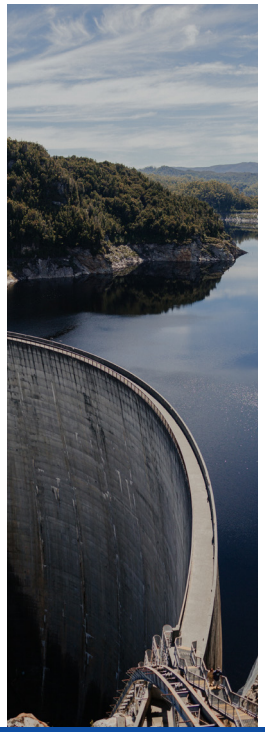
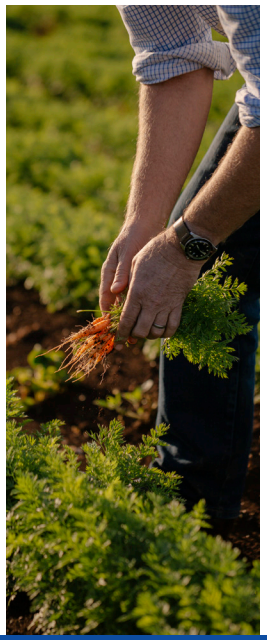
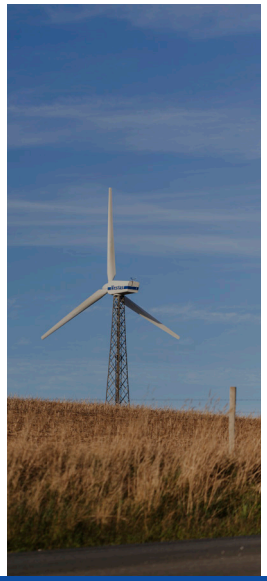
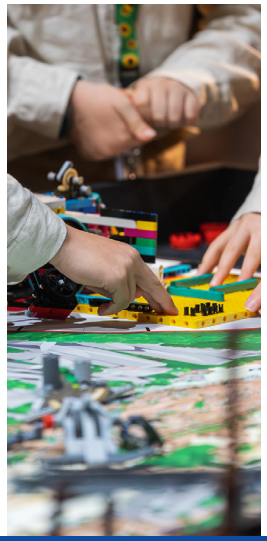
Local Power,
Local Prosperity

Ensuring we all share the benefits of renewable energy investment in our region


An invitation to join the conversation and take collective action — now and into the future

CRADLE COAST
AUTHORITY
Stronger Councils, **Stronger** Region

Local Power, Local Prosperity

Ensuring we all share the benefits of renewable energy investment in our region
2026
Version 1

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Cradle Coast Authority

Cradle Coast Authority (CCA) is a regional development and natural resource management organisation representing the nine councils in the Cradle Coast region. CCA plays a key role in uniting council efforts and collaborating with local communities, businesses and industry to support regional development. CCA hosts the Future Energy Hub providing community members, stakeholders, and industry information relating to renewable energy projects across the region.

Acknowledgments

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North West Renewables Roundtable Contributors: ACEN, Advance West North West, Clean Energy Tasmania, DPC Tas, Franco-Australian Indo-Pacific Centre for Energy Transition (FACET), HIF, Hydro Tasmania, Jobs Tasmania, Marinus Link, Office of the Coordinator General, Renewables, Climate and Future Industries Tasmania (ReCFIT), Skills Tasmania, Swinburne University of Technology, TasNetworks, TasTAFE, University of Tasmania, West Coast Renewables, West North West Working (WNWW) and West by North West (WxNW).

Artwork: Carly Grey, Krakani Creations.

Cradle Coast Authority (CCA) acknowledges the Palawa / Pakana as the traditional custodians of the land, sea and sky Country of Lutruwita / Trouwanna / Tasmania.

Tasmanian Aboriginal people are part of a continuous culture which spans millennia. The Tasmanian Aboriginal Community play an invaluable role as stewards of a healthy Country, maintaining an enduring connection to the landscapes of the Cradle Coast region which CCA deeply respects.

CCA pays respects to Elders past and present and extends this respect to all Tasmanian Aboriginal Community Members. Colonisation has caused significant injustice for Aboriginal people and impacted the living cultural landscape, creating a legacy which CCA seeks to improve. CCA commits to reconciliation, striving for shared progress towards a stronger region.

As an organisation, we are working to integrate Aboriginal knowledge in our work and to develop a better understanding of the cultural, environmental, social and economic dimensions of the region's landscapes to ensure Aboriginal Culture is protected, strengthened and celebrated.

CCA recognises that Tasmanian Aboriginal people determine both the boundaries for the sharing of their cultural heritage and opportunities for participation in activities which embrace and support their aspirations. We strive to work in partnership with the Tasmanian Aboriginal Community for the good of the region, aiming to create healthy and connected communities, protect and enhance natural resources, promote regional development and support local industries.

CCA respects the right of the Tasmanian Aboriginal Community to own, manage and care for Country, and commits to working together in ways which strengthen, respect and honour Aboriginal Culture.

An Invitation to our Community, Governments and Industry

Significant renewable energy investment is planned for the Cradle Coast region in Tasmania. Managed well, it can support local jobs, strengthen small businesses and contribute to long-term regional prosperity. Realising these benefits will require early collaboration between community, industry and government, grounded in sophisticated data that reflects the scale of investment ahead. This data will guide investment in the essential services that underpin the regional economy, including housing and transport, and shape a shared regional vision with clear, prioritised actions for the future.

The Local Power, Local Prosperity Report outlines multi-stakeholder opportunities for the region to benefit from renewable energy development, including:

- **Direct opportunities** such as the Clean Energy Centre of Excellence investment, local contracting, and community benefit sharing arrangements.
- **Indirect opportunities** including increased demand for hospitality and catering services, and the potential for collaborative investment in transport and housing.
- **Strategic opportunities** such as strengthened biosecurity supporting agriculture, growth in green tourism, and new economic activity enabled by improved data capacity through Marinus Link.

The Local Power, Local Prosperity Report is intended to spark a regional conversation and collective action. Some opportunities highlighted are already in train, such as the Clean Energy Centre of Excellence in Burnie. Some opportunities will be led by the Tasmanian and Australian governments, while others will rely on local business capability and community involvement. The most impactful and lasting benefits are likely to emerge where there is an alignment of priorities and identified needs.

We invite you to engage early, contribute your expertise, to guide:

- A regional vision shared by multiple stakeholders
- Priority infrastructure investment opportunities
- The regional outcomes that future projects must deliver

Your insights will guide how renewable energy investment can generate practical, measurable and locally relevant value for the Cradle Coast. Working together we can capture opportunities and convert unprecedented local investment in renewable energy to power long term local prosperity for our region, as a whole.

Renewable energy economic benefits are best achieved through a shared regional vision, open dialogue to inform priorities, and working together towards common goals.

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Executive Summary

The region's renewable energy investment currently underway presents significant opportunities and challenges. This *Local Power, Local Prosperity* Report has been prepared to spark dialogue and inspire action across the Cradle Coast region.

The report includes:

- An overview of the Cradle Coast region's renewable energy history.
- A summary explaining why Tasmania is investing in renewable energy.
- A high-level exploration of emerging opportunities for the region's economy, community, and environment.
- Specific key opportunities explored in more detail.
- Recommendations for action and next steps.

Together, these elements will help create a shared sense of what is possible. Collaboration informed by sophisticated data and open dialogue can shape a vibrant and prosperous future for the Cradle Coast.

The best outcomes will be built together.

Renewable energy development has region wide implications for communities, industry and government. The scale and complexity of this transition cannot be addressed by any one body acting alone. Communities, governments and industries around Australia have been planning for the impacts of renewable energy investment for a number of years. Action in the Cradle Coast is now urgently required.

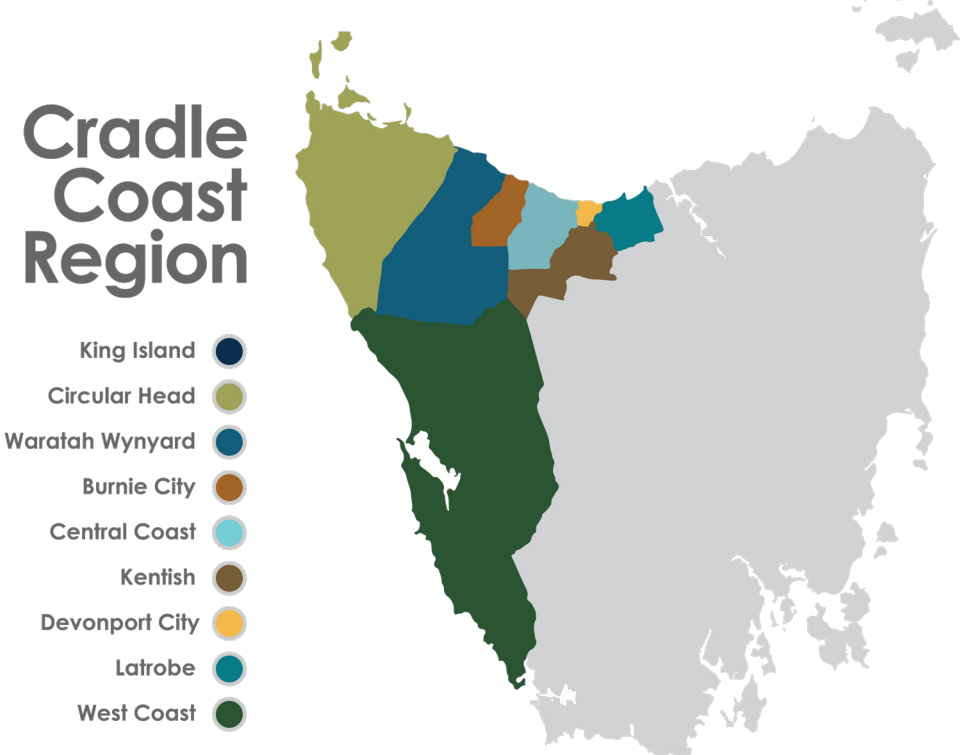
This report highlights the importance of coordinated, agile collaboration that is grounded in evidence and mutual respect. Together, these principles can shape a prosperous future for the Cradle Coast.

Renewable Energy on the Cradle Coast

The Cradle Coast enjoys abundant renewable energy. Our latitude means that the winds that pass over our coastline and hills does so with a force and reliability that comes from having been uninterrupted by landmasses for thousands of kilometres.

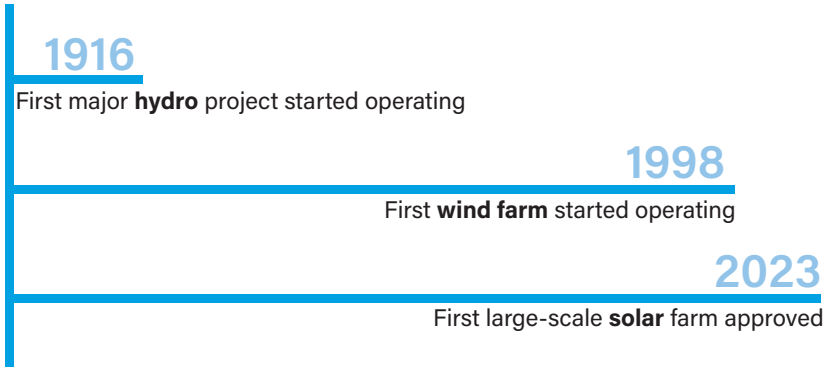
We enjoy reliable tides, rain and sunshine. These natural attributes underpin more than $15 billion of renewable energy projects in the pipeline.[1] We are fortunate to have renewable energy project proponents who are keen to work together and create a positive legacy that can build on our strong renewable energy history.

The Cradle Coast runs from Cradle Mountain down to the coastline on the north west and west coast of Tasmania, and includes King Island.



Why We Need to Invest in Renewable Energy

Tasmania has a strong history of renewable energy with our first major hydropower project commencing operations in 1916.[2]



Tasmania's strong hydropower legacy can also act as a constraint, creating a sense that the hard work is already done. This can contribute to inertia and limit our ability to pursue emerging renewable energy opportunities with the urgency and ambition they require. The following section examines this dynamic in greater detail.

Tasmania's Reliance on Rainfall

Tasmania's clean energy is heavily reliant on rainfall to power our hydropower assets. Tasmania's energy system has spent the past two years under sustained pressure, shaped initially by the worst multi-season drought ever recorded in the state. Through 2023 / 2024 financial year, critically low inflows forced Hydro Tasmania to conserve water, scale back hydroelectric generation, and rely more heavily on the Tamar Valley gas fired power station. During this period, Tasmania also became a net importer of electricity, drawing more power from the mainland via Basslink than it exported. This was a reversal of the state's typical renewable led supply pattern.[3]

The Tamar Valley Power Station

The Tamar Valley Power Station is a natural gas fired plant at Bell Bay, owned by Hydro Tasmania, and used primarily as a backup generation source to support the state's hydro dominated system. It is typically only brought online during dry periods or market pressures when hydro storages are low.

In early 2025, Hydro Tasmania's chief executive, Rachel Watson, publicly acknowledged the severity of the situation. She noted that the state was in "the second year of the worst multi-season drought that's been recorded in Tasmania's history", while expressing confidence that the system could be managed until conditions improved. Watson's assessment proved prescient. Substantial rainfall later in 2025 delivered a marked improvement in inflows across key catchments, easing

pressure on storages and allowing Hydro Tasmania to gradually increase generation.[4]

While the return of rainfall has stabilised the immediate outlook, the episode has underscored the structural vulnerability of a system still heavily dependent on rainfall and a single interconnector to the mainland.

The combination of prolonged drought, increased reliance on gas, and record electricity imports has prompted renewed scrutiny of Tasmania's renewable credentials and highlighted the need for a more diversified generation mix to buffer against future climatic variability.

In contrast to Tasmania's rainfall dependent system, South Australia continues to demonstrate what a high penetration wind and solar grid can achieve under the right technical and market settings. Renew Economy reported on 2 December 2025 that "South Australia – the country's most advanced renewables grid – has averaged more than 100 per cent net renewables (compared to state demand) over the past week, and more than 90 per cent renewables over the last 28 days."[5] This is despite South Australia having no hydro resources to provide dispatchable energy.

Over the past 12 months, South Australia's electricity network has averaged around 75 per cent renewables. This figure is expected to rise sharply as new capacity connects and as the state progresses toward its target of 100 per cent net renewables by 2027.[6]

South Australia has proven that a diversified renewable energy mix is capable of outperforming Tasmania's rainfall dependent system.

Globally, the cost of energy is rising.

We must get the right mix to meet our community's needs and help manage and minimise the increasing costs.

Variable energy

Solar power works when it is sunny and wind power works when it is windy. That's why its called variable.

Low-cost Energy Sources


Wind Power
(depends on wind)


Solar Power
(depends on sunlight)

Dispatchable energy

This energy we can control and use whenever we need it. Battery storage and hydropower are reliable because we can turn them on and off, even if the weather isn't right for solar and wind.

Higher-cost Energy Sources


Gas
(High emissions, high cost)


Hydropower
(Short and long term storage, instantly meets network needs)


Battery Storage
(Short term storage - hours)


Pumped Hydro
(Long term storgage, conserves our precious water)

Decarbonisation

Decarbonisation is no longer a niche environmental ambition but a prerequisite for economic relevance in a globally competitive market. As major trading partners accelerate their own transitions and embed emissions standards into supply chains, regions that fail to adapt risk being sidelined from emerging investment, export, and innovation opportunities.

By contrast, jurisdictions that move early to reduce emissions, modernise infrastructure, and enable clean industry position themselves to attract capital, secure skilled workforces, and participate in new value chains driven by low carbon technologies.

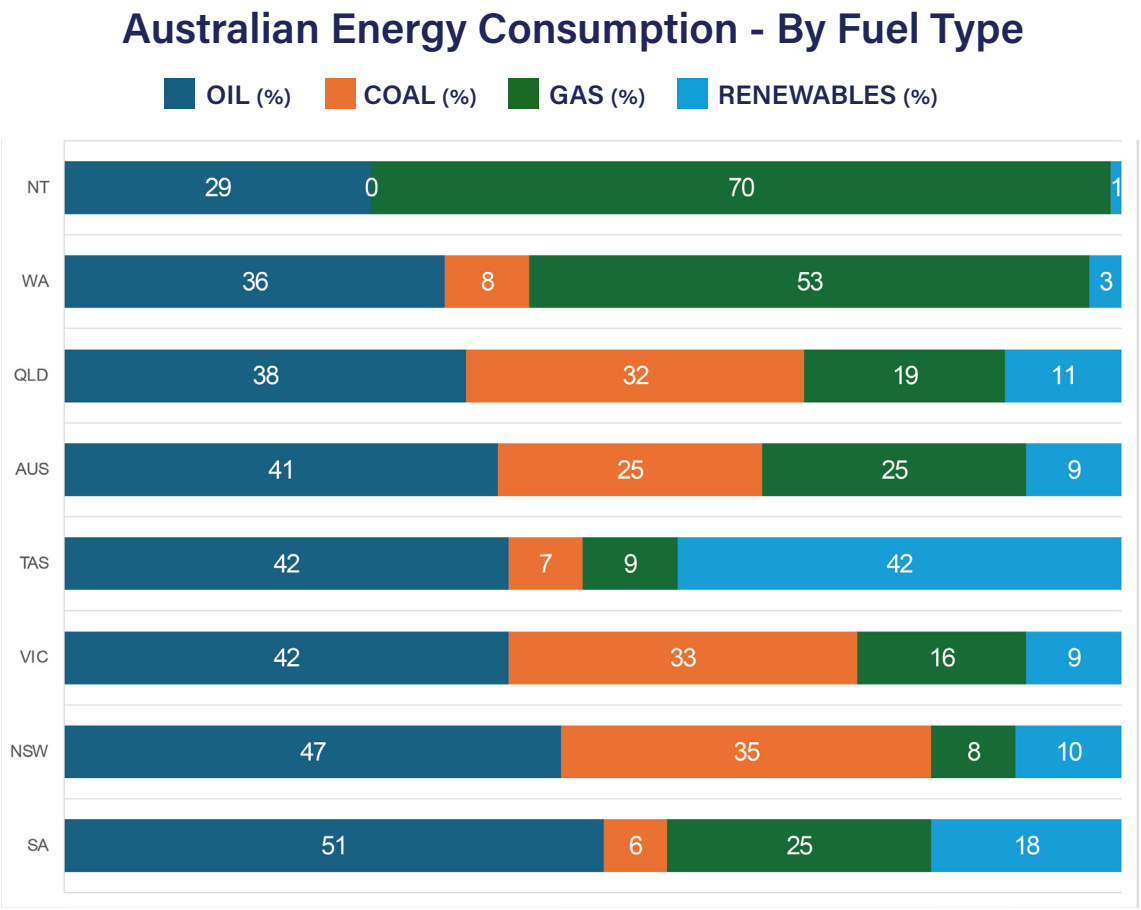
Decarbonisation is therefore not simply a climate imperative. Decarbonisation is a strategic economic choice that determines whether communities remain competitive, investable, and future ready.

China is the world's largest carbon emitter, and they are also the world's largest investor in clean energy.[7]

China is currently winning the clean energy race and has spent ten times more on clean energy than either the US or Europe, over the past five years.[8]

While Tasmania has a low carbon electricity network, we still need to decarbonise industry and transport such as cars and trucks. Our energy use encompasses more than charging a mobile phone, switching on the lights, or relaxing on the couch to watch a movie. Energy underpins almost every aspect of daily life. From the fuel that powers our cars to the electricity, gas and coal that drives Tasmanian industry and supports regional economic activity.

Currently 42% of our energy consumption comes from renewable energy. 58% of Tasmania's energy comes from fossil fuels such as petrol and diesel for transport and coal and gas for heavy industry and businesses.[9]



[10]

Tasmania's legislated target to produce 200% renewable electricity by 2040 is often framed as an ambitious surplus for export, but analysis in the Cradle Coast Authority's Future of Energy in Tasmania report makes clear that this scale of generation is ***only just sufficient to meet the state's own projected future energy needs***. As the report outlines, electrification of transport, industry and heating, combined with emerging hydrogen and advanced manufacturing opportunities, will drive substantial new demand across the state. In this context, the 200% target represents a baseline requirement for maintaining energy security and supporting economic growth, rather than an excess available for large scale export. This reframing highlights the importance of coordinated planning, transmission investment and regional readiness to ensure Tasmania can capture the benefits of its renewable resources while meeting domestic demand.[11]

Regional Economic Strengths and Weaknesses

Our strong renewable energy history is hiding the fact that there is still a lot of work to be done to decarbonise Tasmania. If we fail to rise to the challenge, Tasmania puts its clean green brand at risk, exposing us to reputational damage and damaging our credibility.

Sectors

At CCA we believe our renewable energy and clean green brand is worth defending. The Cradle Coast has a strong industrial past and remains a major centre for **manufacturing, processing and export activity** in Tasmania. Our region leads the state in productivity with $4,230 in value generated per person, nearly 37 percent higher than the South[59]. This intense specialisation defines the region's identity, with local makers exporting more than half their output to global markets. Companies such as BioMar demonstrate this capability, producing high performance aquafeed in Wesley Vale for domestic and international aquaculture industries. Despite this strength, the sector experienced a $35 million decline in value added between 2021 and 2023, reflecting statewide pressures from rising energy costs, worker shortages and ongoing supply chain disruptions.[12]

Cradle Coast visitor economy has become one of the state's strongest tourism growth stories, leading Tasmania with annual expansion of 11.9% between 2021 and 2023 and attracting around 1.2 million visitors in 2023–24. This growth is made more remarkable when understood in context with the sector's historic volatility.

The visitor economy surged 30% in 2013–14, collapsed during the COVID pandemic, and is now settling into a steady 10% growth. The sector has now emerged as a key driver of jobs and regional economic momentum.[15]

Ongoing labour shortages remain a constraint, with the state reliant on imported workers, and the sector's performance remains tightly linked to Tasmania's broader attractiveness and liveability, which continue to underpin visitor demand.[15]

The Cradle Coast is an **agricultural powerhouse**.

We are Tasmania's most productive agricultural region: with only 16% of the state's farmland and creating 41% of the state's agricultural output and 51% of Tasmania's dairy production. [13]

The Cradle Coast leads the state in this sector, which accounts for 7% of all local jobs in the region. The sector is also remarkably productive; across Tasmania, agriculture generates an average of $20,960 more economic output per worker than the national industry average, highlighting the sector's efficiency.[14]

Our **mining sector** remains a defining feature of the Cradle Coast regional economy. In 2023/2024, the sector generated more than $2 billion in annual economic activity[60] even as the industry contracted by $71.5 million statewide due to broader structural pressures.[15]

Persistent skill shortages continue to constrain growth and drive volatility, contributing to a reliance on imported mainland labour to meet operational needs. These pressures are compounded by entrenched regional disadvantage.

Despite its role as a major mining region, the West Coast records one of Tasmania's lowest IRSAD scores at around 800. The Index of Relative Socio economic Advantage and Disadvantage (IRSAD) is one of the ABS's SEIFA indexes. It ranks areas from most disadvantaged (low scores) to most advantaged (high scores) using Census data.[16]

Workforce

Young people are central to Tasmania's long-term economic resilience and innovation capacity. Tasmania faces a clear demographic and workforce challenge, with older workers exiting the labour market faster than young people are entering it. Longstanding gaps in entry-level opportunities and a lack of visible career pathways have contributed to the out migration of young Tasmanians. This has created a persistent participation gap with the national average, affecting both productivity and community wellbeing.

In response to these issues, Jobs Tasmania has developed Tasmania's Youth Jobs Strategy 2024-2030 which is focused on overcoming barriers. Barriers such as transport (driver education rather than an improved public transport system), career guidance, and modern vocational facilities. The strategy aims to make staying in Tasmania a viable, rewarding choice while providing employers with the skilled workforce needed for a productive economy.[17]

On 16 August 2025, Dr Lisa Denny reported that 52.1% of Tasmania's 2024 Year 9 students did not meet the expected proficiency level in writing. This is known to be the strongest predictor of Year 12 education attainment.

In addition to this, 40.3% did not meet reading expectations and 42.8% of students did not meet the expected proficiency level in numeracy. Numeracy is a foundational skill for future STEM pathways and to build strong career opportunities.[18]

While the state government is implementing a "structured literacy approach" by 2026, Dr Lisa Denny notes that the full benefits of this reform won't be visible in Year 12 completion rates until 2037, leaving a decade-long "gap" of under-skilled youth.

To ensure our youth can build on their education and move into higher paying employment, we must lift literacy and numeracy outcomes. Strengthening these foundations will open up real pathways to opportunity.

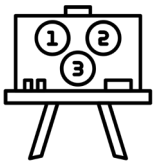
Future

Renewable energy investment can play a powerful role in addressing Tasmania's youth participation and workforce challenges. It can create jobs and reshape the conditions that influence young people to stay, train, and build their futures in the state.

In the Cradle Coast, our weaknesses can also serve as opportunities with the right planning and collaboration. The $15 billion renewable energy investment pipeline can strengthen our shared experience of living on this island. With a collective approach, renewable energy investment will be able to enhance, rather than unsettle, the way we live and work here.

52.1% did not meet the expected proficiency level in writing.

40.3% did not meet reading expectations.



42.8% did not meet the expected proficiency level in numeracy.

*Tasmania's 2024 Year 9 students

[18]

The Opportunity Landscape

The Cradle Coast of Tasmania is a community on the cusp of significant economic transformation driven by renewable energy. While this investment will bring broad economic benefits through new jobs and opportunities, it's important to ensure these benefits are shared equitably and that any disruptions or disadvantages that come with change are minimised as much as possible.

For many years the Tasmanian and Australian governments have been promoting renewable energy economic benefits for our region.

"Today I will be tabling legislation to enshrine in law the Tasmanian renewable energy target and cement this Government's commitment to driving economic development, delivering jobs on the ground in rural and regional Tasmania through our renewable energy resources."

Minister for Energy, Guy Barnett - 15 October 2020

"Energy is more than just a sector, it underpins our economic activity and standard of living, it provides jobs, and it supports the growth of our industries."

Minister for Energy and Renewables, Nick Duigan - 29 March 2025

"It will deliver an economic boost to Tasmania and wider Australian industry during construction as well as having long lasting benefits by improving the transmission of cleaner reliable renewable energy."

Minister for Climate Change and Energy, Chris Bowen - 1 August 2025

The economic benefits of renewable energy investment are often recognised. Particularly within the limited context of business and employment opportunities during the construction phase of renewable projects.

CCA acknowledges recent changes made by the Tasmanian Government to uplift these opportunities, particularly through the Renewable Energy Services Hub (RESH). However, there are clear policy gaps. If these gaps are not addressed, they risk creating net negative impacts for the region (e.g. housing, regional multi-sector workforce planning). The same applies to future-focussed opportunity areas such as enabling compatible and co-located industries. Data centres, for instance, can be paired with enterprises that require warm water for production processes, creating efficient industrial ecosystems.

Similar attention is needed for benefit sharing frameworks that strongly support the development of legacy community infrastructure.

An agile, forward-planning approach is essential to unlock the region's renewable energy potential.

Direct, Indirect and Strategic Opportunities

Renewable energy investment offers a diverse and far-reaching set of opportunities for local communities and industries. These benefits span manufacturing, transport, tourism, services, and the broader regional economy. Some opportunities will provide direct benefits such as local employment, community benefit sharing, and the Tasmanian Clean Energy Centre of Excellence.

Other benefits will be indirect, including legacy infrastructure such as housing, and transport.

Small businesses looking to expand will be well-placed to grow, diversify, and develop their workforce. This will require complementary investment in enablers such as childcare to lift workforce participation. Investment in childcare would also ensure that the employment opportunities renewable energy projects bring to the region can be enjoyed by primary care givers in our community. Local advanced manufacturers can leverage emerging supply chain opportunities, while service industries, such as hospitality to local tourism, benefit from increased activity and offseason demand.

Importantly, renewable energy investment strengthens Tasmania's decarbonisation pathway and enhances our clean, green brand. When paired with strategic benefits and strategic planning, these developments can deliver long-term regional transformation, supporting new industries, modern skills, and a more resilient and competitive economy.

This report will highlight current initiatives and future opportunities.

Opportunity Overview

DIRECT

BUY LOCAL - Regional contracting opportunities allow local SMEs to participate in civil, electrical, and site-services work, helping build capability and scale across the supply chain. Directing more project spending to local firms keeps economic value in the community, supporting jobs and strengthening the regional economy.

ADVANCED MANUFACTURING - Regional manufacturing strengths provide a foundation for entering the renewable energy supply chain, while emerging opportunities in turbines, blades, and other components create pathways for new high-value industries. Keeping more production and investment within the region captures value currently lost to imports and supports broader domestic industrial growth.

WORKFORCE - Specialised training and apprenticeships through the Clean Energy Centre of Excellence in Burnie create clear pathways for young people to enter renewable energy and advanced industries, helping build a skilled local workforce with qualifications aligned to long-term regional jobs. By offering viable, high-value employment close to home, supported by dedicated clean-energy training infrastructure, Cradle Coast UTAS, Zeehan, King Island and Smithton Study Hubs; these opportunities strengthen youth retention and support young people to build their futures locally.

SOCIAL ENTERPRISE AND COMMUNITY SERVICES - Embedding social enterprises and community services in the project supply chains enables mission-driven organisations to reinvest revenue into social, cultural, and environmental outcomes, while procurement settings that prioritise community benefit integrate social impact into service delivery. These arrangements create project-driven income streams that help mission-focused organisations scale their work and address unmet community needs.

COMMUNITY BENEFITS - Structured, community informed long-term funding mechanisms from community grant programs ensures neighbours enjoy a direct financial benefit from local projects and supports broader regional uplift. Community Benefit Sharing helps to deliver lasting social value and stability, creating a meaningful legacy that strengthens regional vitality well beyond the construction phase.

INDIRECT

HOSPITALITY - Construction activity increases spending in local cafés, pubs, and restaurants, providing steady revenue during off-season periods, while buy-local procurement directs project-related catering and service contracts to regional operators, supporting broader hospitality sector activity. For this opportunity to be realised it is essential the FIFO workforce does not absorb tourist accommodation.

With the right support it is possible for hospitality and tourism to benefit directly, indirectly and strategically. Hospitality and Tourism are explored in the “Strategic” section.

TRANSPORT - We recommend improved and innovative transport access reducing barriers to jobs and training and supports regional employment growth, while flexible, demand-responsive services offer reliable, tech-enabled mobility for rural and regional communities.

Collaboration with renewable-energy proponents can enable transport pilots that inform long-term, data-driven planning, and sustainable local services enhance the experience of low-carbon visitors.

An updated Integrated Transport Strategy would align public, active, and freight networks to underpin long-term regional growth and meet future industry and community needs.

HOUSING - Temporary workforce demand can be used to deliver long-term, affordable housing that later transitions into social, mixed, or community options, while innovative models such as youth home-ownership pathways, community income streams, granny flats, and LOTS conversions broaden local supply.

Revitalising under-used pubs, small hotels, and CBD spaces adds further capacity alongside temporary solutions where needed. Together, these approaches help ensure construction-phase demand strengthens

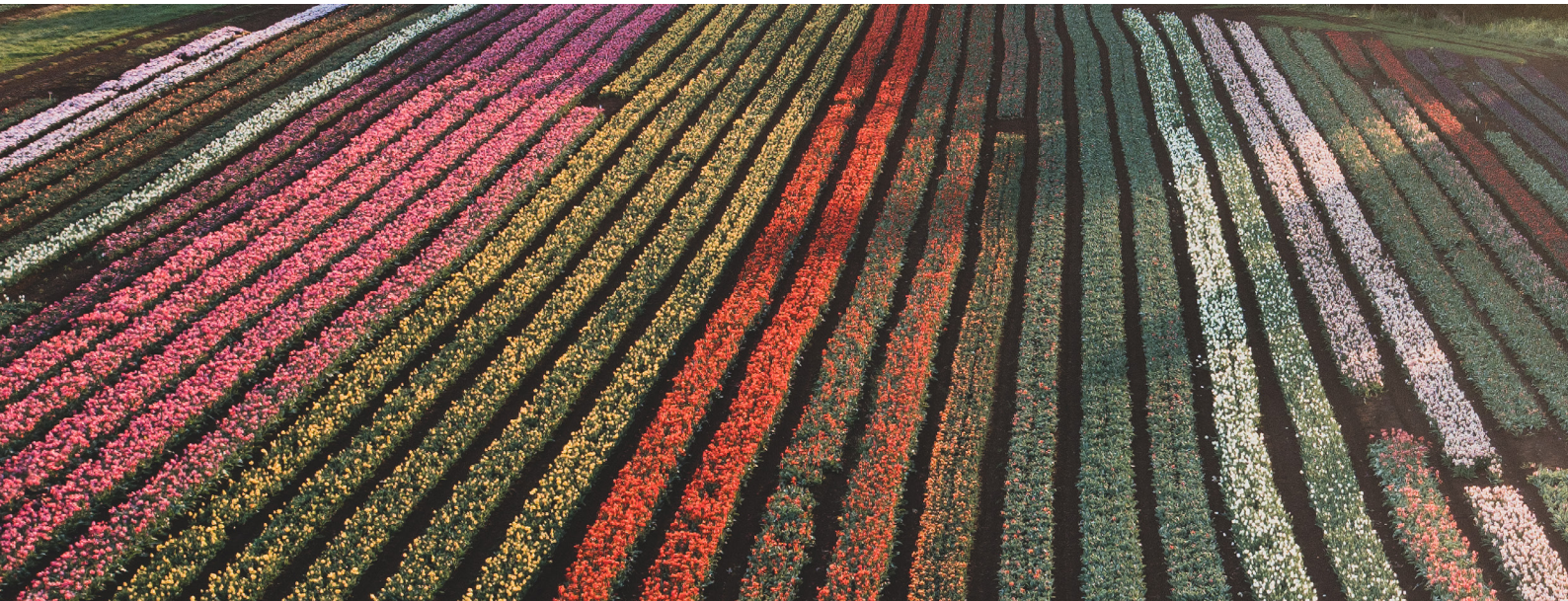
STRATEGIC

AGRICULTURE - Fit-for-purpose biosecurity infrastructure, including wash-down stations and clear decontamination protocols, helps ensure machinery enters Tasmania and its agricultural areas safely. Marinus Link data capacity will support emerging automation and sensor-driven technologies strengthen the connection between the region's knowledge economy and primary industries.

TOURISM - Renewable-powered accommodation, carbon friendly local transport and paddock-to-plate experiences enhance the region's low-carbon tourism appeal for environmentally conscious international visitors. Temporary worker housing can be designed for post-construction reuse and transition into legacy tourism infrastructure that protects hotel capacity, supporting long-term visitor demand.

KNOWLEDGE ECONOMY - Massive data capacity delivered through Marinus Link can accelerate the growth of high-tech industries by enabling AI, automation, and digital innovation to scale locally, while improved digital infrastructure reduces latency, supports advanced manufacturing, ag-tech start-ups and is advantageous for existing local firms competing for international investment without needing to relocate.

DATA CENTRES - New data centres could enable local, low-latency processing that reduces digital fragility and lowers emissions, while the additional data capacity delivered through Marinus Link supports the growth of AI, automation, and fintech industries. Together, these improvements help attract high-tech jobs without requiring firms to relocate.



Overview of Direct Opportunities

Direct opportunities include investments such as the Clean Energy Centre of Excellence, local contracting through "Buy Local" policies, and community benefit-sharing arrangements.

What is at stake: At stake is the regional ability to capture a significant portion of economic benefits from more than **$15 billion in renewable energy projects**. This includes securing high-value jobs for local clean energy trades, as well as retaining billions of dollars in economic value by localizing the manufacturing of wind turbine parts and blades.

Why it is fragile: These opportunities are fragile due to a current **heavy reliance on international supply chain**s and limited industry coordination. Tasmanian Industry Participation Plan accountability relies on contract management, reporting, and reputational consequences rather than on independent monitoring and formal penalties. Furthermore, establishing globally competitive local manufacturing requires complex planning and negotiations including intellectual property and licensing agreements with global companies like Vestas or Goldwind.

What changes if we act together vs. alone: Acting alone or in a fragmented way leads to **"income leakage"** where procurement spending flows out of the region because local businesses lack the capacity to meet large-scale project demands. Acting together through a shared regional vision, supporting the Renewable Energy Services Hub project (RESH) and formal partnerships allows the region to negotiate for IP access, secure government support, and build the "missing middle" of medium-sized firms needed to scale into large infrastructure projects.

Buy Local Policies and Initiatives

Many renewable energy projects use structured Buy Local policies as part of their broader procurement and development frameworks. These policies are designed to direct a set portion of project spending into the regional economy by choosing local goods, services, and labour instead of sourcing them from outside the area.

When this happens, more money stays in the community and supports local jobs and local companies. The policies can include procurement targets that set how much of the project budget must be spent locally, job and training opportunities such as apprenticeships or Aboriginal and youth participation, and support to help small and medium businesses build the capability they need to win work. Large organisations can also strengthen the local supply chain by using their buying power to back regional businesses. In the renewable energy sector, this can include many areas such as steel fabrication, electrical work, infrastructure needs, transport logistics, catering, accommodation, and professional services.

Money spent with local suppliers tends to stay in the region longer, circulating through wages, services, and follow on purchases. Communities often report practical gains, including new skills in the workforce, growth in small and medium businesses, and clearer alignment with local standards and expectations.

While outcomes vary between projects, Buy Local policies are increasingly seen as a mechanism that can strengthen regional economies and create more stable opportunities for local workers. For regions positioned to support renewable energy development, these policies represent a shift that many local businesses are watching closely.

Renewables, Climate and Future Industries Tasmania (ReCFIT) and the Gateway by ICN are directly supporting renewable energy developers to engage with local businesses.

What is the difference between Local content and Hyper-local content?

Local content refers to goods, services, and labour sourced from Australia and New Zealand, while hyper-local content means procurement and benefits directed to the immediate host community or region where the project is located.

What is the Tasmanian Industry Participation Plan?

The Tasmanian Industry Participation Plan (TIPP) is a strategic document that suppliers must complete when bidding for certain Tasmanian Government contracts. Its purpose is to:

- Maximise opportunities for local Tasmanian businesses, especially SMEs
- Strengthen the local economy and supply chains
- Increase transparency in how government spending benefits Tasmania
- Ensure suppliers demonstrate local engagement, job creation, and economic contribution

TIPP accountability relies on contract management, reporting, and reputational consequences rather than on formal independent governance and penalties.

Industry Capability Network - Gateway by ICN

Renewable energy proponents and contractors will be connecting local works contracts with local businesses through the Gateway by ICN which is supported by the Tasmanian Government.

The Gateway by ICN in Tasmania is an online procurement and networking platform managed by the Industry Capability Network Tasmania, through the Department of State Growth. It is designed to connect local businesses with buyers for major projects. It plays a central role in supporting Tasmanian small and medium-sized enterprises, by increasing their visibility and access to procurement opportunities, including in renewables, construction, transport, and government contracts.

How Gateway by ICN Tasmania Works

1. Tasmanian suppliers register and create detailed company profiles. The system automatically notifies them of relevant opportunities and allows them to submit EOIs directly.

2. Buyers such as project owners, government agencies, and private developers publish their projects and associated work packages on the Gateway by ICN. Local suppliers, subcontractors, and service providers are then able to submit expressions of interest (EOIs) to be considered for those opportunities.

3. ICN Tasmania offers personalised assistance to suppliers, helping them understand requirements, prepare effective EOIs and tenders, and maximise local industry participation.

Projects like the North West Transmission Developments (NWTD) and Marinus Link, use Gateway by ICN as a key procurement channel. This facilitates the delivery of Buy Local commitments through the Tasmanian Industry Participation Plans (TIPP) by enabling streamlined engagement with local suppliers. The Gateway by ICN is however not limited to Tasmanian businesses.

Benefits of the Gateway by ICN for Suppliers and Buyers

- Greater exposure to projects, streamlined EOI submission, direct access to procurement staff, and practical support to improve competitiveness.
- Easy access to qualified local suppliers, transparent tracking of local content and industry participation, and support for fair and open procurement processes.

Register on the Gateway by ICN or miss out.

Businesses who are not registered on the Gateway by ICN will not be eligible for renewable energy construction contracts, in most cases. If you need help to make this happen Gateway by ICN have staff who are able to support locals to register. This is funded by the Tasmanian Government.

Renewables, Climate and Future Industries Tasmania (ReCFIT)

The Renewables, Climate and Future Industries Tasmania (ReCFIT) is a specialised division of the Tasmanian Department of State Growth responsible for leading the state's renewable energy future. They focus on policy, program management and supporting the planning and delivery renewable energy projects.

The Renewable Energy Services Hub (RESH)

The Tasmanian Government committed $5 million in the 2024 - 25 State Budget to establish a Renewable Energy Services Hub (RESH). The RESH emerged from both Tasmania's long term renewable energy ambitions and direct feedback from industry about barriers to investment. Industry consultation revealed that investment in renewable energy was being held back by limited coordination, unclear strategic direction, and a heavy reliance on international supply chains. In response, the RESH was established to strengthen local capability, improve industry coordination, and reduce dependence on overseas inputs. While it began with a focus on Bell Bay, the project has since expanded to support statewide collaboration and broader opportunities. The RESH is now being developed as a virtual hub to enable this wider role.

ReCFIT has been tasked with defining the hub's operational scope, supported by expert facilitation from GHD and input from major stakeholders including Hydro Tasmania, TasPorts, Clean Energy Tasmania and the Clean Energy Council. The RESH serves as the government's mechanism for connecting Tasmania's substantial renewable energy project pipeline with local businesses and workers, ensuring that the economic and employment benefits of the energy transition are captured within the state. Specific initiatives include:

- Direct outreach
- Supply chain development
- Accessing market intelligence
- Networking events
- Matchmaking between local suppliers and project proponents

The Tasmanian Government is currently considering how the RESH Program can directly support industry. The broader program will be announced in the coming months.

The RESH Program aims to provide support through market intelligence and practical coordination between businesses and projects to enable Tasmania's energy transition. You can reach out to ReCFIT via their dedicated email address **futureindustries@recfit.tas.gov.au** and be added to their supplier database.

Community Benefit Sharing

Community benefit sharing refers to the mechanisms that ensure local communities receive social, economic, or financial benefits from major projects developed in their area. These benefits can take many forms including funding, services, jobs, training, infrastructure, or long term legacy initiatives.

Tasmania's renewable energy sector increasingly recognises benefit sharing as a core practice for ensuring that the rewards of large scale projects flow directly to the communities that host them. Evidence shows that strong benefit sharing frameworks deliver strategic advantages for developers and community together. This includes reduced project risk, faster transitions, lower costs, and fewer conflicts by strengthening social connections, community ambition and improving decision making.

Community benefits generate tangible long-term value for local communities through various processes, such as co-designed participation, targeted responses to regional needs such as housing and health, and contributions to economic vitality and energy security.

Most importantly well designed benefit sharing ensures that renewable energy development strengthens, rather than strains, the communities that make it possible.

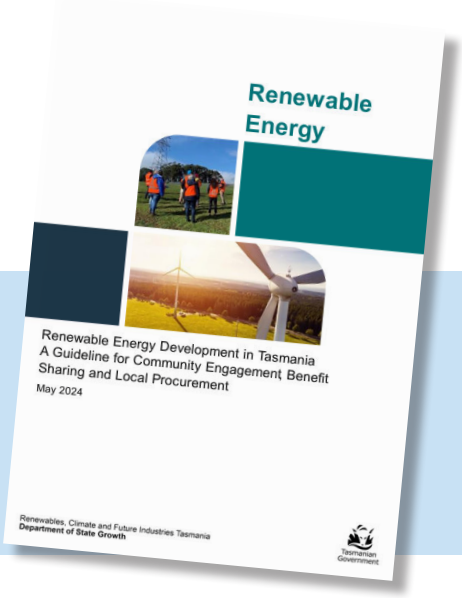
Recommendation

The *Guideline for community engagement, benefit sharing and local procurement* is the Tasmanian Government's current guidance for proponents establishing community benefit sharing schemes and programs. The document considers examples of how community benefits are delivered across other jurisdictions, including both financial and non-financial benefits. CCA recognises that proponents place a high value on corporate ownership of benefits delivered to the community.

To strengthen this approach, the Tasmanian Government should set clear expectations for how major projects contribute to local housing and community infrastructure outcomes. Expectations can be raised for proponents to pool a proportion of benefit sharing funds with other developments where impacts overlap. Where appropriate, CCA supports strengthening community benefits through relevant approval conditions, such as requirements for worker accommodation.

Guideline for community engagement, benefit sharing and local procurement can be found on the ReCFIT website

www.recfit.tas.gov.au



Advanced Manufacturing Opportunities

Manufacturing is a cornerstone of Tasmania's economy, contributing over $2 billion annually, with the North-West region making a disproportionate contribution to the state's manufacturing value.[20]

The Cradle Coast region is home to a dynamic and growing advanced manufacturing sector that stands out for its innovation, collaborative networks, and high-quality output across various industries. Strengths include machinery, equipment manufacturing, defence, composites and machine engineering. This concentration of expertise creates the potential for our local economy to pivot from mining and agricultural services to include the emerging renewable energy supply chain.

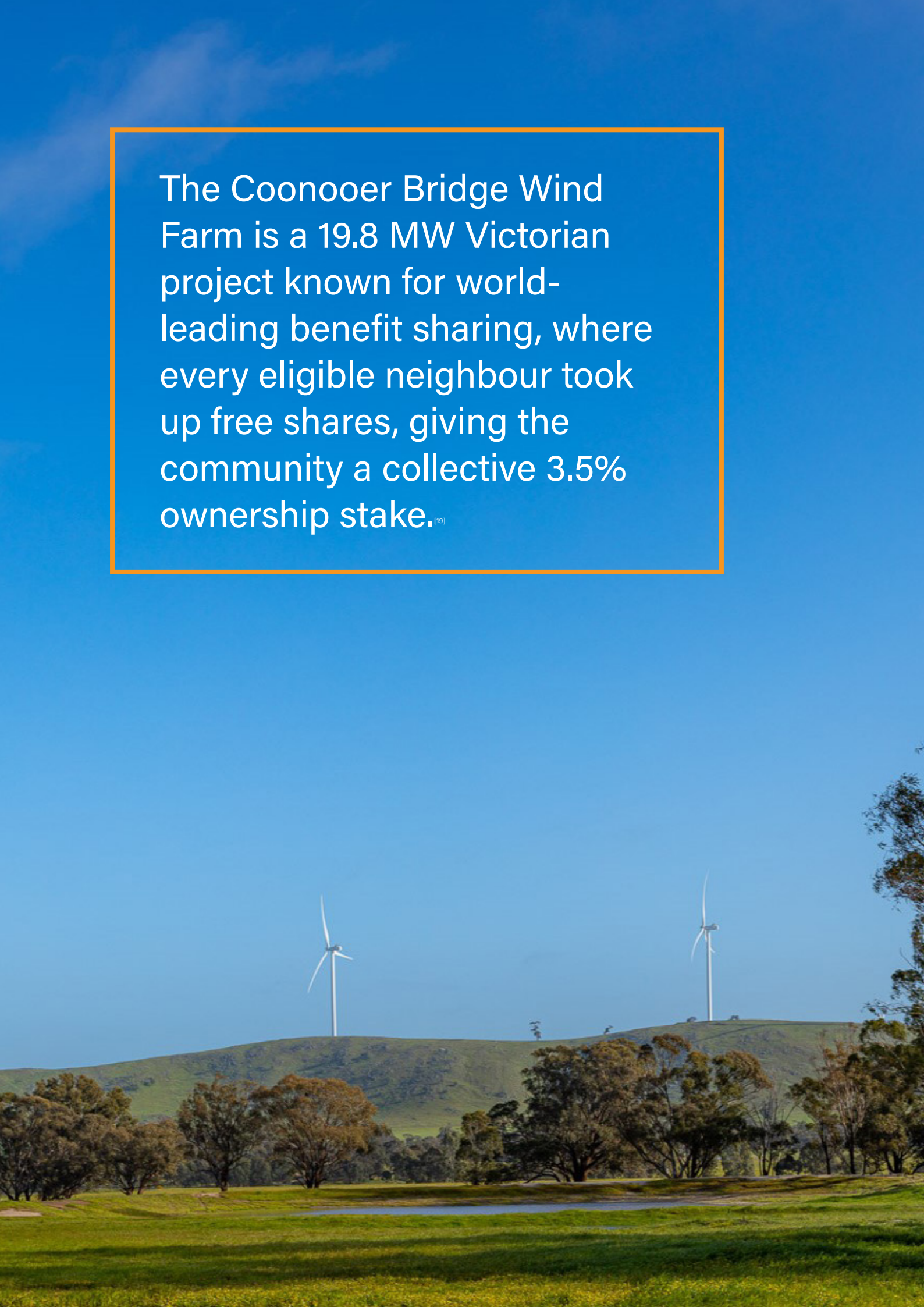
However, challenges persist driven by supply chain disruptions, and acute workforce shortages.[21] The Cradle Coast region is also disadvantaged by gaps in its business structure, lacking a "missing middle" of medium-sized firms needed to scale into larger projects.[22]

The Cradle Coast is home to some highly skilled, large businesses alongside many smaller contractors. Medium-sized businesses are often better equipped to tender for and manage contracts associated with large infrastructure projects. Their absence means that smaller contractors might lack capacity, while larger firms may already be at capacity or focused on different scales of work. If local businesses cannot meet the demands of these projects, procurement spending for goods and services may be sourced from outside the region, leading to an income leakage and transport inefficiencies that diminishes the economic local multiplier effect and reduces overall local wealth generation.

To overcome this barrier, there is an identified need to support existing businesses in lifting their capacity and capability. This includes improving the quality of products and services, increasing business size to take on more work, and assisting businesses in navigating complex tendering processes for major projects.

Income Leakage refers to the loss of potential economic benefits from a local economy when money that could have been spent or earned locally instead flows out to other regions or economies. This often occurs when local businesses are unable to supply goods or services for projects, leading to procurement, investment, or spending being sourced from outside the area. The result is a reduced local economic multiplier effect, meaning that less wealth circulates within the community, limiting job creation, business growth, and overall economic development.

The Coonooer Bridge Wind Farm is a 19.8 MW Victorian project known for world-leading benefit sharing, where every eligible neighbour took up free shares, giving the community a collective 3.5% ownership stake.[19]



Composites and Local Turbine and Parts Manufacturing Opportunity

Tasmania is on the cusp of a large-scale wind energy rollout. In the Cradle Coast region alone, there are plans for around 1,000 turbines.[23]

At present, all turbine components (including blades) are imported into Tasmania with minimal local manufacturing content. This represents a significant economic opportunity loss with billions of dollars of equipment to be procured for Tasmanian wind farms, and without local manufacturing, most of that value leaves the state.

By localising turbine blade and wind turbine parts production, Tasmania can retain a major share of this investment in the local economy, creating jobs and industrial growth. Tasmania can proactively build local supply capabilities, ensuring the benefits of its renewable energy boom are captured regionally.

A study of the UK's offshore wind industry found that failing to establish domestic manufacturing led to an estimated €36 billion in missed turbine production value from 2008–2022.[24]

Turning Parts Manufacturing Converting Potential into Reality

The Cradle Coast has a long-standing advanced manufacturing and composites sector.

Establishing local blade, parts and turbine manufacturing in the Cradle Coast region would require the direct involvement of turbine builders such as Vestas and Goldwind, given that they hold the intellectual property for blade designs and production processes. Wind turbine blades are highly specialised, engineered products with stringent aerodynamic, structural, and materials requirements that are tightly controlled by the companies that develop them. As such for to be feasible, formal licensing agreements are a key requirement. That would provide access to design specifications, specialised equipment, and quality assurance systems. Progress in this area would therefore depend on negotiating arrangements that make it commercially and strategically attractive for Vestas or Goldwind to establish a manufacturing presence in the region.

We need the following to convert this opportunity into a reality:

- Direct involvement of Vestas and / or Goldwind
- Access to intellectual property for turbine and blade designs to support production processes
- Formal licensing agreements for design specifications, specialised equipment, and quality assurance
- Secured demand from approved Tasmanian wind projects
- Targeted support from the Australian Government
- Access to competitive financing
- Appropriately zoned and suitably sized land

Local firms with composites skills are in a position to spearhead and manufacture turbine blades and parts locally. For this to succeed, sophisticated and effective collaboration is essential between the private sector and all three levels of government. Especially if we are to compete in an international context where other countries can produce parts with lower overheads and lower wages.

Recommendation

CCA recommends regional collaboration with ReCFIT to expand the Renewable Energy Services Hub (RESH) to map and identify opportunities for support services expansion. While turbine manufacturing and parts could prove difficult to be competitive in a global market, a niche interest or a network of solutions must be explored. Ongoing services and maintenance can maximise our composites services expertise and advanced manufacturing capabilities. The mapping process can identify existing industries with the capability to deliver componentry, maintenance and other support services, and would involve engagement and workshopping via local business networks and chambers of commerce.

The Cradle Coast has a mix of advanced manufacturing enterprises and expertise that can be leveraged for a network of solutions that services onshore wind projects and offshore wind projects in the Gippsland area.

The Gippsland Offshore Wind Zone is closer to the Tasmanian port of Bell Bay than any Victorian ports and has huge potential due to the Australian Government approving feasibility licences for projects capable of delivering 23 GW of electricity, as reported in August 2025. [25]

How Cradle Coast Councils are Supporting Opportunity

The Central Coast, Devonport, Latrobe and Kentish Councils are all working together as the Mersey Leven Strategic Alliance with a current focus on industrial land. The Mersey Leven Strategic Alliance Industrial Land Study (2025) signals a regional shift toward a unified, investment ready planning system designed to compete with mainland markets. The four councils are moving beyond fragmented local approaches to create a coordinated environment that reduces approval delays, strengthens investor confidence, and prepares large-scale industrial precincts for future demand. The strategy emphasises early engagement, regional governance, flexible land supply, and alignment with major infrastructure so the region can respond quickly to market opportunities and attract both local and global industry.

Central Coast Industrial Land Critical Shortage

The Central Coast Industrial Land Analysis highlights a critical shortage of industrial land within the municipality, with just 1.8 hectares currently available. This is only enough for two years of supply compared to the recommended 15 to 20 years needed to support sustainable growth. Tasmanian Government support is required to assist with strategic rezoning.

Wind Turbine and Blade Manufacturing Site Requirements

If feasible, the proposed turbine manufacturing operation would require a purpose-built facility capable of safely handling and fabricating large-scale wind turbine blades, noting blades can be around 100 metres in length. To support the full production process, a site of around 4 hectares with a shed up to 15 metres in height would be necessary.

Just In Time Parts for Ongoing Maintenance

Harbro Engineering Pty Ltd is a family-owned precision engineering and manufacturing firm established in 1988. It provides CNC machining, fabrication, welding and advanced additive manufacturing to mining, agriculture, marine, transport and industrial clients.

In recent years, Harbro has expanded into industrial-grade 3D printing, complementing its traditional CNC capabilities. It can produce high-tolerance components from industrial strength plastics including carbon-fibre composites, nylon variants, PLA, ABS, ASA, PPA, and PETG. This capability enables locally manufactured parts to be supplied on demand and close to the point of use, eliminating the need for large inventories and issues with long international supply chains. With appropriate intellectual property arrangements, firms like Harbro can rapidly produce replacement or bespoke components for wind turbine maintenance, reducing downtime, logistics risk and costs while supporting ongoing local servicing.

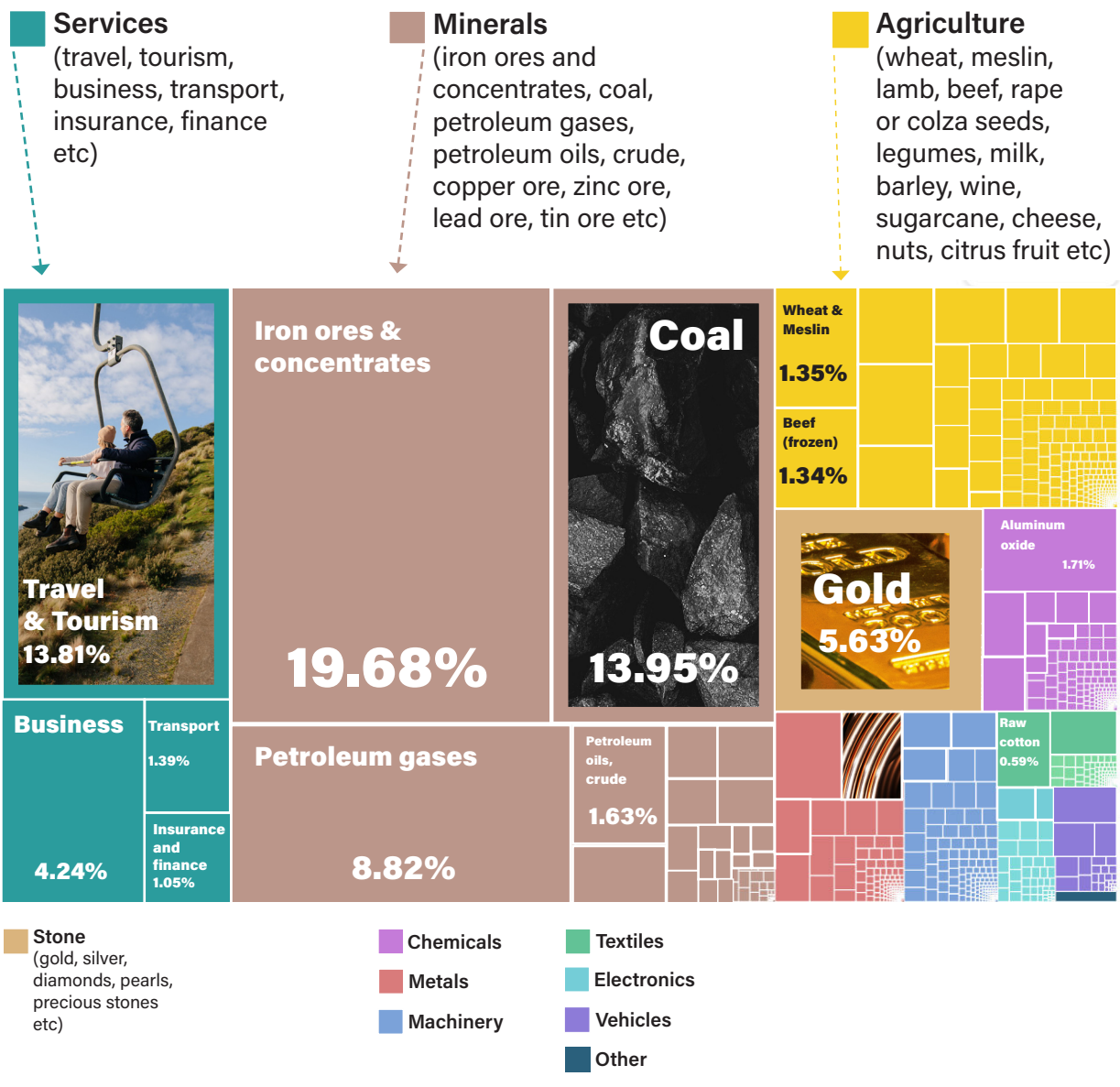
Atlas of Economic Complexity

Harvard Growth Lab's Atlas of Economic Complexity tool has identified Australia as the world's 9th-wealthiest economy on a per-capita basis. Yet Australia ranks 74th globally for economic complexity, in between Uruguay and Jordan.

Over the next decade our economy is projected to grow by just 1.2% per annum. Therefore, Australia's economic growth ranking is 123rd out of 145 countries globally. in the lower half of countries worldwide.[27] The stark gap between our position as the 9th wealthiest nation per capita and our remarkably low growth ranking highlights the importance of strategic renewable energy investment as a lever for long term economic complexity, resilience, and prosperity.

Australia's Export Basket in 2024 (gross trade flow)

Australia's main exports are minerals such as iron ore, coal and gas. Australia's top 3 export destination countries were China 36.36%, Japan 11.79% and South Korea 7.45%.



Social Enterprises and Community Services

A social enterprise is a business that pursues a social, cultural, or environmental mission while generating income. Social enterprises reinvest profits into community outcomes and focus heavily on care, impact, and social value.

The primary purpose of a social enterprise is to drive meaningful and positive change. They can be more effective than government or traditional enterprises because this purpose is embedded directly into the business model. Rather than relying on grants, they generate revenue that can be reinvested into impact, enabling faster and more sustainable growth. Sitting between government and the private sector, they move with the agility of a business while maintaining the ethics and community focus of a mission-driven organisation. This combination allows social enterprises to address unmet needs and influence policy for deeper, longer-lasting impact.
If you want it to sound more formal, more persuasive, or more concise, I can tune it again.

Community services are the supports that help people stay safe, healthy, and connected. They include housing assistance, food relief, family and youth services, and help during tough times. They are seen as essential social infrastructure that strengthens communities and improves wellbeing across Tasmania.

Social enterprises and community services organisations already play key roles in housing, childcare, aged care and community services. Renewable energy will bring an influx of workers requiring childcare and other services. Therefore, the Cradle Coast requires strong data sets to inform investment where demand will be the strongest. In other regions in Australia, data from multiple projects is collected to create a Cumulative Impact Assessment report.

A Cumulative Impact Assessment Report Example

PwC prepared a Cumulative Impact Assessment (CIA) for the Mid-Western Regional Council in NSW in 2024, as a starting point. This included an assessment of multiple renewable energy projects and their construction phase cumulative impact on enabling services such as housing, childcare, schools, GPs and hospitals. The CIA reviewed impacts on physical infrastructure such as water, sewerage, waste, and roads. Sophisticated CIA data, assessing regional impacts of multiple projects can inspire and inform targeted investment. It can equip our local social enterprises to invest and therefore capture more construction phase financial benefits.

Cumulative Impact Assessment (CIA) for the Mid-Western Regional Council

www.midwestern.nsw.gov.au

Globally, social enterprises generate major economic and social value. Tasmania's sector is still emerging but promising. Initiatives like The Shift Lab support social enterprises to develop and grow. The Shift Lab has so far helped more than 85 Tasmanian enterprises launch in three years, including 10 on the North-west Coast. This work is supported by the Tasmanian Government.

Many members of the Cradle Coast community volunteer in local organisations. Volunteers are a vital part of Tasmanian community life, underpinning essential services, strengthening social connection, and supporting the resilience of local communities. Across the state, volunteer led groups contribute to everything from emergency response and environmental stewardship to sport, culture, and community care.

As demographic and social shifts place increasing pressure on volunteer supply, sustaining a strong and adaptable volunteer workforce remains critical to Tasmania's wellbeing and long-term community resilience.[28] Renewable energy investment can support long-term prosperity through supporting our volunteer organisations.

Volunteer run organisations provide services that could scale commercially, but they often rely on a few overstretched individuals, creating risks and limiting growth. This highlights the importance of stronger support for social enterprises.

Renewable energy construction presents opportunities for social enterprises and community organisations to deliver services and capture local benefits. Major energy proponents such as Marinus Link and Hydro Tasmania are exploring ways to build social impact into procurement.

To ensure the region doesn't miss out on renewable energy benefits, community organisations and social enterprises need targeted support. The Tasmanian Government should develop practical "how-to" resources, strengthen digital and infrastructure access, map existing supports, and invest in capacity-building to grow this sector.

Support for social and community enterprise development is fragmented. While the region has general business support providers, there is limited understanding of the specific needs of social enterprises. Many are run by passionate people with little time, limited resources, and few opportunities for professional development.

GreenSTEM

GreenSTEM is a Burnie-based not-for-profit driven by Daniel Edwards and his team of passionate educators. They provide hands-on STEM education across Tasmania and Australia-wide, with a strong focus on equity. Through programs like Greenpower and events such as the BIG Burnie Science Fair, they connect students to real-world innovation and career pathways. GreenSTEM empower our youth to become active, engaged learners and future leaders.

Social Enterprises – Global Data

The global data indicates that there are approximately 10 million social enterprises across the world, which means they comprise more than 3% of all businesses. These businesses:

- Are united in their principle of putting purpose before profit
- Generate around $2 trillion in revenue each year
- Create nearly 200 million jobs
- Bridge the gender gap, with one in two social enterprises worldwide led by women, compared to one in five for conventional enterprises.[29]

Support Services

There are a range of organisations that support new businesses in the region, including Many Rivers, Braddon Business Centre, My Pathway, Enterprize, The van Diemen Project and other programs supported through the Department of State Growth.

The Tasmanian Clean Energy Centre of Excellence

The Tasmanian Clean Energy Centre of Excellence is a $26.4 million strategic investment co-funded by the Australian and Tasmanian governments to cultivate a highly skilled workforce for the state's rapidly expanding renewable energy sector.

Its core mission is to bridge the "skills gap" by training the engineers, electricians, and technicians required to design, install, and maintain large-scale wind, solar, and hydro assets.

The project is guided by an Advisory Committee comprising key industry stakeholders, including Hydro Tasmania, TasNetworks, and various trade associations. This committee is responsible for developing a Quality Delivery Plan and a Workforce Needs Assessment that will map out priority occupations and qualifications for the next decade. Beyond large-scale utility projects, the Centre also focuses on upskilling workers for the residential and commercial sectors, particularly in retrofitting buildings with solar panels and electric vehicle charging stations.

For the Cradle Coast, the Centre represents a significant regional economic and educational windfall:

- **Infrastructure Upgrades:** The project will fund capital investment for buildings and equipment upgrades at the Burnie TasTAFE campus, ensuring local students have access to industry-standard technology.
- **Regional Expertise:** The Cradle Coast is positioned as the state's authoritative hub for clean energy trades, providing a local solution to global workforce shortages.
- **Job Security:** By identifying regional priority occupations, the Centre ensures that Cradle Coast residents are qualified for the high-value jobs generated by local projects, such as hydrogen export at Burnie.
- **Collaborative Training:** The project explores shared access to public facilities, expanding the training footprint and making education more accessible to rural communities across the region.

The Tasmanian Clean Energy Centre of Excellence is a direct and significant investment in our region making renewable energy job opportunities more accessible for more locals. We eagerly await further details regarding the progress of this development.

Overview of Indirect Opportunities

Indirect opportunities involve increased demand for hospitality and catering, capacity building for small businesses, and legacy infrastructure such as housing and transport.

What is at stake: The creation of **legacy infrastructure** and prosperity, that will serve the community long after construction ends. This includes improved workforce participation and the development of permanent housing from temporary worker accommodations, if properly resourced and planned for.

Why it is fragile: The region's housing system is already under strain; rental vacancy rates are low, and public transport investment in Tasmania is the lowest in Australia. Without coordinated planning, an influx of workers could displace lower-income households and undermine the visitor economy by absorbing all available hotel space.

What changes if we act together vs. alone: If projects act alone, they may resort to "siloed initiatives" like isolated worker camps that divert economic benefits away from towns. By acting together, the region can sequence projects effectively and pilot innovative "Demand Responsive Transport" and long term housing investment that serves both the workforce and the community.

Transport

The Tasmanian Government has consistently recognised the vital role of transport in supporting community wellbeing, economic participation, and regional connectivity. This recognition has not translated into action.

Through the Youth Jobs Strategy and the Youth Jobs and Participation Taskforce, transport is framed as a key enabler of employment access for young Tasmanians. The Population Policy reinforces this by prioritising liveability, with a commitment to expanding safe, affordable, and reliable public and active transport options. The Transport Emissions Reduction and Resilience Plan sets clear objectives to increase uptake of sustainable transport and drive progress through partnerships and collaboration. On the ground, initiatives like Area Connect and CTST offer tailored transport solutions that help regional communities stay connected and support social inclusion. Taxi services and many other volunteers and smaller community services are also doing their best to fill the voids built into our ineffective and inefficient public transport system.

Yet despite these strategies and priorities, Tasmania's public transport system remains fragmented and under-resourced. In 2023-24, Tasmania had the lowest investment in passenger transport compared to any other Australian state or territory, with only $121.23 per person spent on passenger transport, compared to $722.53 in QLD.[30]

The vision laid out in multiple government policies has not yet translated into systemic, scalable solutions that meet the everyday needs of our communities. This is most noticeable in remote areas where access, reliability, and affordability continue to fall short. The gap between the Tasmanian Government's intent and implementation underscores the urgency for coordinated reform that creates a truly integrated, inclusive transport network that connects meaningfully with our evolving active transport network.

CCA first became interested in transport because we see it as an economic enabler. An economic enabler doesn't necessarily create economic activity on its own, but it removes barriers or creates the conditions for businesses, industries, and communities to thrive.

Our region has many community members who are tackling entrenched disadvantage. We want to see more people in our community enjoy the economic opportunities coming to our region and one way to do this is through increasing the workforce participation rate.

The Importance of Workforce Participation

Economic growth relies on people being able to take up work when opportunities arise. Simply put, you cannot work if you cannot get to work. Access to reliable transport underpins that ability, and while Area Connect provides valuable early support for the newly employed, it is a temporary measure rather than a structural solution.

In the Deloitte Tasmanian Weekly Economic Brief, Cedric Hodges reported in 2024 that the Tasmanian economy would be $2 billion stronger if the state's workforce participation matched the national average.[31] In 2025, the Deloitte Tasmanian Weekly Economic Brief further highlighted that if Tasmania achieved the same workforce participation rate as South Australia, it would result in an additional 15,000 workers for the state.[32] You could therefore argue that the economic impact of a better transport system could be greater than a stadium, or the Spirit of Tasmania investment.

CCA has worked with industry, academics, community and our councils to identify transport as an economic priority. As previously mentioned, we need functional and fit for purpose transport so people can get to work. It also provides greater social connection, the ability to access health services and education services. These are the building blocks for community wellbeing.

Activating this Opportunity

Each renewable energy project will appoint various contractors to complete the work. This structure typically involves appointing a head contractor, who will then appoint various subcontractors to perform particular portions of the work that needs to be carried out.

A project such as the TasNetworks North West Transmission Development (NWTD) Stage 1 expects a peak of 333 FTE roles is estimated during the construction phase, with local workers from north-west Tasmania expected to make up approximately 45% of the construction force. Interstate resources and workers coming from other locations within Tasmania will make up approximately 55% of the workforce.[33]

It is not uncommon for large projects with large numbers of employees from outside the region to use a charter bus service to support their workforce's transportation needs.

CCA encourages the Tasmanian Government and renewable energy proponents to collaborate and deliver multi-purpose transport solutions that meet the needs of contractors and community. Through collaboration, it will be possible to deliver innovative Demand Responsive Transport (DRT) pilots and collect data to help inform a transportation system that meet the needs of our community and local industry more broadly. This creates additional benefits for our region.

Understanding Demand Responsive Transport

Demand-Responsive Transport (DRT) is best described as a cross between a community maxi-taxi and a bus service. It offers the flexibility of on-demand travel with the shared efficiency of public transport. Instead of running exclusively on fixed routes or timetables, DRT vehicles can provide a combination of fixed and flexible route services. DRT systems can respond to individual time bookings, picking up and dropping off passengers at locations and times that are designed to meet individual needs more easily. This flexibility makes it especially valuable in areas where traditional services are limited or infrequent.

We have heard from community that the large and frequently empty buses and fixed timetables do not match our community expectations. DRT on the other hand is powered by smart technology. DRT systems group trips together and dynamically adjust routes to serve more people with fewer vehicles. The result is a more inclusive, cost-effective transport option that connects communities, reduces isolation, and supports access to work, education, and services. This is particularly important in regional and rural areas. It's a practical, people-first solution that adapts to the way communities actually move.

Next Steps

A DRT pilot can improve transport service accessibility and ensure the benefits of forthcoming regional investment are more widely realised. We recommend:

1. Transport delivery organisations and renewable energy proponents to partner with the Department of State Growth and align:
    a. Renewable energy workforce transport needs
    b. Community transport needs
    c. Existing transport options
    d. Government policies, processes and priorities.

2. Community to co-design and trial new flexible transport delivery models that maximise available resources and respond to emerging workforce requirements. This will support both reliable access to work and improved mobility for leisure and time off.

3. Collect data and validate it with community and industry insights to ensure future transport planning is accurately informed and responsive to real world needs. Data can be utilised to inform broader public transport reforms.

Integrated Transport Strategy

The Cradle Coast requires an updated *Integrated Transport Strategy* to support regional growth, enable efficient movement of goods and people, and ensure emerging industries like renewable energy can thrive. Coordinated planning for our public transport, active transport and freight needs will ensure impactful investment with long-term outcomes. This will improve access, reduce congestion, and deliver long-term social, economic, and environmental benefits.[34]

Housing and Accommodation Needs and Challenges

The scale of upcoming renewable energy projects is expected to place significant pressure on local housing and accommodation, highlighting both challenges and opportunities for the Cradle Coast.

Large renewable energy projects are projected to have between 200 to 600 employees during construction phase. With the unemployment rate in the north and north-west of Tasmania currently sitting at 4.1%,[36] and many of the roles will be highly specialised, we can expect a temporary influx of workers in the region. This massive increase in demand and forecast creates significant challenges but also represents an opportunity for investment in accommodation that creates long-term benefits for the Cradle Coast. There are a few factors at play that impact housing development.

Building a home in Australia relies on four key factors:

1. Regulations
2. Finance
3. Construction delivery
4. Design quality.

First, it is essential to follow legal rules and planning requirements. This includes obtaining permission from local councils, ensuring the land is suitable for housing, and aligning the development with broader strategies for the area, such as environmental protection, zoning, and efficient urban planning.

Second, the project must be financially viable. Building a home requires funding not only for construction but also for shared infrastructure such as roads, parks, and services. Market conditions - including population growth, housing demand, interest rates, and lending availability - affect whether a project is practical and attractive to developers.

Third, the home must be physically constructed to a high standard. This involves hiring skilled, productive builders, using quality materials, and ensuring the structure is safe, durable, and functional.

Fourth, the home should be designed to meet the needs of its occupants. This includes thoughtful layouts, comfortable living spaces, and convenient access to transport, services, and community amenities. A well-designed home is both practical and connected to the surrounding neighbourhood.

The conceptual model on the following page, adapted from Gurran, Phibbs, Gilbert , Bramley and Austin (2012)[64], summarises the key tools, levers, headwinds and tailwinds shaping housing opportunity in Tasmania. By mapping both the enabling conditions and the constraints, we can identify where targeted action can unlock new supply, including opportunities emerging through the renewable energy construction

Building Tasmania - Housing Solutions and Economic Benefits

Homes Tasmania will cease to exist after Premier Jeremy Rockliff acknowledged the authority "hasn't achieved what we'd like to have achieved" and "hasn't had the desired results". According to the review led by former New South Wales auditor general Margaret Crawford, Homes Tasmania also fell short of its stated aim to build "innovative, flexible partnerships" designed to speed up the delivery of new housing. In response, the government has announced the creation of Building Tasmania, a new department intended to take responsibility for housing delivery.

The establishment of Building Tasmania creates an opportunity to deliver the outcomes that have not been achieved to date. Building Tasmania can establish a more responsive and effective public development model by aligning rapid delivery with long term community needs. Flexible accommodation models, including renewable energy worker housing that can later be converted to aged care use. This can create a pathway for the Tasmanian Government to generate a short-term revenue stream with long-term regional benefits.

Opportunity for Community – Granny Flats

Housing and Planning Minister Kerry Vincent has announced that work is underway to amend the Tasmanian Planning Scheme to increase the allowable size of granny flats from 60m^2 to 90m^2. The Minister emphasised that expanding small, self contained dwellings is a practical way to boost supply, noting strong demand for one and two bedroom homes across the state. He described secondary dwellings on existing blocks as "low hanging fruit" for increasing medium density housing and highlighted that more diverse housing options will give Tasmanians greater choice about where they can live. [61]

Planning and Residential Development in Australia: A Conceptual Model

Source: Gurran, Phibbs, Gilbert, Bramley and Austin 2012[64]

KEY
Orange - needs work
Green - strong signals
Red - needs urgent attention

FINANCE

- Interest rates have risen, and inflation is likely to stay above target for some time[65]. Interest rates remain low by historical standards. According to the RBA's long run interest rate series, the current cash rate sits well below the historical average observed across the 1990s and 2000s[56].
- The soon-to-be established Building Tasmania will have the opportunity to demonstrate it's ability to be innovative, agile and responsive in meeting the short-term needs of the local economy and the long-term needs of the community.[62]
- Australian Government First Home Supply Program is investing $2 billion in grants and $8 billion in concessional loans to deliver up to 100,000 homes reserved for first home buyers. State governments will also provide $2 billion in matched funding to get homes underway.
- The Tasmanian Investment Board has the capacity to support projects. The board's primary focus is to encourage and promote the balanced economic development of Tasmania, and to ensure that the Tasmanian Government's policies are directed to the greatest advantage of the people and economy of Tasmania.[57]

COST OF NEW VERSUS ESTABLISHED

- As renewable energy projects increase the need for housing and accommodation, builders can work at a larger scale. This can lower construction costs through economies of scale and support the delivery of additional housing.

PLANNING STANCE

- Tasmania's planning system is recognised as one of the fastest permit systems in the country, with Victoria being 70 days, NSW 84 days, WA 60 or 90 days, SA 8 weeks or 12 for subdivision and QLD 40 business days.[38]

SUPPLY OF DEVELOPERS/BUILDERS

- It is reported that the construction industry has lost 872 jobs from 2018 to 2023. This is concerning. We need more developers and builders, and we need our builders and developers to be more productive. This could be achieved by investing in production line manufacturing.
- Additionally, some housing construction workers may choose to work in the renewable energy sector during the construction phase, which could further impact workforce availability.

FORECAST OF PROFITS

- While renewable energy projects indicate positive demand forecasts, the absence of reliable data limits our ability to fully assess this opportunity and strategically allocate impactful investments.
- Quantifying future demand through a Cumulative Impact Assessment, as noted in tis report, would be a positive move towards recognising the benefits and encourage private investors to build more accommodation in our region.

DEMAND

- Renewable energy projects contribute to strengthened and positive demand forecasts.
- We need a suite of investable, actionable accommodation projects that are informed by our community needs and aspirations. A suite of accommodation projects capable of attracting funding can meet short term needs and ensure long-term benefits for the region. This requires active support from the Tasmanian and Australian Government and Building Tasmania through resourcing, collaboration, and coordinated planning.

Variables to Navigate

There are many variables that must align for new housing development to move from concept to construction. Renewable energy investment and workforce housing requirements can create a positive environment for housing development across multiple categories. However, the key constraint for housing construction is access to workforce. This challenge is likely to intensify during the renewable energy construction phase. Enabling workforce housing delivery prior to renewable energy project construction will therefore be critical.

The Fundamental Tension Point

A fundamental tension must be navigated. Prior to project approvals and the securing of finance, renewable energy projects remain in the development and social licence stage. At this point, projects lack certainty and access to finance is limited. Developing a housing investment plan that genuinely responds to future industry and community needs is resource intensive at a time when project approval certainty remains low. Once Final Investment Decision (FID) is reached, project scope and budgets are largely fixed. This significantly reduces the opportunity to develop collaborative solutions.

The Right Support at the Right Time

The period prior to FID is when government support can be most effective. During this stage, government can enable collaboration and equip local communities to design housing solutions in partnership with project proponents and community housing providers. While not all renewable energy projects will proceed, early collaboration can support the development of multi-purpose and multi-benefit regional housing investment plans.

Support prior to FID can build momentum at a time when projects are most vulnerable. It also creates opportunities for community organisations and social enterprises to design housing solutions that align with local priorities and industry needs. Providing the right resources at the right time will help ensure the region is positioned to benefit from renewable energy development both during construction and over the long term.

The influx of temporary workforces associated with renewable energy projects is expected to place significant pressure on the Cradle Coast region's already constrained housing and service systems. Construction activities will distribute large numbers of temporary workers into areas with limited access to suitable accommodation. Relying on existing housing stock and rental accommodation carries considerable risks.

Extended bookings of hotels reduce availability for tourists and undermines the growing visitor economy. The absorption of workers into the private rental market can be expected to drive up rents and displace lower-income households. Purpose-built worker camps, though necessary in remote locations, can divert economic benefits away from local communities.

These challenges are compounded by existing regional pressures. The Cradle Coast is already experiencing rising rents, limited housing stock, and strain on essential services.[39] Uncertainty around project approval timeframes and the cumulative impacts of multiple developments add further complexity.

Local industries such as tourism are particularly vulnerable, facing both workforce competition from higher-paid construction roles and potential revenue loss from reduced visitor accommodation.

To manage these impacts, several critical actions are required. A cumulative impact assessment must be undertaken to better

define the regional effects of clean energy projects on workforce, housing, and services. A dedicated and implementable Tasmanian government Workforce Accommodation Strategy or Policy is also needed to guide both short- and long-term housing responses, including provision for workers who relocate with families or partners. Our community and local industry must be meaningfully included in the development and design of the workforce accommodation solutions by proponents, not just consulted.

> *"FIFO workers typically spend around $125 per night. Tourists visiting Tasmania spend an average of almost $300 per night. If FIFO workers end up occupying beds that would otherwise be available to tourists, it has a direct impact on the broader visitor economy, from hospitality and tours through to regional businesses that rely on overnight stays".*[63]
>
> **Cyndia Hilliger - WxNW Tourism Chair**

Proposed Solutions and Opportunities

Renewable energy proponents are exploring a range of innovative approaches to ensure that the energy transition delivers socially just housing outcomes alongside economic benefits. One proposal receiving strong support is the involvement of Community Housing Providers (CHPs) in workforce housing. Traditionally focused on supporting low-income and vulnerable households, CHPs could enter into multi-year contracts with governments or project proponents to deliver temporary workforce accommodation at market rates. The guaranteed short term income stream from Fly-In-Fly-Out workers would help attract financing for new housing developments. This could then be converted into permanent social and mixed housing once construction demand subsides. This approach creates a lasting community legacy but also channels funds that might otherwise be spent on inflated hotel rates into solutions with a social purpose.

Other adaptable solutions are also being considered. Designing workforce housing that can transition into long-term regional stock is regarded as a key strategy. It is possible to utilise workforce accommodation as a foundation for future community infrastructure, either publicly or privately owners, such as;

- aged care,
- accommodation for remote community members travelling to our regional hospitals eg. King Island residents who need to travel for surgery at Burnie hospital,
- future sub-divisions or
- social housing.

This would be supported by investment in essential services like water, power, and sewerage infrastructure. Another option is for temporary accommodation to be placed where it can be later converted into a caravan park, particularly in areas with strong tourism demand. There are also reports that many temporary workers are keen to purchase their own caravan and utilise this for temporary accommodation needs. The right partnership structure could create an opportunity for legacy caravan park facilities in the region to cater for additional visitors once the Spirit of Tasmania terminal is built.

Opportunities exist to repurpose disused or under-utilised buildings. This could include pubs and small hotels in need of refurbishment.

Delivering effective outcomes will require more than individual project responses. CCA acknowledges the need for a coordinated regional approach to workforce housing, supported by strong collaboration between government, industry, and community stakeholders, but the scale of development requires broader leadership and collective action.

The Tasmanian Government needs a strong focus on these issues, starting with a Cumulative Impact Assessment, working to better understand risks, barriers, and opportunities. These efforts can inform communication, support positive housing supply outcomes, and guide research to underpin effective action in the region.

Medium Density and Community Accommodation

The Cradle Coast is the home of makers, doers, fixers and practical know-how. The renewable energy construction phase is an opportunity for our local doers to create an income through accommodation. There are different ways this can be achieved:

- Granny flats are self-contained secondary dwellings on residential properties and offer a strategic way for homeowners to generate income while addressing housing shortages and supporting multi-generational living. Well-appointed granny flats can earn rental income, boost property values and serve diverse community needs.

- LOTS (living over the shop). Our central business districts contain many underused spaces above the ground floor. Although there are issues with building standards and insurance there are increasing examples of this type of development in Hobart and Launceston. Catalysing this type of development in the region would make use of this asset, widen the choice of housing types and enhance the vitality and safety of our town centres.

- Billeting offers a low-barrier, community-based income stream by enabling residents to host short-term guests in their homes. This can be particularly valuable in regions with limited accommodation and create income streams within community. Tasmania is reported to have 125,424 homes with 2 or more spare bedrooms.[44]

A Financial Mechanism and Housing Pathway for our Youth

The region's future strength depends on young people choosing to stay and on others seeing it as a place to settle and contribute. Young people play a vital role in keeping a region strong. They join the workforce, support local businesses, and develop fresh skills and ideas that help communities grow. As they settle and start families, they can also help balance our ageing population, which is becoming a significant challenge.

To successfully attract youth and retain youth in our region, we need affordable, well-designed housing that is within walking distance to vibrant community assets. One of the most significant barriers for young people is access to secure and affordable housing, which directly impacts their ability to stay, work, and build their futures locally.

CCA is keen to see Building Tasmania and the Tasmanian Development Board play an innovative role in helping young people to secure appropriate housing. By addressing an imminent need for additional housing along the coast and supporting renewable energy projects, we can create a meaningful incentive for youth to remain here.

There are a number of puzzle pieces that will need to come together to make this happen:

- **Structure:** A house and land package is secured under a tailored finance arrangement.
- **Lease Arrangement:** While renewable energy projects are under construction, the property is

leased to the project proponent to accommodate their workforce.
- **Financial Pathway:** Rental income from the lease is directed towards building equity and contributing to the deposit. The Australian Government First Home Supply Program, Building Tasmania and the Tasmanian Development Board could work together to cashflow this initiative.
- **Land Availability:** Local councils can nominate parcels of land available for the program, which aligns neatly with the Australian Government First Home Supply Program.[42]
- **Outcome:** At the conclusion of the project, the young person is positioned to assume the mortgage and transition into the home, supported by the deposit accumulated during the lease period.

This approach delivers immediate housing to meet workforce needs, while also creating a sustainable pathway into home ownership for local young people. It is important to note that providing any housing would not be adequate, it needs to be the right type of housing in the right area. Failing to do so risks creating worse future problems associated with urban sprawl. These include worsened social isolation, increased car dependency, reduced local access to essential services and higher long term health system costs associated with sedentary lifestyles.

This proposal was originally designed to fit neatly with Homes Tasmania's purpose to:

- assist in reducing the incidence of housing stress and homelessness in Tasmania;
- encourage the development of flexible and innovative financial arrangements that facilitate the ownership, leasehold, or occupation, of residential premises by eligible persons and persons on low or moderate incomes. [43]

Providing a pathway to home ownership, supported by reliable rental income during renewable energy construction projects, gives young people both stability and a tangible financial foundation to invest in their future here. Through ambition and multi-stakeholder collaboration, renewable energy opportunities can translate into long-term benefits for our youth and local communities.

CCA has worked with renewable energy proponents to start this conversation. We are now keen to hear from:

- Community to see if there is support for us to advocate for an innovative housing model which is designed to address both renewable energy housing needs and long-term pathways to home ownership for young people.
- Philanthropic investors who see value in providing access to medium-term capital and support youth accessing affordable housing.
- Developers with appropriately zoned land, potentially suitable projects and compatible timeframes.
- Building Tasmania, Tasmanian Development Board and the Australian Government to further develop fresh ideas with our community and renewable energy proponents.

Marine Floatels

A *floatel* is one option to deliver accommodation quickly. A floatel is a floating accommodation facility designed to house workers near construction project sites. Typically they are moored at ports or quays, which can connect them to our city centres. They offer fully serviced living quarters including en-suite cabins, dining areas, and recreational spaces.

Because they are floating they do not need permanent land infrastructure and can provide a flexible solution for large-scale construction operations, while minimising environmental and logistical impact. Some barges can accommodate up to 600 personnel, making them ideal for large-scale construction operations.

Calculating the potential missed opportunity

Fly-in-fly-out (FIFO) roles offer far more than wages alone. Workers receive a comprehensive accommodation package that significantly increases their total remuneration. This typically includes a private room with an ensuite bathroom, air conditioning, TV, internet access, and comfortable furnishings, supported by regular cleaning and linen services. Modern camp facilities also provide shared common areas and amenities that reduce day-to-day living costs. The annual value of this accommodation package is estimated at $30,000–$50,000 per worker (around $150–$250 per day), effectively removing rent or mortgage expenses for employees while on-site. For many workers, this represents a substantial financial advantage and a key element of FIFO's overall appeal.[47]

From a local level, reliance on a FIFO workforce model results in significant regional economic leakage. A project employing 100 FIFO workers over two years diverts an estimated $6–$10 million in accommodation-related expenditure away from the regional economy.[48] This foregone spending could otherwise support local housing, tourism, agriculture and other service sectors, highlighting the material opportunity cost of FIFO-intensive project design.

In this context, worker accommodation that provides no post-project housing or community benefit represents a missed legacy opportunity, reinforcing the case for solutions that build long-term regional capacity rather than enabling temporary extraction of value.

With multiple renewable developments forecast, the cumulative missed opportunity becomes enormous. This further explains why coordinated planning, investment partnerships, and enabling infrastructure are essential to meet temporary demand, and convert this into a long-term economic benefit for the Cradle Coast.

Rental Availability is Low

Devonport's rental vacancy rate fell to 0.5% in December 2025[45], indicating a severe shortage of available properties, particularly at lower price points. Anglicare Tasmania's 2025 Rental Affordability Snapshot notes that vacancy rates below 3% signal excess demand and upward pressure on rents, with tighter markets accelerating price growth.[46] Vacancy rates have reached record lows statewide over the past year. Leveraging industry workforce needs to deliver long-term housing supply outcomes is a critical and time-sensitive opportunity.

Bibby Marine Floating Accommodation

Bibby Marine is the owner and operator of five floating accommodation barges, "floatels," which offer comfortable, flexible, and affordable shoreside and nearshore living solutions for clients in a variety of different industries, across the globe.

You can visit their website: www.bibbymarine.com/floating-accommodation-barges

Recommendation

A coordinated approach is required to ease housing pressure associated with renewables and other major developments and to ensure these projects make a net positive contribution to local housing stock. CCA will play a key role in starting this process through delivering the following:

- **Convening a Roundtable** with the Australian and Tasmanian Governments, project proponents, utilities providers and other key stakeholders to identify actionable solutions that reduce housing pressure and deliver a net positive contribution to housing stock. CCA to deliver.
- **Developing a Strategy/Prospectus** outlining short, medium and long-term worker accommodation and housing options specific to the region, informed by the workshop survey results. CCA can develop this with councils.
- **Supporting the development of a Planning Policy Document** to address worker accommodation for major projects, in partnership with SPO, RDA and LGAT. This would include proposed planning rule changes to facilitate shop-top living and other adaptive options. Would require State Government support / funding.
- **Targeted worker accommodation projects** can ease pressure on limited local housing stock and create the enabling infrastructure needed for future development. This includes aged care, tourism accommodation, agricultural workforce housing, and mixed tenure options that support a broad cross section of developers and community needs.

Overview of Strategic Opportunities

Strategic opportunities focus on long-term regional transformation, including strengthened biosecurity for agriculture, green tourism growth, and the development of a "knowledge economy" through increased data capacity via Marinus Link.

What is at stake: At stake is the **"clean green" brand** and the global economic relevance of the region. Successfully leveraging Marinus Link will increase data capacity by **150 times**, enabling the growth of tech industries, AI startups, and a competitive "knowledge economy" that can keep skilled youth in the region.

Why it is fragile: The region faces **"digital fragility"** due to outdated fibre-optic cables. Additionally, the massive import of machinery poses a **biosecurity risk** to the agricultural sector if wash-down facilities and oversight are not improved.

What changes if we act together vs. alone: Acting alone leaves the region vulnerable to biosecurity issues and missed opportunities in green tourism. Acting together fosters **"innovation diffusion"**, where strong social networks and collaborative spaces allow local businesses to learn from one another and adapt to new technologies like AI and sensor networks. This collective approach ensures that renewable energy investment lifts the region as a whole, rather than creating "boom and bust" cycles.

Biosecurity investment

The rollout of large-scale renewable energy infrastructure presents a clear biosecurity challenge for Tasmania.

Contractors will be transporting oversized machinery from interstate or overseas to the state, increasing the risk of introducing invasive species, soil-borne pathogens, and other contaminants. Existing truck wash facilities are inadequate for the scale of equipment involved, leaving regional ecosystems and agricultural assets vulnerable.

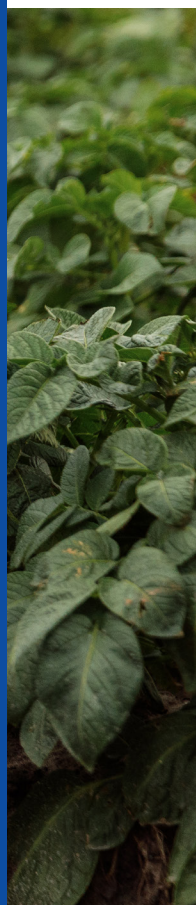
To safeguard environmental integrity and primary industries, biosecurity must be integrated into project planning from the outset. This includes investment in purpose-built wash-down stations, mandatory contractor training, and coordinated oversight to ensure all machinery is properly cleaned and managed. Without these measures, the transition to renewable energy could carry unintended ecological and economic consequences.

The Tasmanian Government must commit meaningful investment to ensure that progress in clean energy does not come at the cost of long-term environmental resilience.

Potato mop-top virus (PMTV)

PMTV has been detected in Tasmania for the first time and is one example of the importance of biosecurity for agriculture. PMTV poses a serious threat to the state's potato industry.

The virus spreads through soil and powdery scab spores, which can persist for over a decade, making machinery hygiene and movement controls critical to containment.



Tourism and Hospitality

Growing demand for sustainable travel presents a clear opportunity for Tasmania's tourism and hospitality sector to attract carbon-aware visitors and strengthen its competitive edge.

Overseas visitors are increasingly looking for low-carbon tourism experiences, reflecting a global shift towards more sustainable travel. Many travellers, particularly from Europe, North America and parts of Asia, are becoming more conscious of their carbon footprint and are actively seeking destinations that align with their environmental values. A 2025 Booking.com survey of over 32,000 travellers across 34 countries found:

- 93% want to make more sustainable travel choices
- 84% say sustainability is important when booking
- 59% actively seek sustainability credentials when choosing accommodation

For carbon aware visitors, choosing to offset the carbon on flights is just the start. Carbon aware tourists are choosing eco-friendly transport, staying in renewable-powered accommodation, enjoying paddock-to-plate dining, and taking part in nature-based experiences.

The opportunity for low carbon tourism is significant, but gaps in our offering remain. Tasmania lacks reliable, low-carbon local transport. A more responsive and fit-for-purpose transport system is necessary for Tasmania to deliver a truly carbon-aware visitor experience.

Temporary workforce spending

The temporary construction workers will have disposable income they can spend within the community during downtime. This creates new customers for local cafés, restaurants, pubs, and accommodation providers, as well as tour operators and small retail businesses.

Workers typically seek convenient meals, familiar comforts, and opportunities to explore the region on days off, which translates into higher demand for food services, local attractions, and recreational experiences.

Once again, transport is a key enabler to activate this opportunity. It is likely the construction workforce will be limited to charter bus transport. Better local transport service and networks will be needed to enable the temporary workforce to spend their disposable income more easily in our region.

In order for the temporary workforce to have a positive impact on tourism and hospitality, it is important the temporary workforce does not absorb local tourism accommodation. When a project worker occupies a bed instead of a tourist, the local economy loses out. Visitors spend significantly more across a wider variety of businesses like cafes and tours. Without proper planning for workforce accommodation this trade off can harm our tourism industry at a time when the Spirit of Tasmania IV and V will be capable of bringing an additional 400 passengers per sailing into Devonport.

Knowledge Economy and Data Centres

Improved data capacity creates new opportunities for the Cradle Coast to grow a knowledge economy focused on innovation, skills and high-value jobs.

The knowledge economy describes an economy where the creation, dissemination and application of knowledge is the primary driver of growth, productivity and competitiveness. This is unlike traditional economies centred on land, labour and physical capital. A knowledge economy includes sectors where value comes from expertise and innovation, such as digital services, research and development, professional services, creative industries, advanced manufacturing, and education and training.

Marinus Link is the undersea and underground electricity and data interconnector between North West Tasmania and the Latrobe Valley in Victoria. Marinus Link is in the pre-construction phase and will increase Tasmania's data capacity by 150 times (with both stages). This additional capacity has the potential to catalyse a thriving knowledge economy, especially when paired with our University of Tasmania Cradle Coast campus, Study Hubs and TasTAFE Clean Energy Centre of Excellence.

Here are some basic examples of knowledge economy opportunities that can emerge when there is more data capacity in a region:

- Development of data-driven innovation hubs and startups
- Growth in tech industries such as software development, artificial intelligence (AI), and machine learning
- Enhanced research and development activities in universities and private sectors
- Expansion of digital services including financial technology (fintech), health technology (healthtech), and education technology (edtech)
- Growth in professional services like consulting, analytics, and intellectual property management
- Increased opportunities for education and training in STEM (science, technology, engineering and maths) and data literacy skills
- A strengthened and more competitive gaming community.

The Cradle Coast already has a strong foundation in advanced manufacturing, particularly in defence-related products. We also have a growing group of local high-tech and startups doing innovative work in areas like agriculture, automation, drones and sensor networks. Improved data capacity can help these businesses stay in our region to scale, attract investment, and create skilled local jobs.

Ageing Infrastructure

Tasmania's current data infrastructure is outdated and becoming increasingly vulnerable. The state is connected to the mainland by three undersea fibre cables. The two Telstra cables were commissioned in 1995 and 2002. Our third cable was commissioned in 2006 by Basslink.

This limited capacity and lack of diversity exposes the state to a heightened risk of economic disruption. The Basslink cable outage from December 2015 to June 2016 caused major slowdowns, reduced service availability, and highlighted our digital fragility.[55] A further outage in 2022 took out both Telstra cables, effectively stopping most services in the State including internet access, telecommunications, radio and tv broadcasts etc.

The proposed Marinus Link will be the first major investment in Tasmania's submarine fibre-optic cable infrastructure since the mid 2000s. Marinus Link will include considerable additional optical fibre, increasing capacity by 150 times and providing a backup if one cable fails.

The first Marinus Link cable is expected to be operational around 2030. This will be 35 years and 28 years after our existing Telstra cables were commissioned.

Expected Lifespan of Cables

Fibre-optic submarine cables have a design life of 20-25 years, after which they are expected to be lifted and replaced to ensure a reliable service can continue to be delivered.[49]

What is Innovation Diffusion?

Innovation diffusion is defined by the Productivity Commission, as the process by which knowledge and technologies are communicated, adopted and adapted over time in an economy.[50] While only 1–2% of Australian firms produce "new-to-the-world" innovations, most productivity gains come from the wider uptake of existing ideas and practices e.g. basic tools like accounting software, to advanced technologies such as AI.[51]

Social Infrastructure and Innovation Diffusion

Social infrastructure is very important for innovation diffusion. Innovation spreads through social networks, both formal (e.g. professional associations) and informal (e.g. community groups, peer circles) and second and third-degree connections from the behaviours and ideas we see around us. Examples include education systems, training programs, professional networks, industry associations, cross discipline diffusion, and collaborative spaces. This helps businesses and workers access, share, and apply new knowledge.

Strong social infrastructure builds the skills, trust, and connections needed for local business to notice opportunities, learn from each other, and adapt ideas effectively.[52]

Data Centres

Data centres are highly specialised digital infrastructure facilities designed to house the advanced computing, storage and networking systems that underpin contemporary cloud services, AI workloads and critical government and business operations. These facilities provide the controlled environment, high-capacity connectivity and physical security required to ensure continuous, large-scale data processing. Therefore, data centres provide a range of functions from real time analytics to essential public services with the reliability and performance expected of enterprise grade infrastructure.

Tasmania already holds a strong competitive position for data centre development, and the Cradle Coast is emerging as one of the most strategically aligned regions for growth.

The Office of the Coordinator General identifies Tasmania as offering a stable operating environment, low-cost renewable energy, strong data protection frameworks and industrial land.[53]

From a strategic perspective, the Cradle Coast is well positioned to support national and Asia Pacific digital infrastructure demand. Tasmania's renewable energy profile and secure islanded grid offer resilience and sustainability advantages that are increasingly sought by global cloud and AI providers. As the world shifts toward low emissions computing, regions that

can offer clean power, stable climate conditions and secure geopolitical environments are becoming highly competitive. The Cradle Coast aligns strongly with these requirements, and its inclusion in regional investment prospectus signals growing recognition of its potential as a digital infrastructure hub.

Wesley Vale - Firmus AI Factory

The proposed AI Factory at Wesley Vale represents a major shift in how advanced computing infrastructure is understood. An AI Factory operates as a modern manufacturing plant where the output is intelligence. It takes renewable electricity and data as inputs and uses large-scale computing to produce AI tokens. These tokens are the essential units that enable systems such as conversational AI, medical diagnostics and scientific modelling to generate predictions and insights. This positions the facility as an active production engine in the global digital economy.

Wesley Vale was selected as one of the first major developments under the national Project Southgate program because Tasmania offers a combination of climate, energy profile and strategic advantages. The cool environment allows the facility to rely on outside-air cooling for more than 97 percent of the year. This design reduces water use by 99 percent compared with conventional data centres. The state's renewable energy enables the factory to convert natural resources into high value digital exports. This development strengthens Tasmania's role in the national economy and expands its identity beyond farming and tourism by establishing a sovereign digital industrial base.

Wesley Vale is expected to become a global benchmark for Green AI. The project forms part of an initial $4.5 billion dollar investment that will scale to $73.3 billion dollars nationally. It has the potential to create hundreds of jobs and provide long-term stability to the energy grid through consistent demand for renewable power.

Sophisticated Data Required for Collaboration

The Cradle Coast is on the frontline of Tasmania's renewable energy boom - but without better data, stronger coordination and a real seat at the table, the region risks bearing the impacts without sharing the benefits.

Collaboration across industry, communities and all tiers of government is essential to deliver successful renewable energy projects, yet these stakeholders often operate with fundamentally different incentives. Industry is driven by commercial returns, communities prioritise legitimacy and fairness, and government systems are structured around risk management and process compliance. These misalignments can slow progress unless they are actively addressed. Achieving the scale of opportunity before us requires more than procedural adherence: it demands a willingness to embrace managed risk, ensure equitable regional benefits, and support financially viable projects that deliver long-term value for all stakeholders.

The Project Marinus Expert Advisory Panel Report was commissioned by the Tasmanian Government to provide independent advice on the project as it approached a Final Investment Decision. As part of this report the Expert Panel was required to provide independent advice on key risks and potential mitigations.

These findings were published on 24 June 2025, the full report is available to the public through via the ReCFIT website under major projects.

www.recfit.tas.gov.au

A key finding from this report is Finding 6, which recommends the establishment of a multi-department taskforce and procuring sophisticated data through a Cumulative Impact Assessment (CIA). Finding 6 can be explained as follows:

1. Data

The Expert Advisory Panel emphasised that additional large scale renewable energy generation is essential to unlock the full economic value of Project Marinus.

However, it also warned that the cumulative impacts of these developments over the next 5–10 years pose a strategic risk to Tasmania's resources and communities.

Tools such as a Cumulative Impact Assessment (CIA), widely used in regions undergoing rapid development, provide the evidence base needed to understand how multiple projects together will affect and can improve:

- housing supply
- skilled labour availability
- training systems
- transport networks
- health and community services
- local industry capacity
- social benefits and community wellbeing

Despite the Panel's explicit recommendation, this work has not yet begun, leaving the Cradle Coast exposed and under prepared for the scale of development ahead.

2. Prioritise

Turning opportunity into outcomes requires clear, coordinated priorities. The Expert Advisory Panel recommended establishing a senior, whole of government taskforce, made up of Heads of Agencies and directly accountable to the Premier and the Energy Committee of Cabinet. Its role would be to:

- sequence overlapping projects
- coordinate supply, transport, housing and labour planning
- identify where demand will exceed local capacity
- manage emerging issues before they constrain development

This is a structural requirement identified by the State's own experts. Without this coordinated leadership, the region risks:

- upward pressure on housing and construction costs
- shortages of skilled labour
- increased reliance on interstate workers
- strain on roads, ports, bridges and health services
- erosion of social benefits if communities experience disruption without prosperity

Prioritising a whole of government approach ensures renewable energy development strengthens the Cradle Coast rather than overwhelming it.

3. Implement

Delivery depends on agile decision-making, coordinated planning and continuous engagement across government, industry and community. The taskforce provides the structure needed to:

- map project timing
- anticipate cumulative pressures
- guide early investment in enabling infrastructure
- enable proponents to contribute to legacy assets such as road upgrades and improved community services
- enhance social benefits by aligning development with community expectations

With the right governance and data driven approach, renewable energy can leave a legacy of improved housing, stronger local industry, better services and long-term regional prosperity.

Without immediate action, the region risks missing the benefits of the largest development pipeline in Tasmania's history.

What is missing from the Expert Panel's Assessment Finding 6?

The Cradle Coast cannot rely on hope alone. To fully capture this generational opportunity, the Tasmanian Government must act on its own expert advice:

- establish the recommended whole of government taskforce
- commence a Cumulative Impact Assessment immediately
- coordinate development to protect communities and maximise regional benefit

It should be noted that community, existing industry and local government are absent from this recommendation.

Councils across the Cradle Coast must be empowered, included and properly equipped to contribute to this process, alongside the businesses and communities that will experience these impacts first hand.

If coordination is driven primarily from Hobart, there is a real risk our local voices, local industry knowledge and local needs will be overlooked, weakening both the effectiveness of planning and the social prosperity required to deliver these projects.

Tasmania's 200% target delivers carbon-zero at home but undershoots the renewable scale needed for true economic growth.

www.cradlecoast.com/energy-hub/

Summary of Recommendations

CCA emphasises that moving from intent to implementation is now essential. The Tasmanian government must act on their own expert advice to establish the recommended whole-of-government taskforce and initiating the CIA is critical to safeguarding the region. Without a shift to coordinated, data-driven action, the Cradle Coast remains vulnerable to the risks of unsequenced development, including escalating construction costs, infrastructure strain, and erosion of community and economic benefits.

CCA acknowledges that the scale, concentration and timing of the renewable energy pipeline will place significant pressure on regional housing, workforce availability and essential local services without careful coordination. CCA also recognises the urgent need for integrated planning for worker accommodation to avoid negative impacts on existing housing supply and the tourism sector. We welcome collaborative mechanisms, a coordinated, whole-of-region approach involving councils, State agencies and project proponents. CCA further notes that with many projects yet to reach final investment decision, workforce requirements and timing remain uncertain, underscoring the importance of a flexible, adaptive planning approach that can respond to dynamic project trajectories.

The following recommendations consolidate the region's immediate and long-term priorities into a clear, actionable agenda for government, industry and community partners. They respond directly to the pressures and opportunities created by concurrent major developments and outline the coordinated steps required to ensure the Cradle Coast region secures lasting economic, social and infrastructure benefits. Together, they provide a practical roadmap for implementation and a foundation for structured engagement with stakeholders.

Regional Multi-Sector Workforce Planning and Coordination

- **Whole-of-Government Taskforce:** Establish a senior taskforce reporting to the Premier to sequence overlapping projects and coordinate housing, transport labour planning etc. Key governance features to include heads of agencies, direct accountability, reporting obligations, and a mandate to enable action.
- **Cumulative Impact Assessment:** Immediately commence a Cumulative Impact Assessment to quantify how concurrent projects will affect skilled labour, training systems, childcare, transport, health services and housing. This data can then inform solutions, assist in the prioritisation of resources and inspire collaboration between multiple stakeholders.
- **Local Governance:** Ensure communities, councils and local industries are central to coordination efforts to avoid planning being driven solely from Hobart and missing regional realities.
- **Foundational Skills:** Improve regional enthusiasm for education, literacy and numeracy outcomes urgently. Currently, over half of Year 9 students do not meet writing proficiency to ensure local youth can access high-value STEM roles created by the energy transition. Support teachers and harness the power of family and community knowledge through engagement to improve student outcomes. A systemic response is also required.

Public Transport Pilot and Intergrated Transport Strategy

- **Demand Responsive Transport (DRT):** Local transport providers to partner with proponents and the Tasmanian Department of State Growth (Infrastructure) to pilot DRT models that use smart technology to dynamically adjust routes based on real-time bookings.
- **System Alignment:** Align renewable energy workforce transport needs with broader community access requirements to ensure people can reliably reach work, education and services.
- **Integrated Transport Strategy:** Update the Integrated Transport Strategy to coordinate public transport, housing development, active transport and freight movements to support regional economic growth and productivity. Renewable energy projects will need to invest in roads to support transport and logistics during construction phase. A more detailed and updated Integrated Transport Strategy can enable quick response strategic road investment that benefits projects short-term and long-term regional needs.

Community Benefit Sharing (CBS) Policy Updates

- **Fund Pooling:** Create a structure to pool a portion of benefit-sharing funds across regional projects to deliver shared community assets.
- **Approval Conditions:** Incorporate community benefit expectations into project approvals in a way that shapes ancillary benefits such as worker accommodation. This can support local housing needs and coordinated, region-wide solutions when developed with proponents and the community

Housing and Workforce Accommodation

- **Early-Stage Enablement:** Strong support from Tasmanian and Australian Governments is essential to design workforce housing solutions pre-FID. There is a need to design fit-for-purpose accommodation and fit-for-purpose financial partnerships. Coordinating now with project proponents, community housing providers, local industry and the community to co-design multi-purpose accommodation solutions will ease workforce pressures and deliver long-term regional benefits.
- **Stakeholder Collaboration:** CCA to convene a Round Table with Federal and State governments, project proponents, utilities and key stakeholders to identify practical actions that reduce housing pressure and ensure major projects deliver a net positive contribution to regional housing supply.
- **Strategic Planning:** CCA to develop a regional Strategy/Prospectus outlining short-, medium- and long-term worker accommodation options, supported by a Planning Policy Document proposing rule changes to enable development.
- **Legacy Infrastructure:** Investment in worker accommodation that can be repurposed post-construction for aged care, tourism, or social housing, ensuring long-term community benefit.
- **Community Housing Partnerships:** Work with Community Housing Providers to manage temporary workforce accommodation at market rates, using guaranteed income streams to finance new developments that transition into permanent social and mixed dwelling housing solutions.
- **Youth Housing Pathway Pilot:** CCA to advocate for a "Housing and Finance Pathway for Youth" where homes are leased to project proponents during construction, with rental income building a deposit for young people to assume ownership once projects conclude. CCA will require insights and contributions from partners to develop this further.

Activation of RESH

- **Progress RESH:** In collaboration with Gateway by ICN, Renewable Energy Services Hub (RESH) into an active coordination hub that supports local businesses to collaborate, expand and participate in energy projects and related opportunities.
- **Support Service Mapping:** ReCFIT to expand RESH to map opportunities for support services, maintenance, componentry and supply-chain expansion across the region. This can capture local benefits and Gippsland Offshore Wind Zone economic benefits.

Knowledge Economy and Data Centre Capability

- **Digital Infrastructure Hub:** Leverage the increased data capacity enabled by Marinus Link to position the region as a hub for AI, tech startups, data centres and STEM-driven research.
- **Land Availability and Requirements:** Support the work of Cradle Coast councils who are actively addressing the shortage of industrial land in our region.

Philanthropic Potential

- **Partner to Develop Youth Housing Model:** We are keen to connect with a partner who can work with our region to refine, develop, and design a youth housing model that genuinely benefits our community and investors.
- **Community Designed Future:** We have partnered with Indigenous Energy Australia to design a program with local Aboriginal community members. This program can support renewable energy investment in our region that benefits multiple Aboriginal communities, our broader community and industry together. While we are hoping to obtain funding through the Australian Government Regional Precincts and Partnerships Program, we cannot be sure of success and require ambitious partners.
- **Inspiring our Next Generation:** GreenSTEM delivers high impact, hands on STEM initiatives that build skills in science, engineering, digital technologies and equipping young people to participate in the region's emerging industries. There is a significant opportunity for philanthropic partners to invest in this work, enabling GreenSTEM to enhance access to programs that grow confidence, curiosity and capability in the region's young people. GreenSTEM is positioning our region as a national leader in future focused STEM education and innovation.

Planning for our Whole Community to Genuinely Benefit

Despite this potential, our region faces poor planning and entrenched socio-economic challenges that could prevent vulnerable populations from participating in this growth.

In 2022, TasNetworks published the discussion paper "Capturing The Economic Development Opportunities from Renewable Energy Investments in North-West Tasmania," which was developed in partnership with SGS Economics and Planning. This was a welcome, proactive move by TasNetworks.

The paper discusses the Cradle Coast struggles with a low workforce participation rate of 58%, which is lower than state and national averages, signalling an aging population and significant disengagement. Furthermore, the region was identified as a youth unemployment hotspot, where young people, along with the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community (who face a 12.6% unemployment rate), are at high risk of being left behind. Barriers such as generational low educational attainment, limited public transport outside metropolitan centres, and the fact that the Cradle Coast is the least digitally connected region in Tasmania further inhibit the ability of

local job seekers to access training and work.

While the region has strong roots in engineering and manufacturing trades, there is a notable underrepresentation of "white-collar" professionals in ICT, business, and science. Essential "soft skills" like communication and complex problem-solving, alongside digital literacy, are now requirements for the modern renewable energy workforce but have not traditionally been embedded in local vocational pathways. Without a proactive, "bottom-up" approach marginalised groups will continue to face barriers such as discrimination and intergenerational disadvantage.

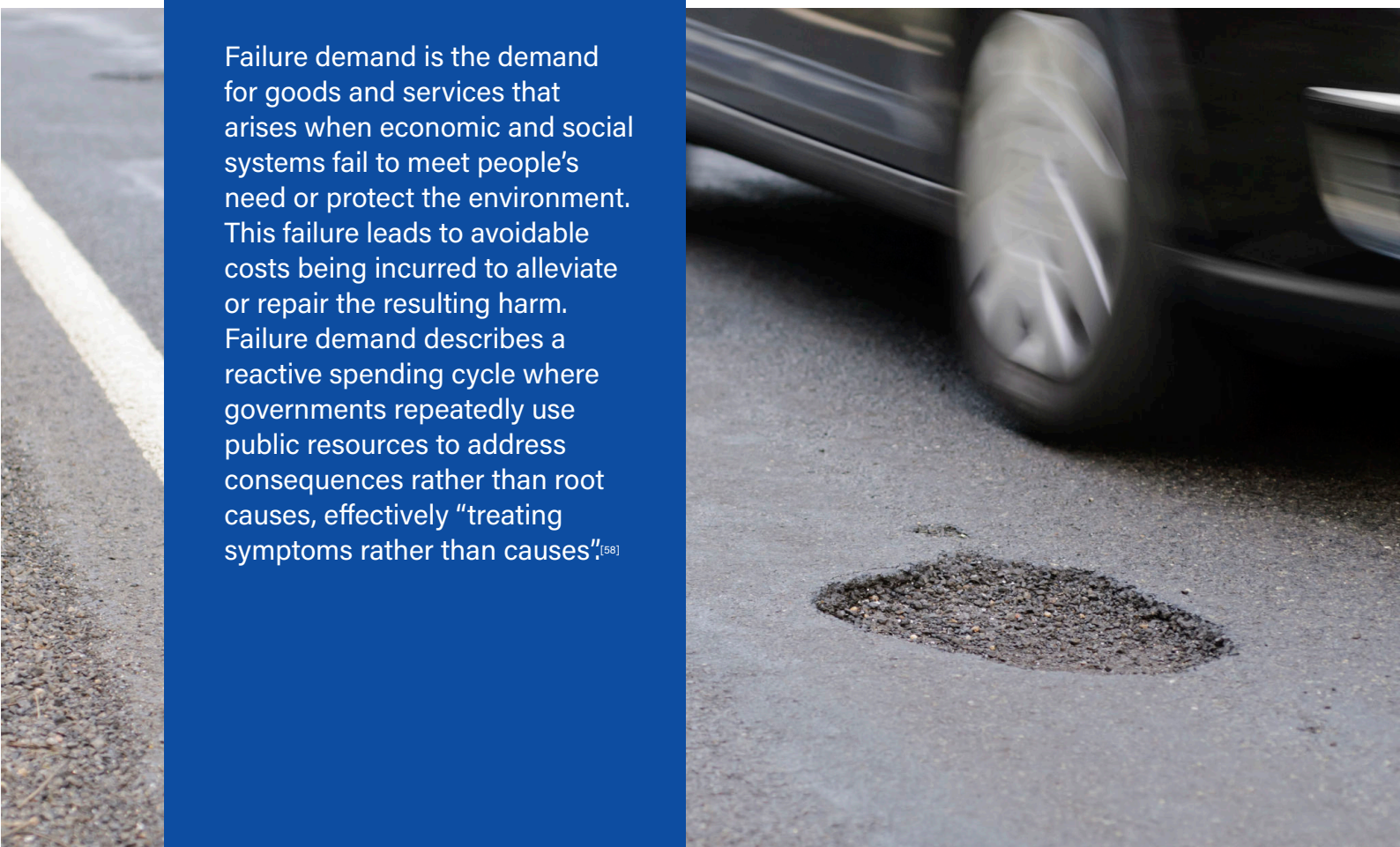
The 2022 paper notes that if planning is not properly coordinated across the whole community, the region risks a repeat of failed "trickle-down" models where economic benefits "leak" back out to interstate or global firms. Without a local workforce ready to fill positions, proponents may be forced to rely on imported "fly-in-fly-out" (FIFO) workers, which would severely diminish the local economic impact and potentially displace workers from existing small businesses.

Furthermore, a lack of coordinated social infrastructure planning, particularly regarding the major gap in housing supply, could lead to a scenario where local residents bear the "local costs" of infrastructure.

This report was written in 2022. So, what next?

What is Failure Demand?

Failure demand is the demand for goods and services that arises when economic and social systems fail to meet people's need or protect the environment. This failure leads to avoidable costs being incurred to alleviate or repair the resulting harm. Failure demand describes a reactive spending cycle where governments repeatedly use public resources to address consequences rather than root causes, effectively "treating symptoms rather than causes".[58]



In Conclusion

The Cradle Coast stands at the threshold of transformative change. With a projected $15 billion pipeline in renewable energy investment, the region has the potential to drive economic growth, create skilled jobs, and strengthen community prosperity.

Achieving these outcomes requires a coordinated approach that integrates data, expertise and local insight to prioritise and implement multi-purpose, multi-benefit infrastructure, delivering long-term advantages. This can include strategic housing and transport investment. Both of which are essential for many sectors, as well as community.

1. Data and Multi-Stakeholder informed Vision

Renewable energy investment presents a once-in-a-generation opportunity for the Cradle Coast. Initiatives such as the Clean Energy Centre of Excellence, the Renewable Energy Services Hub (RESH) and the Gateway by ICN provide important foundations. However, they do not yet address the full regional, economic and social implications of an unprecedented $15 billion investment pipeline. Securing lasting benefits requires a shared regional vision, underpinned by robust data and shaped jointly by community, industry and government.

2. Prioritise

Turning opportunity into outcomes demands clear priorities: strong regional leadership, targeted investment and a coordinated, whole-of-government approach. These priorities must enable local industry participation, build workforce and infrastructure capacity, and safeguard community wellbeing - ensuring renewable energy development strengthens, rather than strains, the Cradle Coast.

3. Implement

Delivery depends on coordinated planning, agile decision-making and continuous engagement with industry, community and government. With the right governance and data-driven approach, renewable energy can deliver broad-based regional prosperity. Without it, the depth of opportunity will be lost.

The choices we make now will determine whether the Cradle Coast fully captures this generational opportunity. By setting a clear vision, prioritising investment, and implementing with agility and collaboration, renewable energy can deliver enduring benefits to our communities, industries and environment. Success depends on unwavering collaboration, coordination and commitment from government, industry and community.

What Next from Cradle Coast Authority

CCA will lead the development of a regionally aligned vision, informed by the strategic priorities of organisations across the region and by reflecting on shared community, industry and institutional ambitions.

We invite you to identify where the opportunities outlined in this report, such as housing, workforce, biosecurity, digital infrastructure and supply chains, intersect with your remit and where collaboration could deliver greater impact. By considering how your priorities and expertise align with these opportunities, you can help create coordinated approaches that leverage shared resources, avoid duplication, and maximise outcomes. Taking a lead in these efforts will not only strengthen the effectiveness of your initiatives but also contribute to broader, lasting benefits for the community and regional economy.

We urge the Tasmanian Government to translate intent into action by establishing the recommended senior, whole-of-government taskforce and promptly initiating a Cumulative Impact Assessment (CIA). This is a demand for strategic coordination, identified by our own experts as a "structural requirement," to effectively manage the $15 billion project pipeline.

The scale and pace of change across the Cradle Coast demonstrate a simple truth: many hands make light work. The window of opportunity is open, but it will not stay open forever.

The choices we make now will determine whether this investment leaves a legacy of enduring prosperity or a series of missed opportunities.

The time to act is immediate.

Our email address for this work is **futureenergyhub@cradlecoast.com**

Renewable energy economic benefits are best achieved through a shared regional vision, open dialogue to inform priorities, and working together towards common goals.

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