

Item 5: Mayoral Minute

5.1 Mayoral Minute: Proposed Central-West Orana Renewable Energy Zone (REZ) Declaration Amendment

MAYORAL MINUTE

TO 16 AUGUST 2023 ORDINARY MEETING
GOV400103, LAN900113

RECOMMENDATION

That Council provides a submission to the proposed Central-West Orana Renewable Energy Zone (REZ) Declaration Amendment.

Council received correspondence to advise that the Central-West Orana Renewable Energy Zone (CWO REZ) declaration is to be amended to increase the intended network capacity from 3GW to 6GW.

This increased capacity will likely lead to increased renewable energy projects in the region. There are already 15 projects either approved or in the formal planning process in the region and even more in surrounding LGAs. In addition, there are a number of projects that are engaging with staff that are in early stages of planning.

Council should provide a submission in regards to this amendment and ensure all stakeholders needs are considered as part of the consultation. In particular, Council should highlight how local towns and villages can be protected from project encroachment, limit the overall number of renewable energy projects that may be approved in the region to protect agricultural land and amend the declaration map to remove the southern portion in the Mid-Western LGA as there is no planned new network major infrastructure in this part of the region.



CR DES KENNEDY
MAYOR
10 August 2023

Attachments: 1. CWO REZ Media Release.
2. CWO REZ Draft Declaration Amendment.

EnergyCo



Media Release

7 August 2023

Right-sizing Renewable Energy Zone to power NSW's future

The NSW Government is proposing to amend the declaration of the Central-West Orana Renewable Energy Zone (REZ) to increase the intended network capacity of the REZ to support the state's future energy needs.

The proposed amendment to the REZ declaration reflects the projected size of the Central-West Orana REZ in the [Network Infrastructure Strategy](#), which was released in May 2023.

EnergyCo chief executive James Hay said right-sizing the Central-West Orana REZ network capacity is critical to delivering the clean, affordable and reliable energy required to meet NSW's net zero targets.

"This will allow the Central-West Orana REZ to cost-effectively accommodate future expansion and provide flexibility to deliver energy reliability and putting downward pressure on electricity bills as we transition our economy away from a reliance on fossil fuels."

To increase the intended network capacity, the NSW Government is proposing an amendment to the Central-West Orana REZ declaration, which was formally made in November 2021, following public consultation.

The Network Infrastructure Strategy outlines options to increase the network capacity of the Central-West Orana REZ up to 4.5 gigawatts (GW) initially under Stage 1, and up to 6GW by 2038 under Stage 2. This will allow more renewable energy from solar, wind and storage projects to be distributed through the NSW transmission network.

This supports recent modelling by the Consumer Trustee in its [draft 2023 Infrastructure Investment Objectives Report](#) showing more network capacity will be needed to meet NSW's future energy needs as coal-fired power stations progressively retire.

Mr Hay said the proposed declaration amendment relates to the intended network capacity only and will not impact the geographical size of the REZ, which covers an area of about 20,000 square kilometres around Dubbo.

"Importantly, Stage 1 would not change the proposed transmission infrastructure that EnergyCo has been consulting on over the past 2 years," Mr Hay said.

"If we need any future expansions to deliver Stage 2, these will be subject to separate planning and regulatory approval processes including detailed community consultation and environmental assessment under the NSW planning system."

"The proposed amendment also helps us undertake long term strategic planning for the Central-West Orana REZ and minimise any cumulative impacts on the local community by investigating the need for additional transmission infrastructure in other parts of the REZ."

The Energy Corporation of NSW (EnergyCo) is part of the Treasury Cluster

The Central-West Orana REZ would generate up to \$10 billion in private investment in the region by 2030 and support around 5,000 construction jobs at its peak – and the proposed amendment has the potential to deliver even greater economic benefits for the region in the long term.

EnergyCo is seeking community feedback until 4 September 2023 on the draft declaration amendment, which is available to view online at energyco.nsw.gov.au/cwo-rez.

“It’s important that feedback from communities and stakeholders is considered in this process. All comments received will be reviewed by EnergyCo prior to submitting the final amendment to the Minister for Energy for approval,” Mr Hay said.

Network capacity in a REZ is the maximum amount of power that can be transferred from renewable energy generated and stored within the REZ to the NSW transmission system at any point in time.

To view the draft declaration amendment and make a submission, please visit energyco.nsw.gov.au/cwo-rez.

RENEWABLE ENERGY ZONE (CENTRAL-WEST ORANA) ORDER 2023

Under the

Electricity Infrastructure Investment Act 2020 (Act)

I, Penny Sharpe MP, Minister for Energy, make the following Order under section 22(1) of the Act.

Dated this day of 2023

Penny Sharpe MP

Minister for Energy

RENEWABLE ENERGY ZONE (CENTRAL-WEST ORANA) ORDER 2023

1. Name of Order

This Order is the *Renewable Energy Zone (Central-West Orana) Order 2023*.

2. Commencement Date

This Order commences on the date that it is published in the Gazette.

3. Definitions

Unless otherwise defined in this Order, words and phrases defined in the Act have the same meaning in this Order or the CWO REZ declaration.

CWO REZ declaration means the Renewable Energy Zone (Central-West Orana) Order published in the Gazette on 5 November 2021.

4. Amendment of the CWO REZ declaration

The CWO REZ declaration is hereby amended under this Order pursuant to section 22(1) of the Act.

Clause 5 of the CWO REZ declaration is amended as shown in the Schedule to this Order pursuant to section 22(1)(c) of the Act.

Schedule – Amendment to the CWO REZ declaration

**RENEWABLE ENERGY ZONE (CENTRAL-WEST ORANA)
ORDER 2021**

1. Name of Order

This Order is the *Renewable Energy Zone (Central-West Orana) Order 2021*.

2. Commencement Date

This Order commences on the date that it is published in the Gazette.

3. Definitions

Unless otherwise defined in this Order, words and phrases defined in the Act have the same meaning in this Order.

Act means the *Electricity Infrastructure Investment Act 2020*.

specified geographical area means the land identified as the 'Central-West Orana Renewable Energy Zone Geographical Area' in Schedule 1 of this Order.

4. Declaration of the Central-West Orana renewable energy zone

The Central-West Orana renewable energy zone is hereby declared and comprises:

(a) the specified geographical area; and

(b) the network infrastructure specified in Schedule 2 of this Order.

5. Intended network capacity for the network infrastructure in the renewable energy zone

The intended network capacity for network infrastructure in the Central-West Orana renewable energy zone is 36 gigawatts.

6. Central-West Orana renewable energy zone infrastructure planner

The Minister appoints the Energy Corporation as infrastructure planner for the Central-West Orana renewable energy zone upon commencement of this Order.

Schedule 2

1. Specified network infrastructure

The following network infrastructure is specified:

- (a) Planned, new and existing network infrastructure in the specified geographical area.
- (b) To the extent not specified in clause 1(a) of this Schedule 2, planned and new network infrastructure operating at nominal voltages of 330kV or 500kV connecting:
 - (1) the existing network infrastructure operating at nominal voltages of 500kV connecting Bayswater 500kV substation, Wollar 500 kV substation and Mt Piper 500kV substation; and
 - (2) the existing network infrastructure operating at nominal voltages of 330kV connecting Wollar 500kV substation and Wellington 330kV substation.
- (c) Planned and new augmentations to the existing Wollar substation.
- (d) To the extent not specified in clause 1(a) of this Schedule 2, existing network infrastructure operating at nominal voltages of 330kV connecting Wollar 500kV substation and Wellington 330kV substation.