of Council in 2024 to reaffirm Council's position.

Council resolved a further Notice of Motion at the 24 October 2023 Council meeting in relation to the Offshore Wind Power Zone **(ATTACHMENT 2)**.

Following these resolutions, Council has actively contributed to consultation activities and advocated community concerns during the following Federal Government consultation activities for offshore wind projects:

- Council met with the Federal Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water (DCCEE) during the public consultation period for the declaration of offshore wind area to raise the community concerns and ensure that Council had all available information to make a valuable submission.
- Council provided a submission to DCCEE regarding the declaration of the offshore wind area, encouraging further consultation to be undertaken with the community and highlighting potential impacts on visual amenity, cultural heritage, marine and coastal environments and local industry and business.

ORDINARY COUNCIL - 22 OCTOBER 2024

- Council provided a submission to the NSW Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure (DPHI) regarding the draft Energy Policy Guidelines, noting community concerns and requesting guidance regarding how the State Government will regulate offshore wind and related transmission infrastructure, requesting that this be included in the guidelines.
- Council wrote to and a delegation met with the Hon. Chris Bowen MP, Federal Minister for Climate Change and Energy, to highlight community concerns.
- Council wrote to and a delegation met with Meryl Swanson MP, Federal Member for Paterson, to highlight community concerns.
- Council wrote to the Hon. Kate Washington MP, State Member for Port Stephens, to highlight community concerns.
- Council included an action (DI001) within the Port Stephens Coastal Management Program (CMP) to work collaboratively and share information with key stakeholders about any major projects proposed in the open coastal waters, to ensure compliance with the vision and objectives of the Coastal Management Program and the objects of the Coastal Management Act.

COMMUNITY STRATEGIC PLAN

Strategic Direction	Delivery Program 2022-2026
Governance	Provide and implement strategic direction and governance of Council.

FINANCIAL/RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

Source of Funds	Yes/No	Funding (\$)	Comment
Existing budget	No		
Reserve Funds	No		
Developer Contributions (\$7.11)	No		
External Grants	No		
Other	No		

LEGAL, POLICY AND RISK IMPLICATIONS

Risk	Risk Ranking	Proposed Treatments	Within Existing Resources?
There is a risk that the outstanding resolution of Council is not dealt with as the resolution was made.	Low	Deal with the item to reach resolution.	Yes
There is a risk that Council does not have an endorsed position relating to offshore wind projects.	Medium	Deal with the item to reach resolution.	Yes

SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS

Includes Social, Economic and Environmental Implications

The report is in response to a previous resolution of Council seeking to reaffirm Council's position on the matter. The sustainability implications of the matter will vary depending upon the position resolved by Council.

CONSULTATION

Further consultation on the matter is not required as the report seeks only to deal with an outstanding resolution of the former Council.

OPTIONS

- 1) Accept the recommendation.
- 2) Amend the recommendation.
- 3) Reject the recommendation.

ATTACHMENTS

- 1) Ordinary Council Minutes 10 October 2023 - Minute No. 230.
- 2) Notice of Motion - 24 October 2023 - Offshore Wind Power Zone.

COUNCILLORS' ROOM/DASHBOARD

Nil.

TABLED DOCUMENTS

Nil.

ITEM 10 - ATTACHMENT 1 ORDINARY COUNCIL MINUTES 10 OCTOBER 2023 - MINUTE NO. 230.**MINUTES ORDINARY COUNCIL - 10 OCTOBER 2023**

Those for the Motion: Mayor Ryan Palmer, Crs Leah Anderson, Giacomo Arnott, Matthew Bailey, Peter Francis, Steve Tucker and Jason Wells.

Those against the Motion: Nil.

The motion was carried.

URGENT MOTION 1

Cr Giacomo Arnott moved to introduce a matter of urgent business under clause 9.3 of the Code of Meeting Practice.

The motion was granted by Mayor Palmer.

**ORDINARY COUNCIL MEETING - 10 OCTOBER 2023
MOTION**

230	Councillor Giacomo Arnott Councillor Leah Anderson It was resolved that Council: <ol style="list-style-type: none">1) Notes the ongoing consultative process the Federal Government is undertaking with the community and other stakeholders into whether an offshore wind farm industry should be established off the coast of Port Stephens and Newcastle.2) Notes that the Federal Government Minister for Energy Chris Bowen states that an offshore wind farm in this location has the potential to create 3,000 construction jobs and 1,500 ongoing jobs, as well as 5gigawatts of electricity for the East Coast Energy grid.3) Notes that there are 1,454 published responses to the proposal on the Australian Government Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water consultation hub web page.4) Notes that the Federal Government Minister for Energy Chris Bowen, the Federal Member for Paterson Meryl Swanson, and several MPs from the opposition and alternative parties have met with residents of Port Stephens to discuss this project.5) Notes that the Federal Government will still engage in 3 consultation phases before any works actually start, and that it is unlikely that any works would begin for several years from now due to the enormous amount of reports and consultation that is required to be undertaken.6) Notes the concerns raised by the community about the project, including its potential impact on the fishing industry in Port Stephens, potential impact on the environment including marine life, potential noise pollution, potential impact on the tourism industry, and what such an industry would look like when viewed from Port Stephens.7) Notes that Local Government, in particular Port Stephens Council, has had nothing to do with the proposal so far, and has no role to
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MINUTES ORDINARY COUNCIL - 10 OCTOBER 2023

	play in the consideration, approval or consultation of any offshore wind farm now or into the future.
8)	Agrees that until environmental impact statements and other scientific evidence is made available to the community in a full, open and transparent manner, it is opposed to the construction of any wind farm off the coast of Port Stephens.
9)	Requests the General Manager write a letter to the Federal Minister for Energy Chris Bowen and Federal Member for Paterson Meryl Swanson, noting Council's position, and requesting their attendance at a Council briefing to allow Councillors to better understand the proposal and to pass on the concerns of the community.
10)	Requests the General Manager provide a report to Council at each stage of the consultative process, outlining any recent progress on the matter.
11)	Requests the General Manager provide a report to Council seeking the Council's opinion on whether to continue opposing the offshore wind farm, or whether to support it, at the following stages:
a.	When the Environmental Impact Statement has been made available, and
b.	At the first meeting at the start of the new term of Council in 2024 to reaffirm Council's position.

Councillor Matthew Bailey left the meeting at 5:44pm.

Those for the Motion: Mayor Ryan Palmer, Crs Leah Anderson, Giacomo Amott, Peter Francis, Steve Tucker and Jason Wells.

Those against the Motion: Nil.

The motion was carried.

Councillor Matthew Bailey returned to the meeting at 5:46pm.

**ITEM 10 - ATTACHMENT 2 NOTICE OF MOTION - 24 OCTOBER 2023 -
OFFSHORE WIND POWER ZONE.****MINUTES ORDINARY COUNCIL - 24 OCTOBER 2023****NOTICE OF MOTION****ITEM NO. 1****FILE NO: 23/261922****EDRMS NO: PSC2021-04195****PORT STEPHENS OFFSHORE WIND POWER ZONE****COUNCILLOR: CHRIS DOOHAN****THAT COUNCIL:**

- 1) Acknowledges the Circa 2,000 people that rallied against a Port Stephens Offshore Wind Power Zone on Saturday 7 October 2023.
- 2) Opposes the issuing of any exploration licences for the proposed offshore wind power zones.
- 3) Supports local efforts by community groups seeking to stop the offshore wind power zones.
- 4) Writes to the Hon. Chris Bowen MP, Minister for Climate Change and Energy seeking a moratorium on any currently unapproved offshore wind power zones.
- 5) Writes to Ms Meryl Swanson MP, Member for Paterson and the Hon. Kate Washington MP, Member for Port Stephens to secure their support for the opposition to the offshore wind power zone and ask for a response confirming or rejecting support by 3 November 2023 and, if rejecting, state reasons why.

**ORDINARY COUNCIL MEETING - 24 OCTOBER 2023
MOTION**

249	Councillor Chris Doohan Councillor Glen Dunkley It was resolved that Council: <ol style="list-style-type: none">1) Acknowledges the Circa 2,000 people that rallied against a Port Stephens Offshore Wind Power Zone on Saturday 7 October 2023.2) Opposes the issuing of any exploration licences for the proposed offshore wind power zones.3) Supports local efforts by community groups seeking to stop the offshore wind power zones.4) Writes to the Hon. Chris Bowen MP, Minister for Climate Change and Energy seeking a moratorium on any currently unapproved offshore wind power zones.5) Writes to Ms Meryl Swanson MP, Member for Paterson and the Hon. Kate Washington MP, Member for Port Stephens to secure their support for the opposition to the offshore wind power zone and ask for a response confirming or rejecting support by 3 November 2023 and, if rejecting, state reasons why.
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ITEM 10 - ATTACHMENT 2 NOTICE OF MOTION - 24 OCTOBER 2023 - OFFSHORE WIND POWER ZONE.**MINUTES ORDINARY COUNCIL - 24 OCTOBER 2023**

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| | 6) Organise a delegation from Council, including the Mayor and other councillors such to their availability, to visit Parliament House to meet with the Hon. Chris Bowen MP and relevant departmental officers about the Offshore Wind Power proposal. |
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The inclusion of point 6 in the motion was accepted by the mover and seconder.

Those for the Motion: Mayor Ryan Palmer, Crs Giacomo Arnott, Chris Doohan, Glen Dunkley, Peter Kafer and Steve Tucker.

Those against the Motion: Crs Peter Francis and Jason Wells.

The motion was carried.

**ORDINARY COUNCIL MEETING - 24 OCTOBER 2023
AMENDMENT**

	Councillor Giacomo Arnott Councillor Peter Francis
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That Council:

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| | <ol style="list-style-type: none">1) Re-affirms its support for the 10 October 2023 resolution of Council relating to the offshore wind zone matter, which opposes the wind farm proposal, with a review of that position when the environmental studies are received.2) Organise a delegation from Council, including the Mayor and other councillors subject to their availability, to visit Parliament House to meet with the Hon. Chris Bowen MP and relevant departmental officers about the Offshore Wind Power proposal. |
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Cr Peter Kafer foreshadowed amendment.

"Organise a delegation from Council, including the Mayor and other councillors to confirm their availability, to visit Parliament House to meet with the Hon. Chris Bowen MP and relevant departmental officers about the Offshore Wind Power proposal."

The inclusion of point 2 in the amendment was accepted by the mover and seconder.

Those for the amendment: Crs Giacomo Arnott, Peter Francis, Peter Kafer and Jason Wells.

Those against the amendment: Mayor Ryan Palmer, Crs Chris Doohan, Glen Dunkley and Steve Tucker.

The amendment was lost on the casting vote of the Mayor.