



Girgarre Solar Farm

Frequently Asked Questions

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Project Overview

Frequently Asked Questions

Project Overview	Question	Answer
	What is the project?	The Girgarre Solar Farm consists of approximately 167,000 photovoltaic (PV) modules and associated infrastructure including a substation, site office, storage facilities, access roads and other related equipment and infrastructure.
	How much energy will the solar farm produce?	The capacity of the solar farm is approximately 93 MW, it powers around 43,000 Victorian homes each year.
	Where is it located?	The Girgarre Solar Farm site is in the Shire of Campaspe, in Victoria, Australia. The site is located approximately 10 km north-west of Stanhope and approximately 50 km west of Shepparton.
	How big is the project area?	The project site is approximately 250 hectares.
	Why was this location chosen?	The location of the project site has an excellent solar resource and is in close proximity to an existing transmission line (with available capacity). The project site consists of land previously cleared for agricultural purposes, with favourable topography for the installation of photovoltaic (PV) modules
	What is the investment value of the project?	The construction of the Girgarre Solar Farm had an investment value of over \$140 million.
	What's the status of the project?	The project is operational.

Project Overview

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Project Overview	Question	Answer
	Who approved the project?	The Girgarre Solar Farm project was assessed by the Campaspe Shire Council and granted a Planning Permit in 2018.
Project Ownership	Does the project require Victorian State Government and Federal Government approval?	The consent authority for the Girgarre Solar Farm is the Campaspe Shire Council. Consultation with relevant State and Federal Government Departments has been undertaken as required.
	Who owns the project?	Potentia Energy (previously Enel Green Power Australia) is the owner of Girgarre Solar Farm project.
	Who is Potentia Energy?	Potentia Energy (previously Enel Green Power Australia) is a joint venture entity co-owned by Enel Green Power and INPEX. Potentia Energy is currently operating over 800 megawatts (MW) of renewable energy assets across Australia, with construction underway on a further 200 MW of capacity. Potentia Energy has rights secured for a development pipeline of over 8 GW across Australia and is committed to an ambitious growth agenda, targeting a significant increase to its installed capacity across wind, solar, storage and hybrid projects across Australia. Potentia Energy is committed to accelerating Australia's energy transition, driving the potential for a sustainable future.
	Who developed the project?	The project was jointly developed with Lesson Group, a Victoria-based solar power systems developer. The development work by Lesson Group included securing suitable land for the project, undertaking relevant assessments and resource monitoring, and obtaining relevant development approvals.

Project Construction

Frequently Asked Questions

	Question	Answer
Project Ownership	What is Potentia Energy's relationship with Lesson Group?	Potentia Energy and Lesson Group signed a commercial agreement for the joint development of the Girgarre Solar Farm. Upon completion of the project development phase, Potentia Energy fully acquired the project from Lesson Group in 2019.
	Who owns the land where the project is situated?	The land on which the project is located is owned by Potentia Energy.
Project Construction	Who constructed the project?	Potentia Energy appointed Beon Energy Solutions as the Engineering Procurement Construction (EPC) Contractor for the Girgarre Solar Farm project. Beon was supported by local contractors and suppliers throughout the construction phase of the project.
	How many jobs were created during construction?	Approximately 250 construction team were on site during peak construction periods. Potentia Energy worked closely with Beon Energy Solutions to identify local capability and capacity for construction roles and prioritise local engagement where possible.
	Were there apprenticeships and traineeships available during the construction phase?	Potentia Energy worked closely with Beon Energy Solutions to identify on site trainee and apprenticeship opportunities where possible during construction.

Project Construction

Frequently Asked Questions

	Question	Answer
Project Construction	How long did the construction take?	The approximate timeframe for the construction was 18 months.
	What was built on the project site?	Approximately 167,000 PV modules, approximately 15 Power Conversion Units, underground cabling, unsealed internal access roads, a substation, security fencing around the perimeter of the project area, and some vegetation screening has been installed on the project site. A site office with a small carpark has also been installed.
	Where do the PV modules come from?	The PV modules were provided by a company called LONGi and were manufactured in China.
	What transmission infrastructure will be built for the project?	A substation has been constructed on the project site, a small amount transmission infrastructure has been constructed to connect the Girgarre Solar Farm to the existing 66 kV transmission line on the southern boundary of the site area.
Project Operation	Who operates the project?	Potentia Energy manages the operational phase of the project and has engaged Beon Energy Solutions to manage the operations and maintenance activities on site.
	How long will the project operate for?	The approximate timeframe for the operational life of the project is 30 years.

Frequently Asked Questions

Project Operation	Question	Answer
	Where will the power generated from the PV modules go?	Electricity generated from PV modules are being transported via underground cabling to the Power Conversion Units on site. Here, electricity produced is converted from Direct Current (DC) to Alternating Current (AC), then transported to the onsite substation, then fed into the existing 66 kV transmission line for distribution into the grid.
	Where does the electricity go?	Electricity is fed into the existing 66kV transmission line (feeding towards Stanhope) for distribution into the grid.
	How many jobs will be created during operations?	A small number of operational and maintenance staff are required for the operational phase. Potentia Energy will work closely with the contractor to identify local capability and capacity for operations and maintenance roles and prioritise local engagement where possible. In addition, where there is capability and capacity in the local area, it's anticipated for the local operations and maintenance team to be supported by local contractors and suppliers.
	Will there be apprenticeships and traineeships available during operations?	Potentia Energy works closely with the contractor to identify on site trainee and apprenticeship opportunities were reasonably practicable during operations.

Frequently Asked Questions

What are the benefits for the local community from the project?

Potentia Energy is committed to a Creating Shared Value (CSV) approach during construction and operation of the project. CSV means Potentia Energy intends to work closely with the local community to enhance the economic and social conditions in the local area to the project and proactively share benefits within the local community. Potentia Energy's overall objective is for the project to be considered as an integrated and valued component of the social and economic fabric of the local community. As part of the CSV initiatives implemented for the project, a shared approach to cattle agistment and cropping was undertaken within the project area. Proceeds from this generated financial benefits which were reinvested back into the Girgarre community through enhancing the Girgarre netball courts and botanical gardens, along with other small town-improvement projects. Potentia Energy worked closely with the Girgarre Development Group to identify meaningful Benefit Sharing initiatives for the local community, and as a result the project coordinated and funded the installation of solar panels on two community hubs, which both contribute to lower the electricity costs of those facilities through clean energy generation.

Potentia Energy partnered with the Yorta Yorta Nation Aboriginal Corporation (YYNAC), via a long-term Cultural Engagement Agreement, ensuring that the entire life of the project respects and supports the Indigenous heritage of the region, continuing to proactively identifying opportunities related to renewable energy that we can share with YYNAC.

During the construction phase of the project, the EPC contractor, Beon Energy Solutions, worked closely with local Indigenous and disability support organisations such as the Rumbalara Aboriginal Co-operative and We Are Vivid, creating jobs and providing opportunities for marginalised groups, helping to reduce unemployment and creating a culturally inclusive work environment. Local disability support groups like We Are Vivid were also engaged to provide opportunities for people with disabilities, such as processing hardware for the solar panels.

Project Benefits and Impacts

Frequently Asked Questions

Project Benefits and Impacts	Question	Answer
	What impacts will the project have on the local community and environment during construction?	The project had some impacts on the local area during the construction period, including an increase to local traffic in the area. Environmental, noise and construction impacts have been assessed by the relevant regulators during the planning phase of the project. The planning approval sets out conditions for the project, including management plans. Management systems are in place to ensure compliance with all conditions.
	What visual impact will there be from the project?	Visual impacts have been assessed by the relevant regulators during the planning phase of the project. The Planning Permit includes a condition to establish and maintain vegetation screening on some areas of the project boundary to reduce local visual amenity impacts.
	What impacts will there be on local flora and fauna from the project?	The project site area consists of previously cleared agricultural land. The Planning Permit includes a condition for an Environmental Management Plan. This sets out management and monitoring procedures to ensure that flora and fauna impacts are mitigated during the project's construction and operational phases.
	What impacts will there be on local roads and traffic?	The project had some impacts on the local area during the construction phase, including an increase to 'light construction' traffic in the local area. The Planning Permit includes a condition for a Traffic Impact Assessment Report and local roads will be maintained as required, in consultation with the Campaspe Shire Council.
	What are the noise impacts from the project?	PV modules do not produce any noise, and the Power Conversion Units produce minimal noise while operating.

Project Community Engagement

Frequently Asked Questions

	Question	Answer
Project Community and Engagement	What community engagement has been undertaken for the project to date?	<p>Following acquisition of the project, Potentia Energy has developed a Stakeholder and Community Engagement Plan, it includes activities such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Targeted engagement with neighbours within the vicinity of the project area. • Targeted engagement with broader local community groups within the Campaspe Shire Local Government Area, including tailored project updates to the Girgarre Development Group, Campaspe Shire Council, and other key project stakeholders. • Sharing monthly project updates via local community newsletters. • Establishment of a project webpage.
	Can local community members visit the project?	<p>As the project is an operational renewable energy power plant, health and safety is the key consideration when determining access to the project area. If there is sufficient interest in the local area, Potentia Energy will explore opportunities to arrange for site tours for interested community members, local school groups etc.</p>
Complaints	How can I make a complaint about the project?	<p>Complaints about the project can be made to Potentia Energy via the information channels listed in the 'more information' section of this document.</p>
	Are there further avenues to complain?	<p>If the response from Potentia Energy is deemed unsatisfactory, Potentia Energy recommends contacting the Australian Energy Infrastructure Commissioner.</p>

More Information:

Visit the [project webpage](#)

Community Engagement and Sustainability

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