

FACT SHEET - PEREGIAN BEACH ENERGY HUB

What is the project / proposal all about?

Plans to transform the Rufous Street precinct at Peregian Beach into an “energy hub” is one of a number of ambitious projects being undertaken by Zero Emissions Noosa Inc (ZEN) in 2022.

The site at Peregian Beach already houses the highly successful Digital Hub and the recently completed new community house. Proponents argue that the development of an “energy hub” at the site would complete the trifecta.

The initial proposal has several components: installation of increased solar capacity on the Council owned buildings; the optimum use of the extra electricity generated through the installation of a suitable storage scheme; the provision of a number of electric vehicle charging stations; the use of the community house as a venue and focal point for community forums on emissions reduction, renewables, and associated topics. It is hoped that links will be developed to possible renewable energy start-ups at the Digital Hub.

Why are we doing this?

The objective of reaching net zero emissions in Noosa by 2026 is dependent, in part, on encouraging the uptake of rooftop solar throughout the Noosa Shire. The grouping of a number of Council owned buildings at the Rufous Street precinct, Peregian Beach provides an opportunity to provide solar uptake at a dedicated location. The location can showcase the possibilities of an “energy hub” including solar installations, energy storage, electric vehicle charging as well as opportunities for education and information dissemination on emissions reduction initiatives.

In addition to emissions reduction, the uptake of solar and other initiatives such as storage, can provide significant economic benefits to local businesses and residents because of cheaper and more readily accessible electricity.

Where will the project be located?

The Rufous Street precinct at Peregian Beach is the ideal location for the first stage of a proposal to create an energy hub at Peregian Beach. Noosa Council’s Zero Emissions Organisation Strategy 2016-2026 seeks to increase solar capacity on Council owned buildings and, as many of the buildings at the Rufous Street precinct are Council owned, this is a good place to start. (PTO).

Once the first stage is activated, the plan is to expand the “hub” to hopefully include the “Marquesa” complex (David Low Way), the Peregian Hotel, and IGA supermarket as well as the retail, restaurants, and cafes on the beach side of David Low Way.

Who are the key stakeholders in the project?

There are a number of stakeholders in the project. Noosa Council because they own a number of buildings in the Rufous Street precinct and reducing emissions from Council owned properties is a key policy of Council. Ultimately all electricity users in the Peregian Beach commercial and retail precinct will benefit from the

project as will a number of residencies in the immediate locality. There are economic benefits for local solar installers and others involved in electricity and solar enterprises.

It is hoped that local community groups and business associations will get behind the project.

When will the project be implemented?

The first stage of the project (based around infrastructure at the Rufous Street precinct, Peregrine Beach) is likely to be implemented by the end of calendar year 2022. Capital works provisions in the 2022-2023 budget is likely to attract funding for all or most of the components of the plan.

The uptake of solar on the commercial and retail buildings at Peregrine Beach is surprisingly low. Maximising solar uptake, while a priority, will take time to be fully implemented. A reasonable level of solar uptake will be a prerequisite for other initiatives (such as storage).

How will the project be implemented?

ZEN has a project team that is facilitating the project. It is working closely with a number of key stakeholders, particularly Noosa Council's emission reductions team, to implement the plan.

Research and information gathering is being conducted by the volunteer members of the project team who also lead the advocacy of the project. An audit of current solar uptake and capacity in the local area will need to be conducted to establish base line data and determine the level of support for such a concept within the Peregrine Beach community (business and residential).

For further information, contact:

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