

North West Community Consultation Summary



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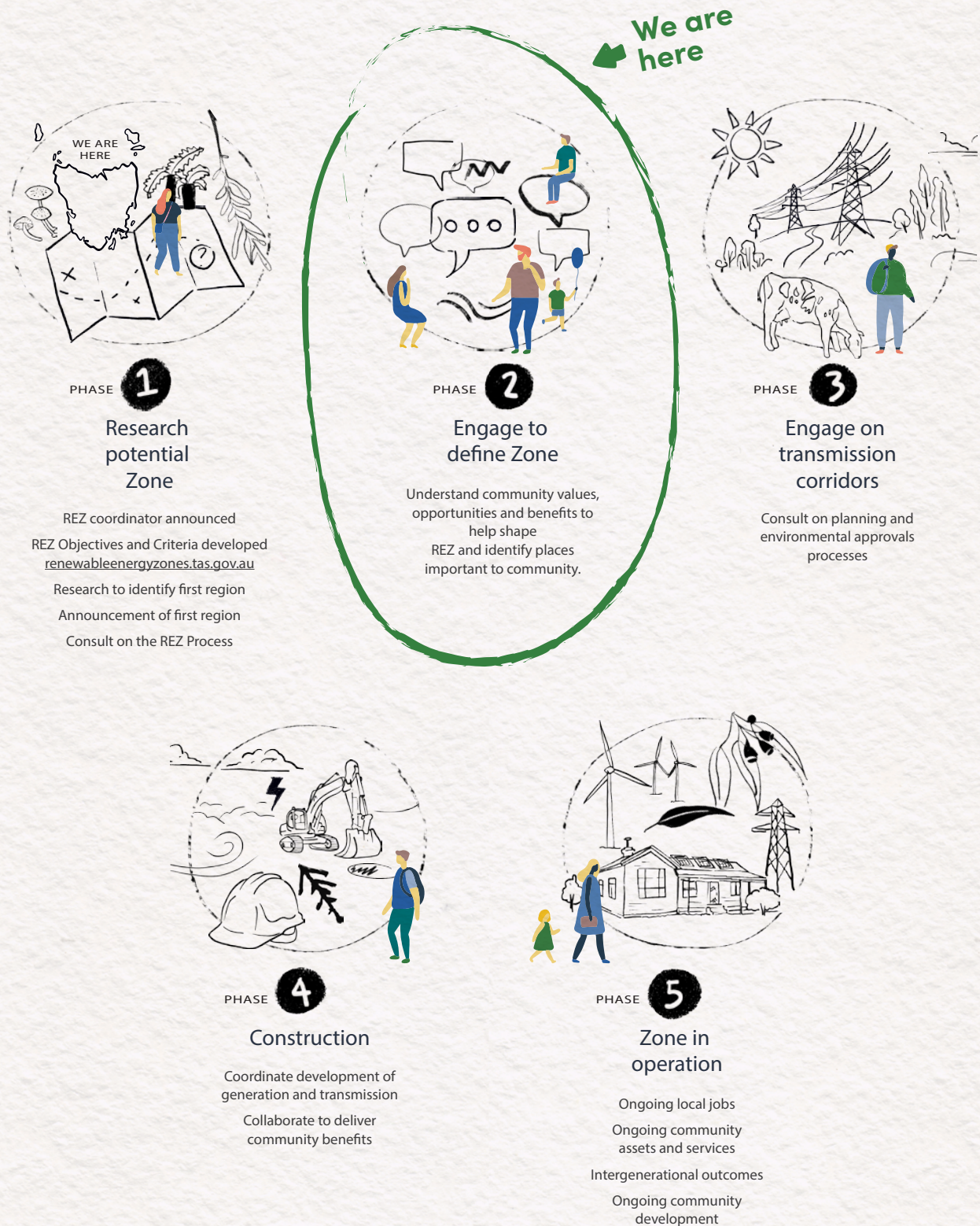
About REZ

Tasmania's renewable vision commits to sustainably growing our renewable energy generation to 200% by 2040. Renewables, Climate and Future Industries Tasmania (ReCFIT) is coordinating this growth in a way that considers our unique environment and community. Central to this outcome is defining the State's first Renewable Energy Zone (REZ), a key action of the Renewable Energy Coordination Framework.

REZ seek to coordinate new renewable energy projects and transmission at least cost in high quality wind resource areas, considering environmental, cultural and social values to ensure the benefits are realised at a local, state and national level.



In December 2022 the north west was announced as the first region to be explored in further detail for its potential to host a REZ. We are currently in the early phases of investigating a REZ with the work undertaken in the north west focusing on engaging to define a zone. This requires understanding how REZ can be done well from a local perspective and what communities expect in the way of benefits if they are to host a REZ.



Where We Have Been

We are committed to involving community in shaping Tasmania's first REZ. In 2023 we have focused on communicating and engaging within the north west region on REZ. We asked people to let us know what's important to them and what opportunities and challenges they see for the region from further renewable energy development.

We did this through mapping important places and community values, distributing a newsletter, attending regional events, meeting with local councils and key stakeholders and establishing two north west Stakeholder Reference Groups (SRGs).

The SRGs have been important to inform how best to engage and communicate information within the region, and to share information, test ideas, and seek input from representatives on the REZ process and community benefits. They included representatives from local councils, the Cradle Coast Authority, Northern Tasmania Development Corporation, Regional Development Australia Tasmania, Circular Head Aboriginal Corporation, Advance West North West, and community members.

How you got involved:

8
SRG
Workshops



6
Community
sessions
with 220 actively
engaged participants



22
Industry
meetings



42
Representative
body meetings



22
Council
meetings



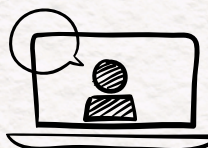
3
Newsletters
and 221 subscribers



4,478
Website
visits



30
Completed
online surveys



693
Submissions
on Mapping
Important Places



What We Have Heard

From all our consultation we heard broad support for the renewable energy vision when balanced with protecting the regions environmental values. This is largely driven by opportunities from more renewables within the region including new industries, employment, enhancing services, and diversifying existing sectors such as agriculture. We have heard about the potential issues and concerns that should be taken into consideration as we plan and define a REZ.

The following themes reflect feedback received from the north west:

Community



Community centred engagement: this approach has been welcomed by the region.

Build capacity to engage: community would like to be further supported and empowered to participate in particular youth and Aboriginal community in defining and planning renewable energy zones.

Coordination: community is currently experiencing engagement fatigue as they are being engaged on a project-by-project basis imposing a heavy burden on the same people. Community is seeking coordinated approach to engagement that has a role for Government to facilitate information sharing and design processes with the community.

Benefit sharing: emphasis on maximising community benefits from hosting renewables within the region and seeking a codesign approach to benefit sharing. Community were particularly focused on housing supply and affordability.

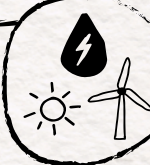
Environment



Minimising environmental impact: the natural environment holds a special place for the north west community. Protecting coastal regions, preserving Aboriginal culture and heritage, and conserving bird habitats and biodiversity are seen as vital. Projects should be located in places that do not detrimentally impact the region's social, cultural and environmental values.

Sustainability: seeking to understand whole of life assessment of windfarm development.

Integrated Infrastructure



Transmission: community members have highlighted the importance of locating renewable energy projects near existing transmission to minimise impacts to biodiversity and natural values.

Economic



Energy prices: the community has concerns about exporting energy and high power costs. If they are to host major infrastructure they want to see this reflected in their power bills.

New Industry: welcome the prospect of new industries, future employment opportunities, and a construction boom.

Opportunities: to diversify income streams and capitalise on renewable energy projects.

Mapping Important Places Summary

What We Asked

We asked the north west community to identify places important to them and places that could potentially host renewable energy projects.

By understanding places of social value, we can ensure they are considered in the planning of Renewable Energy Zones (REZ).

What We Did

Mapping Important Places (MIP) is a participatory mapping initiative, which ran across the month of July and was promoted to encourage a broad range of people to participate.



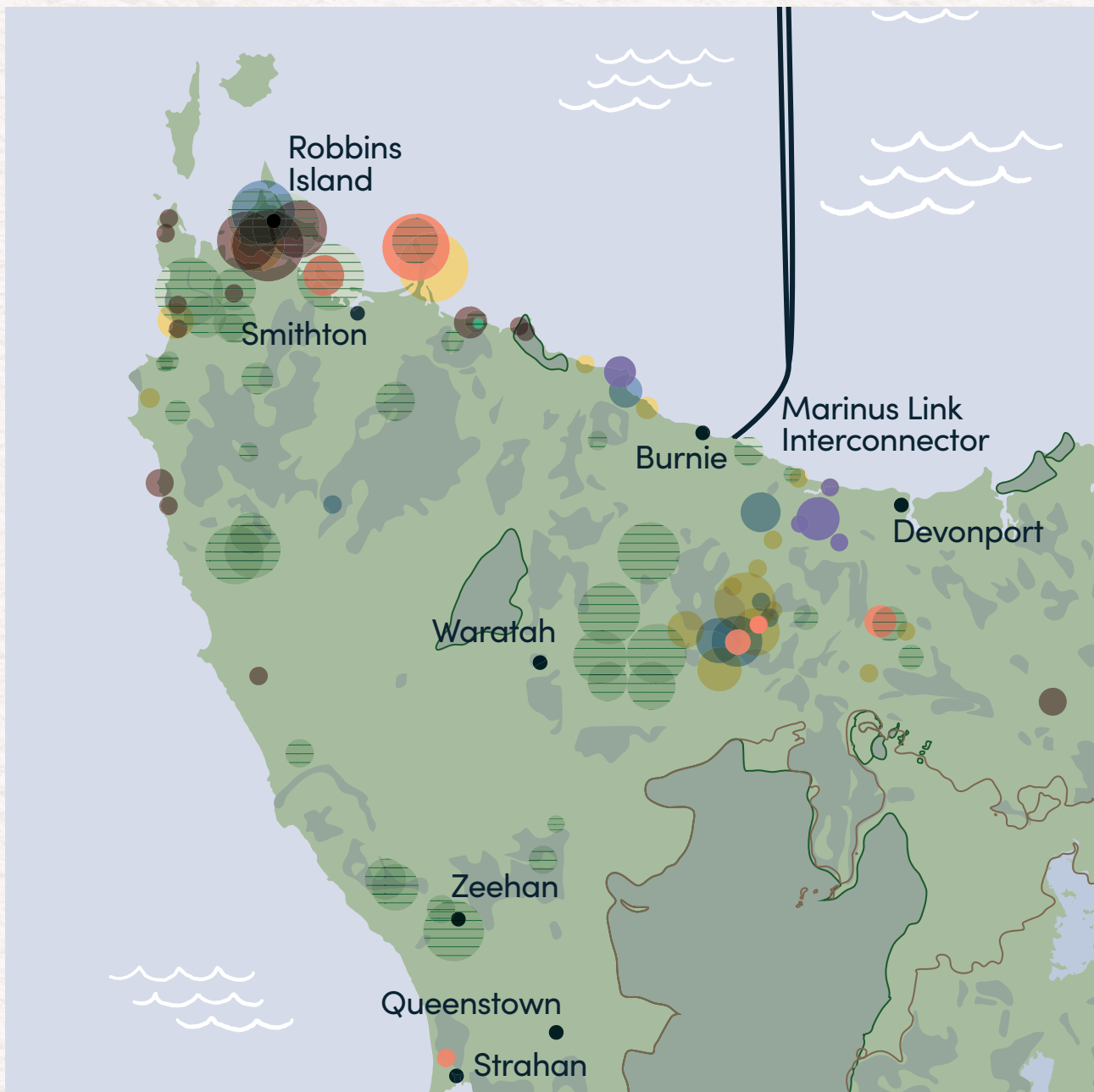
How You Engaged

In total we received 693 submissions. Most respondents lived within 50 km of identified locations, with just over half living within 10km. Almost half of the submissions identified suitable locations for renewable energy projects.



Important Places

The map below depicts the places most important to Tasmanian community members and places they deem suitable for renewable energy development.



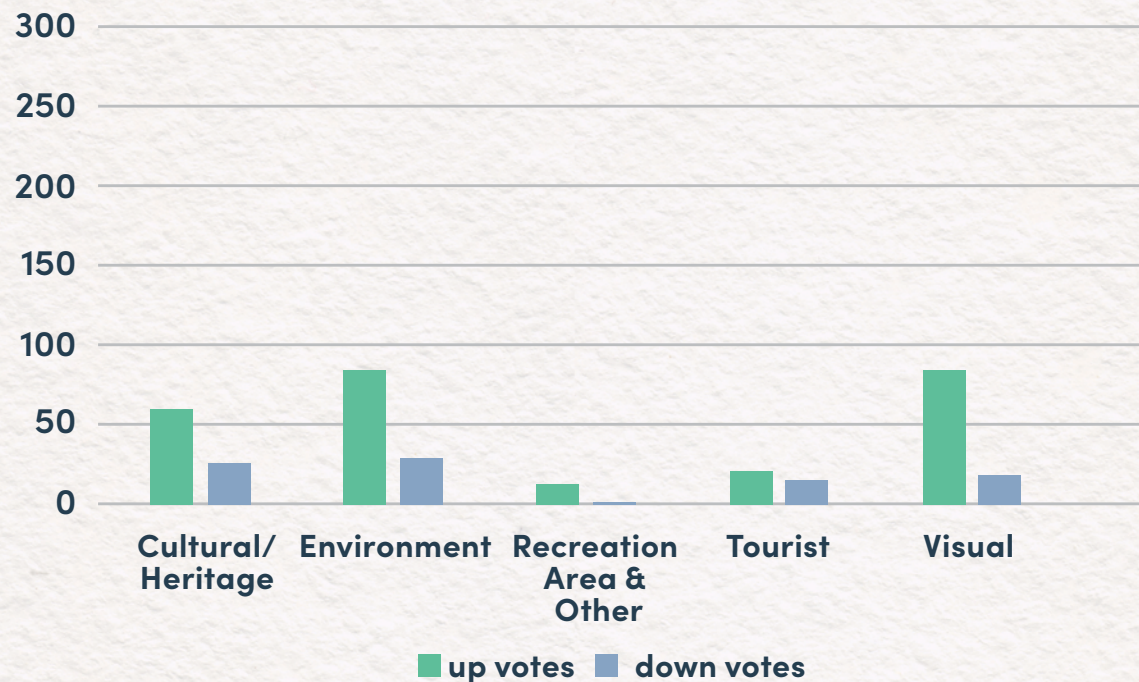
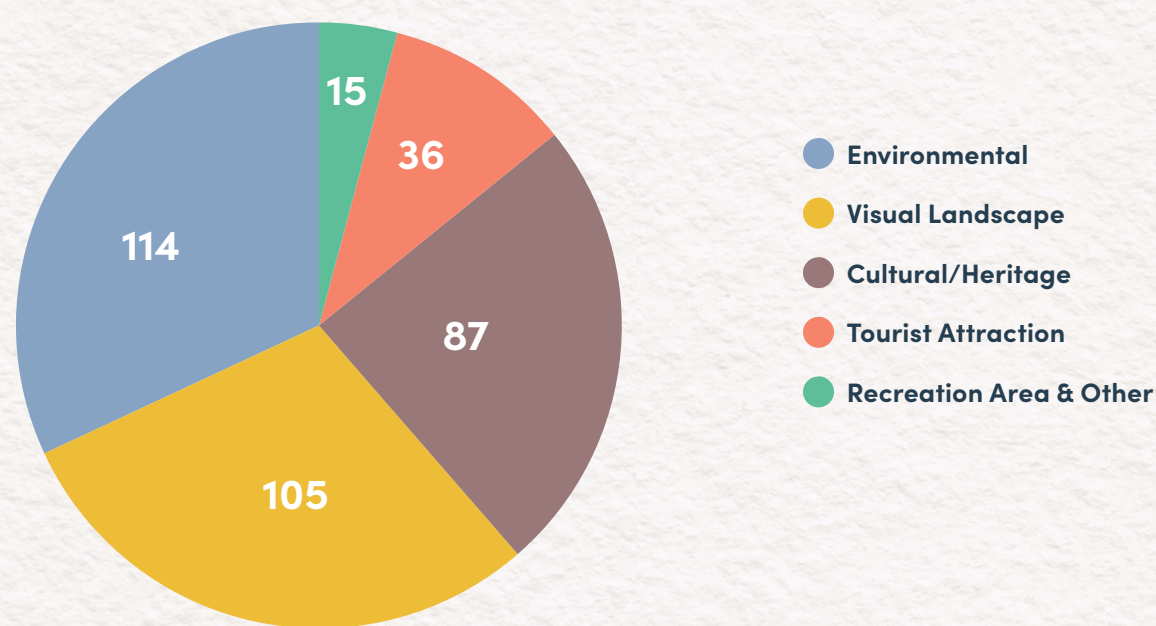
- Regional Values**
- Suitable Location*
 - National Parks & World Heritage Areas
 - Cultural/Heritage
 - Environmental
 - Other
 - Recreation Area
 - Tourist Attraction
 - Visual Landscape

*Circle size represents the number of up-votes received.

You can explore an online version of the map [here](#)



Total submissions



A total of 44 locations were identified as suitable for hosting renewable energy projects, with 249 up-votes and 87 down-votes. These locations were generally located in areas away from the coast and in already altered landscapes characterised by forestry, and grazing. The voting function showed that whilst there was not an overall consensus for these sites, 74 % of participants agreed with these locations.

There was a similar trend in regards to the other categories where they were generally supported by participants.

What We Heard

Coastal regions are important to the north west community due to their high scenic values, significant Aboriginal cultural history, and migratory and shorebird habitat.

There are concerns over the potential environmental impact of wind turbines on species and biodiversity, with mentions of the Tasmanian devil, wedge-tailed eagle, migratory shorebirds, and other bird life. Key issues raised include habitat damage, and effects on migration routes and biodiversity.

"There is natural habitat value, birds, waterways and cultural landscapes that are important to us."

"Beautiful rugged wild coastline important scenic value. Cultural values."

"This is part of the most important area for migratory shorebirds in Tasmania."

Suitable locations are identified in areas away from the coast, which are characterised by altered landscapes minimising impacts to biodiversity and scenic values, prime agricultural land and generally close to existing transmission infrastructure.

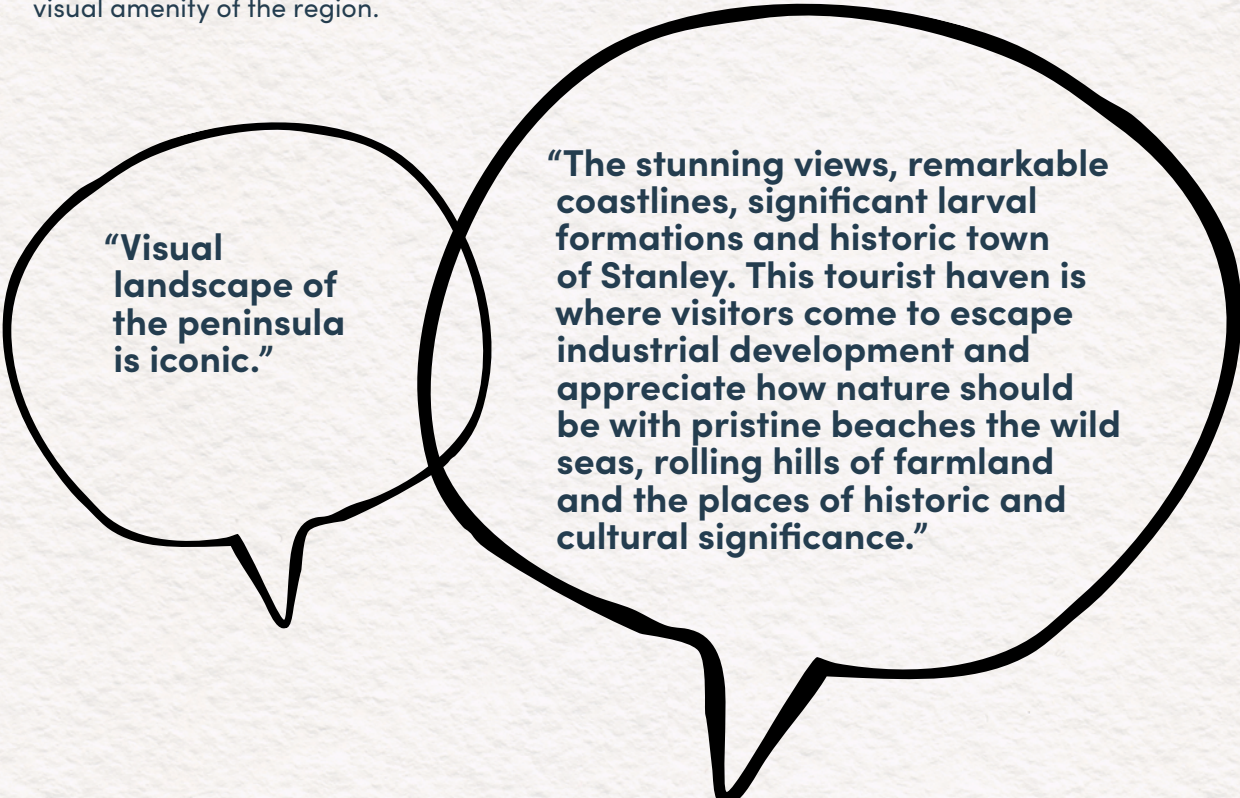
"Abundant in flat land and being logged by forestry. The environment is already altered and visual impact will not be effected. Roads cleared throughout the area. Close to transmission lines."

"Windfarms could exist within the production forestry zone."

"Prime agricultural land is not suitable for renewable energy developments."



Potential visual impact of wind turbines on the landscape has been highlighted, particularly along coastlines and near iconic natural landmarks. Local residents and some involved in the tourism industry highly value the visual amenity of the region.



"Visual landscape of the peninsula is iconic."

"The stunning views, remarkable coastlines, significant larval formations and historic town of Stanley. This tourist haven is where visitors come to escape industrial development and appreciate how nature should be with pristine beaches the wild seas, rolling hills of farmland and the places of historic and cultural significance."

Meaningful consideration for preserving cultural practices and sites, historical artefacts, and the deep cultural significance of the region to Aboriginal people is required when investigating future renewable energy projects and REZ spatial boundaries.



"This area is important culturally important for the Aboriginal community."

"Protect our cultural heritage practices like mutton birding."

"The region has undocumented and unacknowledged Aboriginal sites that must be preserved to protect Tasmanian history."

How we will use this information

This information will input into our broader spatial mapping process which aims to identify candidate renewable energy zones considering other attributes like the quality of the renewable resource (e.g. wind), existing land uses, the location of other resources (e.g. mining, forestry), environmental attributes (protected flora and fauna), heritage and cultural values.



Next Steps

We are committed to keeping people informed and will provide further opportunities to get involved as we progress with our work in the region.

We will publish a map of candidate REZ areas for public consultation in the coming months. As part of this process you will have an opportunity to comment on the candidate areas to inform the coordination and planning of future development required to achieve the Government's renewables vision.

In parallel with the work identifying a first Tasmanian REZ, we will work with locals to identify ways to minimise impacts (or opportunities to enhance) important places, including through community benefit sharing.

Sign up to receive our updates and latest project news at www.renewableenergyzones.tas.gov.au.

