

SOUTHERN OCEAN OFFSHORE WIND ZONE CONSULTATION

Presentation to City of Mount Gambier
25 July 2023

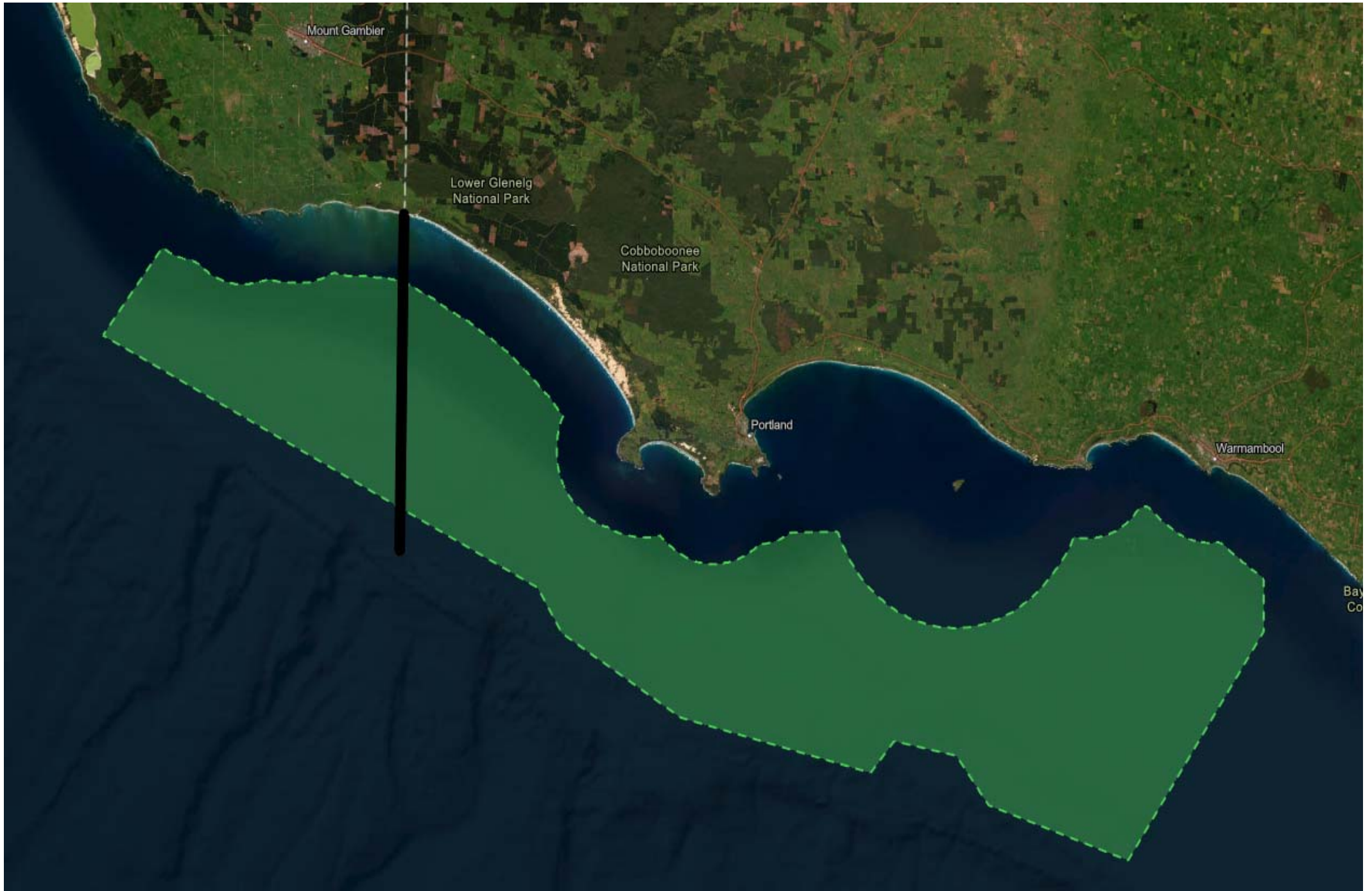


What are we asking of the City of Mount Gambier

That you make a submission to the consultation process for zoning the Southern Ocean Offshore Wind Region such that the zone concludes at the Victorian and South Australian border.



The Proposed Southern Ocean Area (Source DCCEEW)





The announcement by Minister Bowen

- On the 27th June 2023, Minister Bowen, whilst in Portland Victoria, announced consultation for a new wind zone in the Southern Ocean
- The proposed zone is 5,100 square kilometres in area and extends from Warrnambool to Port MacDonnell
- The area was originally identified as one of six areas of interest for offshore wind and was supported by the Andrews' government in Victoria. It was originally labelled *The Southern Ocean Region off Portland Victoria*
- The inclusion of the area off the coast off Port MacDonnell was undoubtedly an after thought and has come about because BlueFloat Energy were late to the party in laying claim to a project site within the originally intended region.
- The included area off the coast of Port MacDonnell was nothing more than the next closest unclaimed site.



Why is the area so critical to our fishery

- The area supports the Bonny Upwelling – its classified under the Commonwealth EPBC Act as a ‘key ecological feature’ which supports high productivity and aggregations of marine life.
- Couple this with an abundant system of limestone reefs and kelp beds and you get an environment perfect for settlement, recruitment, and growth of Southern Rock Lobster.
- Approximately 40 vessels work out of the port of Port MacDonnell and the area sustains a catch of around 400 tonnes, annually.
- The SZRLF contributes around \$200m to the State’s economy, supports 1,100 plus FTEs, and has a capital asset value well over \$1 Billion.
- Most of the economic activity occurs in the Limestone Coast region and in towns and cities like Mount Gambier.





Why is it critical we intervene at the zoning stage?

- We are of the opinion that once the proponent starts looking at the proposed project area off Port MacDonnell, they will realise its unsuitable for their bottom-fixed technology.
- Problem being that to determine suitability of site, seismic testing will be required and undertaken.
- Seismic testing is the blasting of the seafloor with high powered air-guns to establish the constitution of the seabed and bedrock.
- Seismic testing disturbs, injures, and kills marine life.
- Studies specific to seismic testing and Southern Rock Lobster show that the sound blasting damages the lobster's sensory system, and their ability to 'right' themselves.





Why as a South Australian resident should you support this recommendation?

- All projects within the proposed Southern Ocean offshore wind zone will fall under Commonwealth and Victorian jurisdiction and legislation.
- All energy produced will be cabled through the ocean floor to Portland and transmitted through the interconnector at Heywood and distributed into the Victorian energy grid.
- There will be no net energy benefit to South Australia from the Southern Ocean offshore wind zone.
- Jobs?? – the scale of the infrastructure and machinery will mean that almost all works will be undertaken out of the port of Portland.
- There will be very few if any jobs for Port MacDonnell and Mount Gambier residents.





THANK YOU

