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# Winton Solar Farm COMMUNITY UPDATE

EDITION 1 / AUGUST 2020

Artist Impression - Winton Solar Farm

Welcome to the first Community Update for the Winton Solar Farm project. We look forward to providing you with news as the project progresses.

## PROJECT SNAPSHOT

Winton Solar Farm is an 85-megawatt (MW) facility which will take around 12 months to build. When complete, the solar farm will produce enough clean, renewable energy to supply 52,000 homes.

Detailed plans for the solar farm were approved by the Benalla Council in 2018. These plans will ensure the solar farm is built with minimal impact to neighbours and rural areas surrounding the site.

## LOCAL EMPLOYMENT A PRIORITY

Construction has now commenced and it is expected that around 200 temporary jobs will be created during the coming months. Up to 140 workers are currently onsite, with numbers increasing as installation of key solar generation components gets underway.

FRV Services - the Project's owner - and Principal Contractor, Gransolar, are committed to ensure qualified workers from North East Victoria are given the opportunity to work on this ground-breaking project.

Employment positions are being advertised on the North East Victorian Jobs Hub as they become available [www.northeastvictorianjobs.com.au](http://www.northeastvictorianjobs.com.au)

## JAMES CIVIL

Benalla-based independent business, James Civil Group has been working at the Winton Solar Farm site since 31 March 2020. Tasked with managing the civil construction of the site, JCG's ten employees have been busy preparing the site's internal paths and foundations for the solar farm's substation.

*"Working on the Winton Solar Farm has been a great opportunity to complete a complex and challenging project close to home. It has given James Civil Group the opportunity to gain exposure to the growing renewable energy sector".*

### Cameron James



James Civil employees onsite at the Solar Farm.

## CLEAN ENERGY CONTRIBUTION

While Winton Solar Farm is an important project for the Benalla Shire, it will also play a role in helping Victoria to achieve its renewable energy target of 50 percent by 2030.

When complete, the Solar Farm will generate 210,000MWh of renewable electricity per year and prevent up to 150,000 tonnes of greenhouse gas emissions, known to accelerate the impacts of climate change.

## COVID-19 CONSTRAINTS

All staff and contractors working at the Winton Solar Farm are closely following physical distancing requirements while the construction progresses on site. A COVID management plan remains in place to protect worker safety, and to limit contact between the project team and the community.

# Winton Solar Farm COMMUNITY UPDATE

## Community Involvement

### SUPPORTING BIODIVERSITY

Winton Solar Farm recently worked in partnership with the Goulburn Broken Catchment Management Authority (CMA) to re-purpose logs and stumps from our site for use as waterway rehabilitation and fish habitat in local rivers. Gransolar, with support from subcontractors, removed the timber from site to provide to the CMA, who will use them to create new habitat for fish, animals and other aquatic species. As a secondary benefit, in-stream logs will also help to reduce riverbank erosion and protect surrounding agricultural and bushland.

### COMMUNITY FUNDING AVAILABLE

In coming months, FRV will open applications for its Community Benefit Grants Program. Up to \$20,000 in total will be available to eligible local groups. The Program will provide funding for local initiatives looking to improve or enhance the environment and sustainability, health and safety, and community participation.

Visit [www.wintonsolarfarm.com](http://www.wintonsolarfarm.com) for more details.

## Frequently asked questions

### Where exactly is the Project site?

Winton Solar Farm is being built on a private 250-hectare site approximately 25km south west of Wangaratta. The site is adjacent to the existing Glenrowan Terminal substation, avoiding the need to build additional electricity transmission lines in the local area.

### How do the panels capture solar energy?

Solar panels – like those seen on rooftops – will be installed on ground-mounted structures that will track the sun from East to West. Using absorbed solar energy the solar panels convert this to electricity that is then dispatched into the local electricity network.

### Will the development create lower power prices for local residents?

Introducing a new renewable energy generation facility into the energy market is expected to reduce wholesale power prices. In turn, this could lead to retail power price cuts for consumers.



*Mature and native trees onsite are protected during construction.*

### STAFF PROFILE

**Justin Beukman & Jan Rieschieck**  
– Health, Safety & Environment.

Justin has worked on construction projects for 30 years. Originally from Melbourne, Justin moved to live in Bundalong two years ago and has been working on renewable energy projects for the past 12 months.

Jan has a background in forestry and agriculture industries in the North East and Yarra Valley. Jan has been a local in the North East for over 15 years, previously on farm at Upper Lurg then moving to Bundalong South three years ago.

Both Justin and Jan have a passion for health and safety and bring a wealth of skills and local knowledge to the project, helping both Gransolar and subcontractors promote a positive safety culture.



*Two new workers onsite: Justin Beukman and Jan Rieschieck will manage Health, Safety and Environment.*

### CONTACT US

Detailed project information is available on the Winton Solar Farm website [www.wintonsolarfarm.com](http://www.wintonsolarfarm.com)  
Alternatively email us [info@frv.com](mailto:info@frv.com) or phone **0418 142 173**