

**Penny Sharpe**

Minister for Climate Change, Minister for Energy  
Minister for the Environment, Minister for Heritage  
Leader of the Government in the Legislative Council

**Paul Scully**

Minister for Planning and Public Spaces

**Ryan Park**

Minister for Health, Minister for Regional Health  
Minister for the Illawarra and the South Coast

**Media Release****Government engages community on plan for the Illawarra Renewable Energy Zone**

**Friday, 23 May 2025**

The Minns Labor Government will today engage with industry, community and union leaders in Wollongong on its new plans to establish NSW's first 'urban renewable energy zone', leveraging the unique characteristics of the Illawarra region to deliver more affordable and reliable power to NSW homes and businesses.

The Illawarra REZ Roundtable will see energy experts, business leaders and community representatives map out next steps for the REZ, including initial options which can be delivered by 2030.

The Roundtable coincides with the signing of a new memorandum of understanding between EnergyCo, which leads the delivery of REZs, and local electricity distribution system operator, Endeavour Energy, to jointly develop innovative network and battery solutions within the REZ.

Renewed attention is being given to the integration of consumer energy resources, such as rooftop solar systems and home batteries, as well as community-scale batteries and utilisation of spare government land and commercial roof space. This will minimise the impact on surrounding communities and the environment by repurposing existing infrastructure as much as possible.

The Illawarra region contains unique features that make it an ideal location for a REZ. The region already hosts major energy, port and transport infrastructure, has a skilled workforce and has strong demand for future renewable energy projects. The Illawarra REZ will help strengthen the region's economy and support jobs for decades.

EnergyCo will engage closely with community, industry, local government and other stakeholders as the design and delivery of the REZ progresses.

**Quote attributable to Minister for Climate Change and Energy, Penny Sharpe:**

"The Illawarra has the potential to be NSW's first urban renewable energy zone. This is a chance to leverage the community's enthusiasm for solar, batteries and EVs to benefit the entire region, as well as pursue longer-term opportunities to support green manufacturing.

"The Roundtable is an opportunity for community, industry and energy leaders to map out the next steps for unlocking clean, reliable and affordable energy for the Illawarra Renewable Energy Zone."

**Quote attributable to Minister for Planning and Public Spaces, Member for Wollongong Paul Scully:**

"The Illawarra is uniquely positioned to show how renewable energy production and consumption can fit into an urban area.

“This Roundtable brings together industry pace setters and innovators in a crucial step towards delivering clean green energy that can meet the needs of both residents and local industry.

“Right across the Illawarra, businesses and the community are motivated to be a part of NSW’s energy future.”

**Quote attributable to Minister for the Illawarra and the South Coast, Member for Keira Ryan Park:**

“The Illawarra is perfectly poised to host a Renewable Energy Zone which will power homes and businesses here and across NSW.

“The Illawarra already hosts major energy, port and transport infrastructure, we have skilled workers ready to go, and strong demand for projects which capitalise on the region’s ability to innovate.”

**Further information:**

#### **What is a Renewable Energy Zone?**

- REZs will group new wind and solar power generation into locations where it can be efficiently stored and transmitted across NSW. Five zones have been identified and will keep electricity reliable as coal-fired power stations retire, by delivering large amounts of energy.
- REZs will help deliver lower wholesale electricity costs and place downward pressure on customer bills through increased competition.

#### **What is EnergyCo?**

- EnergyCo is the NSW Government authority responsible for leading the delivery of REZs, as part of the Electricity Infrastructure Roadmap. The Roadmap is the state’s 20-year plan to transform our electricity system and unlock more affordable and reliable energy.
- EnergyCo leads strategic planning and consultation processes, to make sure the new transmission infrastructure needed is built in the right place at the right time, with benefits for host communities.

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