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Minister for Climate Change and Energy
Member for McMahon

THE HON SHARON CLAYDON MP
Deputy Speak of the House of Representatives
Member for Newcastle

THE HON MERYL SWANSON MP
Member for Paterson

MEDIA RELEASE

Offshore wind to bring jobs and clean energy to the Hunter

28 February 2025

The Albanese Government is securing the Hunter's jobs and energy future with the next steps for its offshore wind zone announced today.

Today Novocastrian Wind Pty Ltd, a partnership between Equinor and Oceanex Energy, has been offered a feasibility licence to explore its planned offshore wind farm project for the Hunter offshore wind area.

This finalises the Government's previous preliminary decision to grant a licence to Novocastrian Wind, but not to any other applicants in the Hunter zone.

The project is located a minimum 22 kilometres off the coast of Newcastle and has the potential to deliver 2 gigawatts of renewable electricity - enough to power more than a million homes.

The project has the potential to create hundreds of well-paid, ongoing jobs for workers, including engineers, technicians and divers, as well as new opportunities for suppliers and surrounding industry.

To ensure communities and businesses across the Hunter benefit from the new offshore wind industry, Novocastrian Wind is required to maximise its use of local supply chains, industries and workers.

A newly established Hunter Wind Industry Committee – comprising Novocastrian Wind, NSW and local governments, First Nations groups, local industry and workers' representatives – will work together to maximise economic and social benefits.

This reflects how the Government is ensuring the project includes as much local content as possible, delivering benefits for workers, industries and the region's economy.

The licence holder must consult further with the community and undertake environmental assessments as part of the feasibility studies supporting their offshore wind project. In addition, they are required by law to consult with the fishing industry and avoid, mitigate and offset any impacts on fishing.

The feasibility licence is granted for up to 7 years and Novocastrian Wind must use this time to obtain all necessary approvals, including working through environmental assessments and approvals, before it can apply for a commercial licence to allow construction to begin.

Attributable to Minister for Climate Change and Energy Chris Bowen:

"The Albanese Government is securing the Hunter's jobs and energy future with the offshore wind industry the former Coalition Government promised but failed to deliver.

"We're fixing the broken offshore wind plan left behind by the Coalition to ensure communities reap the full social and economic benefits of this burgeoning industry.

"We back offshore wind because done right it has huge potential for jobs, new industry, and clean, reliable renewable energy for the Hunter and surrounds. This region is building a future as a clean energy powerhouse.

"Peter Dutton prefers to cheer on job losses with his backflip on offshore wind in favour of a \$600 billion nuclear scheme that won't deliver enough power to keep heavy industry running and will see the end of the Hunter as a manufacturing powerhouse."

Attributable to Member for Newcastle Sharon Claydon:

"This is an important next step in Australia's offshore wind industry, and it's happening right here in Newcastle. Newcastle's world class infrastructure, our deepwater port, skilled workforce, abundant resources and energy smarts means our region is poised to lead Australia's emerging offshore wind industry.

"A new offshore wind industry in Newcastle means new jobs in local manufacturing, construction, maritime, transport and logistics industries, as well growing our vocational education and training pathways – at TAFE and University.

"This announcement builds on the Albanese Labor Government's strong commitment to ensuring that regions like Newcastle and the Hunter play a lead role in generating, storing and distributing clean energy now and into the future.

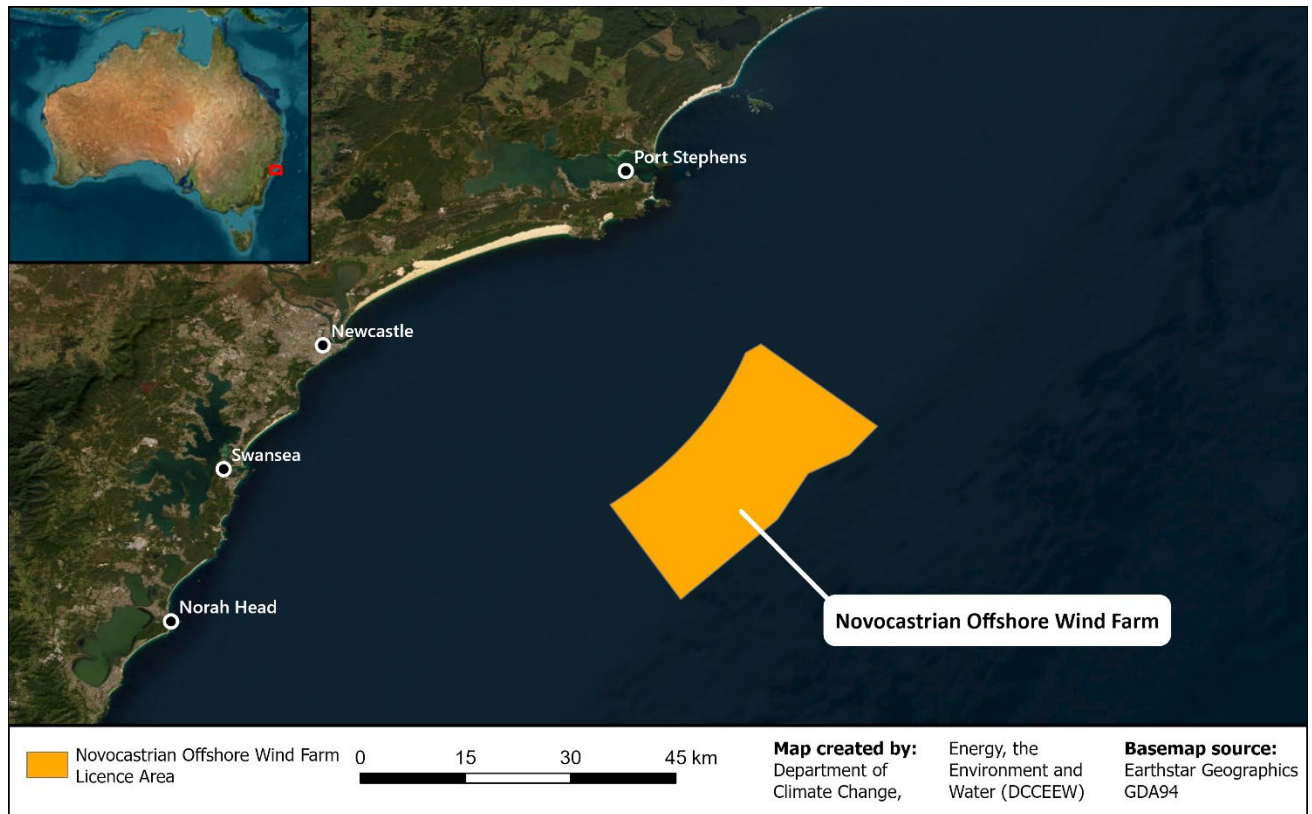
"I have an expectation that the community will get maximum benefit from the consultation process undertaken as part of the feasibility licence."

Attributable to Member for Paterson Meryl Swanson:

"A sustainable renewable energy industry will create new businesses, jobs and growth for the electorate of Paterson. As we embrace new technologies and cleaner energy sources, we must make sure our local communities and workers are supported every step of the way.

"The Hunter region has been the backbone of Australia's energy production for generations, and we are determined to ensure it remains at the forefront as we move into the future.

"We now have clarity on the next steps in the process for the Hunter Offshore Wind Zone. It is vital that the community is consulted extensively, and their views considered in the next stages of this process. It's for the proponent now to demonstrate that both the environmental and economic benefits stack up."

BACKGROUND:**ENDS**

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