

A low-angle photograph of a wind turbine against a clear blue sky. The sun is positioned behind the central hub of the turbine, creating a bright lens flare effect. The three blades of the turbine extend outwards, and the tower is visible at the bottom right.

**Clean Energy  
Council**

**Best Practice  
Charter for  
renewable energy  
projects**

Annual signatory submission: 2024



**Potentia Energy acknowledge  
the Traditional Custodians of the  
lands and waters on which we  
work and live, and their  
respective ongoing connections  
to Country.**



**As a signatory of the Best Practice Charter for Renewable Energy Projects, Potentia Energy is committed to upholding the Charter's 10 commitments in the development of current and new clean energy projects.**

**Potentia Energy is committed to supporting Australian jurisdictions and companies to reach its renewable energy and decarbonisation targets and accelerate the energy transition for Australia.**




**At the time of reporting, Potentia Energy has four operational energy plants and projects in Australia: Bungala Solar Farm 1 and 2 (SA), Cohuna Solar Farm (Vic), and Flat Rocks Wind Farm Stage 1 (WA) and one project under commissioning: Girgarre Solar Farm (Vic) and one project in pre-construction: Quorn Park Hybrid Farm (NSW). Additionally, Potentia Energy has a significant portfolio of wind, solar, storage and hybrid projects under varying stages of development across Australia.**



# Self Reflection

In developing this inaugural report, the team at Potentia Energy have taken the opportunity to reflect on our current practices and provide a self-evaluation of where we believe the Charter principles are well established in our project delivery, as well as areas for future improvement.










The self-reflection has been categorised as:

 <b>Established</b>	Commitments we feel we have operationalised into our practices and will work to continually refine and improve throughout all project development and delivery phases.
 <b>Developing</b>	Commitments where the organisation is dedicated to ongoing development and growth by leveraging insights gained from previous projects
 <b>Growth Opportunity</b>	Commitments identified as a growth opportunity for the organisation, requiring further exploration on ways they can be embedded throughout all project development and delivery phases.



## Self-Reflection

# Charter Commitment

1	<i>We will engage respectfully with the local community, including Traditional Owners of the land, to seek their views and input before submitting a development application and finalising the design of the project.</i>	 Developing
2	<i>We will provide timely information and be accessible and responsive in addressing the local community's feedback and concerns throughout the life of the project.</i>	 Established
3	<i>We will be sensitive to areas of high biodiversity, cultural and landscape value in the design and operation of projects.</i>	 Developing
4	<i>We will minimise the impacts on highly productive agricultural land and explore opportunities to integrate agricultural production.</i>	 Established
5	<i>We will consult the community on the potential visual, noise, traffic and other impacts of the project, and on the mitigation options.</i>	 Developing
6	<i>We will support the local economy by providing local employment and procurement opportunities.</i>	 Developing
7	<i>We will offer communities the opportunity to share in the benefits of the project, and consult them on the options available, including the relevant governance arrangements.</i>	 Established
8	<i>We commit to using the project to support educational and tourism opportunities where appropriate.</i>	 Established
9	<i>We will demonstrate responsible land stewardship over the life of the project and welcome opportunities to enhance the ecological, cultural and/or agricultural value of the land.</i>	 Developing
10	<i>During the life of the project, we will recycle waste materials where feasible and commit to responsible decommissioning or refurbishment/repowering of the site at the end of the project's life.</i>	 Established



## Commitment 1

**We will engage respectfully with the local community, including Traditional Owners of the land, to seek their views and input before submitting a development application and finalising the design of the project.**

Potentia Energy recognises Aboriginal heritage is a unique, irreplaceable part of Australia's national cultural heritage requiring recognition and protection. We are committed to engaging early, and going beyond minimum expectations, to provide opportunities for Traditional Owners of the land where our projects are developed

### Partnership with Bungala Aboriginal Corporation \*Bungala Solar Farm

The Bungala Solar Farm site near Port Augusta SA is leased to Potentia Energy by Bungala Aboriginal Corporation (BAC). As part of lessor agreements with BAC, Potentia Energy have committed to providing BAC notice of upcoming employment and business opportunities. This assists BAC to prepare appropriate tender submissions, so they can better achieve their objective to provide employment opportunities for Aboriginal people in the Port Augusta region.

### Kodja Place Bush Tucker Garden - Partnership with the Kodja Place Cultural Precinct \*Flat Rocks Wind Farm Stage 1

Enhanced local understanding and acceptance of the project by fostering strong relationships with the community through transparency and open dialogue. Implemented benefit-sharing programs that have an ongoing and direct contribution to long-term community well-being and sustainability.

### Supporting Aboriginal artists through proactive local sponsorship \*Bungala Solar Farm

Potentia Energy has partnered with Port Augusta City Council over multiple years to support the Malka Aboriginal Art Prize Awards, an event that celebrates and provides Aboriginal artists with a platform to share their artworks with the wider community.

Case Study



We recognise that reconciliation is an ongoing journey. as part of our commitment to respectful engagement with traditional owners, Potentia Energy intends to commence its inaugural reconciliation action plan with reconciliation Australia in 2024/25.

Figure 1. Malka Aboriginal Art Prize Awards 2024



## Commitment 2

**We will provide timely information and be accessible and responsive in addressing the local community's feedback and concerns throughout the life of the project.**

Potentia Energy is committed to providing timely information and opportunity for community to provide genuine feedback that informs project decision-making. Potentia Energy's approach to community engagement and benefit sharing is anchored in the Creating Shared Value philosophy, underpinned by the fundamental principle that good practice requires meaningful engagement and the establishment of solid, long-lasting community relationships in areas where we operate.

### Case Study

#### Kojonup Community Information Centre \*Flat Rocks Wind Farm Stage 1

Potentia Energy opened a community information centre in Kojonup, Western Australia, the closest local town to the project site, during the project's construction phase. This provided community members an opportunity to speak to our project team face-to-face, have their questions answered, learn more about the project, and understand community benefit sharing opportunities and activities. Potentia Energy also shared regular project updates through local community newsletters and the project website during the project's construction phase.

#### Community Liaison Officer \*Bungala Solar Farm, Cohuna Solar Farm, Flat Rocks Wind Farm Stage 1 & Quorn Park Solar Farm

Community Liaison Officers appointed on Potentia Energy projects use their knowledge of the local community to assist the project to identify appropriate benefit sharing initiatives tailored to the local context and provide valuable feedback to the project team on local community sentiment.



We recognise the benefits of early and transparent engagement and consulting with communities and stakeholders at each decision point.

## Commitment 3

**We will be sensitive to areas of high biodiversity, cultural and landscape value in the design and operation of projects.**

We recognise that new and expanding renewable energy developments can impact local fauna, plants, habitats and places, and are committed to designing and constructing projects in a way that minimises negative impacts to the area's biodiversity and landscape.

### Case Study

#### Bungala Solar Farm footprint refinements to avoid archaeological sites \*Bungala Solar Farm

During land surveys with Nukunu Peoples Council Inc (NCPI), three Aboriginal archaeological sites were identified along the western boundary of the Bungala Solar Farm. These sites are of high cultural significance to the NPCI and were assessed as being of high archaeological significance. The stone artefacts found at these locations provide evidence of the manufacture of stone tools, indicating that knapping (stone working) has previously occurred there. Two of the sites were excised from the project area completely, and a third was fenced-off prior to and during construction, to prevent impact on these important sites.



As Potentia Energy moves towards more end-to-end planning and development of projects, this will enable greater control over site selection and site due diligence, providing further opportunity to enhance sensitive site selection and design practice.



## Commitment 4

**We will minimise the impacts on highly productive agricultural land and explore opportunities to integrate agricultural production.**

Potentia Energy are committed to co-land use and minimising environmental impacts at every stage in the life cycle of our operational activities. We are focused on opportunities for regenerative agriculture to restore topsoil and preserve biodiversity, and agrivoltaics, i.e. growing crops under the shade of solar panels.

### Agrivoltaics project – Agriculture Victoria partnership \*Cohuna Solar Farm

Research conducted at the Cohuna Solar Farm by Agriculture Victoria (Victorian Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action) aims to measure microclimate and soil characteristics below solar panels in a commercial solar farm and identify potential plant and livestock production systems that could successfully co-exist within, beside and around large-scale solar farms. The ultimate outcome is to support co-development of land to combine agriculture production and energy production that contributes to the region's viability and resilience.

### Agistment program \*Girgarre Solar Farm & Bungala Solar Farm

Appreciating that agistment is a beneficial feeding option when feed is short on the livestock's home property, Potentia Energy has agreements with local stockowners to place their livestock on project land for grazing purposes. At Bungala, this arrangement is ongoing while the solar farm is in operation. This has the mutual benefit for Potentia Energy of keeping vegetation low and mitigating grassfire risk

*There is an opportunity to share learnings from our experience and research into agrivoltaics activities to benefit both the clean energy and the agricultural sector more broadly.*



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## Commitment 5

**We will consult the community on the potential visual, noise, traffic and other impacts of the project, and on the mitigation options.**

Potentia Energy are committed to undertaking stakeholder engagement as early as feasible in project planning so that the potential impacts of a project are understood and incorporated into project planning.

### Refining the Bungala Solar Farm project design to minimise stakeholder impacts \*Bungala Solar Farm

A Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) was originally intended to be located at the eastern boundary near the entrance to the Bungala Solar Farm site. After discussions with impacted stakeholders, including the host landholders, Bungala Aboriginal Corporation, it was determined that this location was not appropriate. As a result, in 2021 the BESS was relocated to an alternative location, south of Emeroo substation.

### Neighbour Agreement Benefit Scheme \* Flat Rocks Wind Farm Stage 1

The project has offered voluntary agreements for neighbouring landholders living up to 5km from wind turbine locations. Potentia Energy has engaged with the project neighbours since its acquisition of the project, via dedicated resourcing for engagement and a specific neighbour engagement strategy.

### Worker wellness - MATES in Construction partnership \*All projects

MATES in Construction is a charity established in 2008 to help reduce the high level of suicide among Australian construction workers, and the core of the program involves training to enhance mental health and improve suicide prevention literacy. Recognising the need to support and build a strong, resilient, educated and well-connected on-site construction team, Potentia Energy partnered with MATES in Construction Western Australia, alongside major project partners. Potentia Energy intends to expand its collaboration with MATES in Construction to all its projects in Australia.

Case Study



We will continue to seek opportunities to have meaningful impact-focused conversations earlier in project development and delivery phases to gain local knowledge and provide stakeholders opportunity for their views to be heard.



## Commitment 6

**We will support the local economy by providing local employment and procurement opportunities.**

**We are committed to using our projects to stimulate local economic activity and working closely with communities to enhance the economic and social conditions in the local area, including in the creation of local jobs and engaging local enterprises.**

### Cultural agreement with Yorta Yorta peoples \*Girgarre Solar Farm

Potential Energy's cultural agreement with the Yorta Yorta National Aboriginal Corporation includes an annual Opportunity Fund, contribution towards upskilling for renewable project-related training, funding for a dedicated solar farm liaison resource during construction, and a commitment to a target of employing approximately 10% Yorta Yorta people as part of the project's construction workforce. During the mechanical build phase of the project construction, approximately 27% of the engaged mechanical workforce by the EPC contractor identified as Indigenous.

### Support of local employability program \*Bungala Solar Farm

A partnership with Port Augusta City Council aims to empower individuals with disabilities by providing them with skills, resources and support to enhance their employability. The program works to facilitate successful integration into the workforce, helping participants gain employment for an initial period of 26 weeks. As it enters its next stage, the program will be rolled out to additional suitable employers.

### Support of local disability enterprise \*Girgarre Solar Farm

During the project's construction phase, EPC contractor procured sorting and processing services from 'We Are Vivid', a local disability support enterprise. Vivid's workers added efficiency and value to the project by sorting harness clips to brace the 169,500 solar panels across the entire project site.

Case Study



We will continue to seek opportunities to identify the unique challenges specific to each of our host communities and find innovative solutions that are tailored to supporting each local economy.

## Commitment 7

**We will offer communities the opportunity to share in the benefits of the project, and consult them on the options available, including the relevant governance arrangements.**

Through our Creating Shared Value approach, our team is focused on designing and delivering proactive local benefit sharing during the project's construction and operational phases. We work closely with host communities to enhance the social conditions in the local area.

### Community Fund Scheme \*Flat Rocks Wind Farm Stage 1

The team launched a funding scheme in 2023 to support local groups and initiatives that make a positive and enduring contribution to the local community. The annual fund will provide more than \$2.25 million to the local Kojonup and Broomehill Tambellup communities throughout the life of the wind farm project. The Fund had 13 beneficiaries in 2023, which included funding contributions to purchase a community bus for the Tambellup Community Cropping Group; a new nature play area for Kojonup Playgroup; cricket net upgrades for Kojonup Cricket Club; and funding for Barna Mia Ecological Camp.

### Solar panel installation on community infrastructure \*Flat Rocks Wind Farm Stage 1

Potentia Energy provided solar panel installation at Broomehill-Tambellup Shire Community Pavilion Precinct. The opportunity for photovoltaic (PV) system installation at the Precinct was identified by the Shire of Broomehill-Tambellup, as this facility is the highest power consumer of all the Shire-owned and managed facilities.

### Solar panel installation on community social hubs \*Girgarre Solar Farm

Potentia Energy has committed to installing solar panels on community social hub buildings. The community has identified two buildings which would be suitable for this initiative - the local football club and the botanical garden. The installation is expected to be completed by October 2024.

Case Study



We are always eager to explore new opportunities to contribute to enhancing economic and social conditions through varied and innovative initiatives that are tailored to local needs and benefit a wide cross-section of community members.



## Commitment 8

### We commit to using the project to support educational and tourism opportunities where appropriate.

Potentia Energy believes that **Creating Shared Value** is about creating an enabling environment for enhancing the competitiveness of the project and simultaneously advancing economic and social conditions in the communities affected by the project.

Case Study

#### Support and promotion of local STEM activities \*Bungala Solar Farm

Potentia Energy provides support to Port Augusta Secondary School's Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) facility programs, including the 'Off the Grid' unit work for Year 9 students. This is focused on building sustainable communities through the '2021 Sustainability Challenge' which challenges students to find new ways to be sustainable by engaging in extra-curricular, cross-disciplinary activities.

#### Life in the Sun - Cohuna 1-100 Exhibition \*Cohuna Solar Farm

Potentia Energy sponsored the 'Life in the Sun - Cohuna 1-100' exhibition completed by the Cohuna Art and Craft Gallery. The exhibition featured images of 100 people aged from 1 to 100 that were photographed in Cohuna over seven months.

#### School visits to wind farm and turbine naming competition \*Flat Rocks Wind Farm Stage 1

As part of school and community group educational visits, Potentia Energy facilitated a turbine naming competition, providing local school children and other community groups the opportunity to name the project's wind turbines and encourage community connection to the project. The selected turbine names will be inscribed on plaques installed at the bases of the turbines.

#### Cohuna District Hospital capacity building \*Cohuna Solar Farm

Potentia Energy provided a financial contribution to the Cohuna District Hospital in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, to assist with critical upgrades to consulting rooms, medical equipment and isolation facilities. The contribution focused on engagement of local contractors for completion of the works.

#### Green Steps Sustainability Leadership Program – Multiyear Partnership with Monash University

Supported by Potentia Energy, the Green Steps program run by Monash Sustainable Development Institute, is an opportunity for students to undertake innovative and practical sustainability training and consultancy projects for ambitious emerging leaders. During the course, students have the option to apply for a 25-hour team-based consultancy role undertaking a sustainability-related project with Potentia Energy's team. The program's objective is to equip students with the skills, tools and knowledge needed to become effective leaders and sustainability change-agents



There is opportunity to explore options for eco-tourism and renewable energy tourism, as well as ways to preserve and enhance the tourism appeal of our host communities.

## Commitment 9

**We will demonstrate responsible land stewardship over the life of the project and welcome opportunities to enhance the ecological, cultural and/or agricultural value of the land.**

**We know that the vast numbers of new solar and wind plants being built has potential to increase pressure on local land and habitats at project sites. Potentia Energy is committed to mitigating those pressures by integrating environmental stewardship into the way utility-scale energy facilities are built and run.**

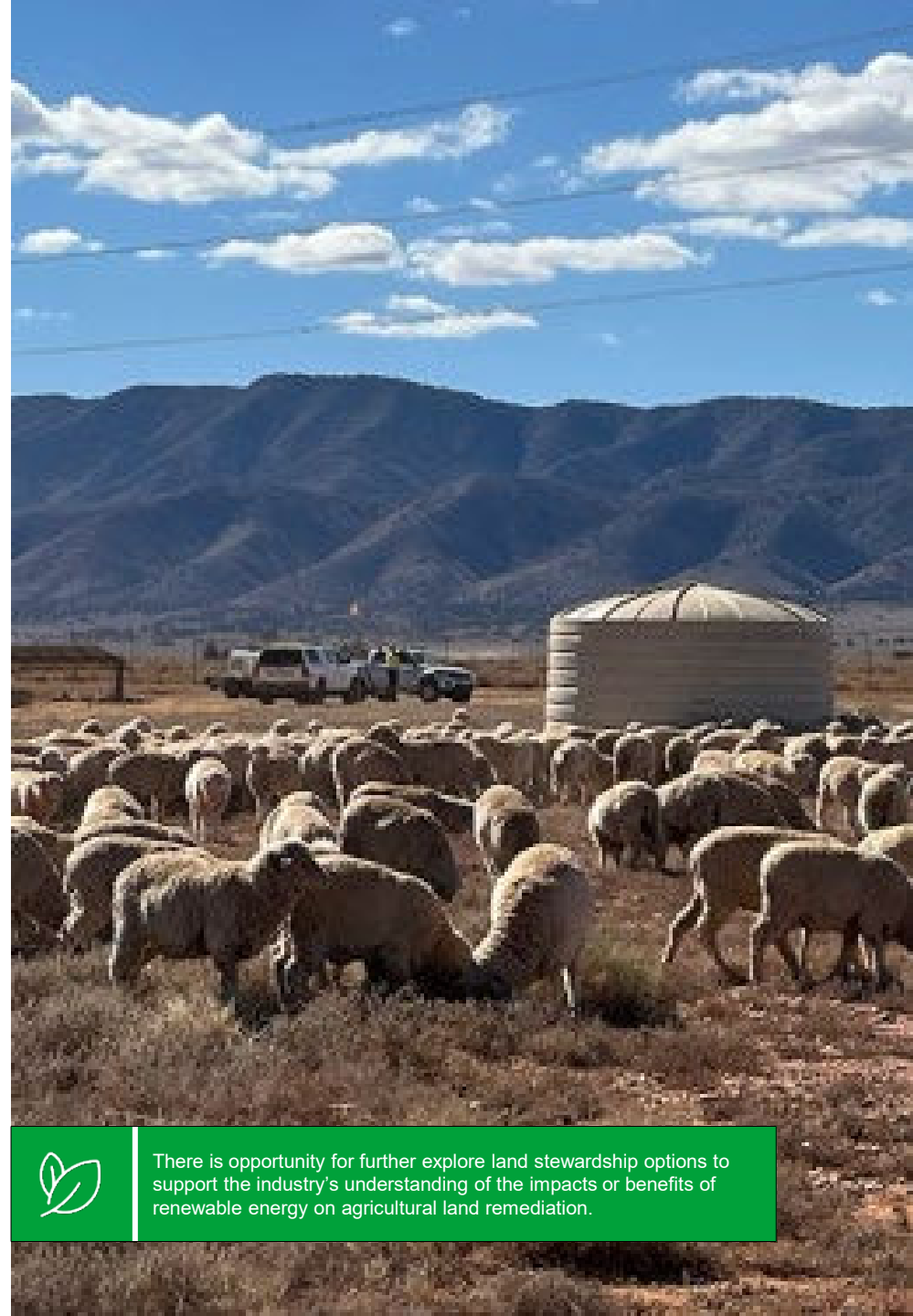
### Case Study

#### On-Country habitat preservation - Partnership with Trust For Nature \*Cohuna Solar Farm

Potentia Energy's practices and endangered native birds in the area, particularly the critically endangered Plains-Wanderer. The partnership also aims to provide opportunities for employment and land preservation activities by Traditional Owners.

#### Crop harvesting with locals - Partnership with Girgarre Development Group \*Girgarre Solar Farm

Under this partnership, Potentia Energy and the local Girgarre Development Group engaged local contractors to crop the solar farm project area over a multi-year period. Proceeds from the sale of crops were then donated to community groups in the local area.



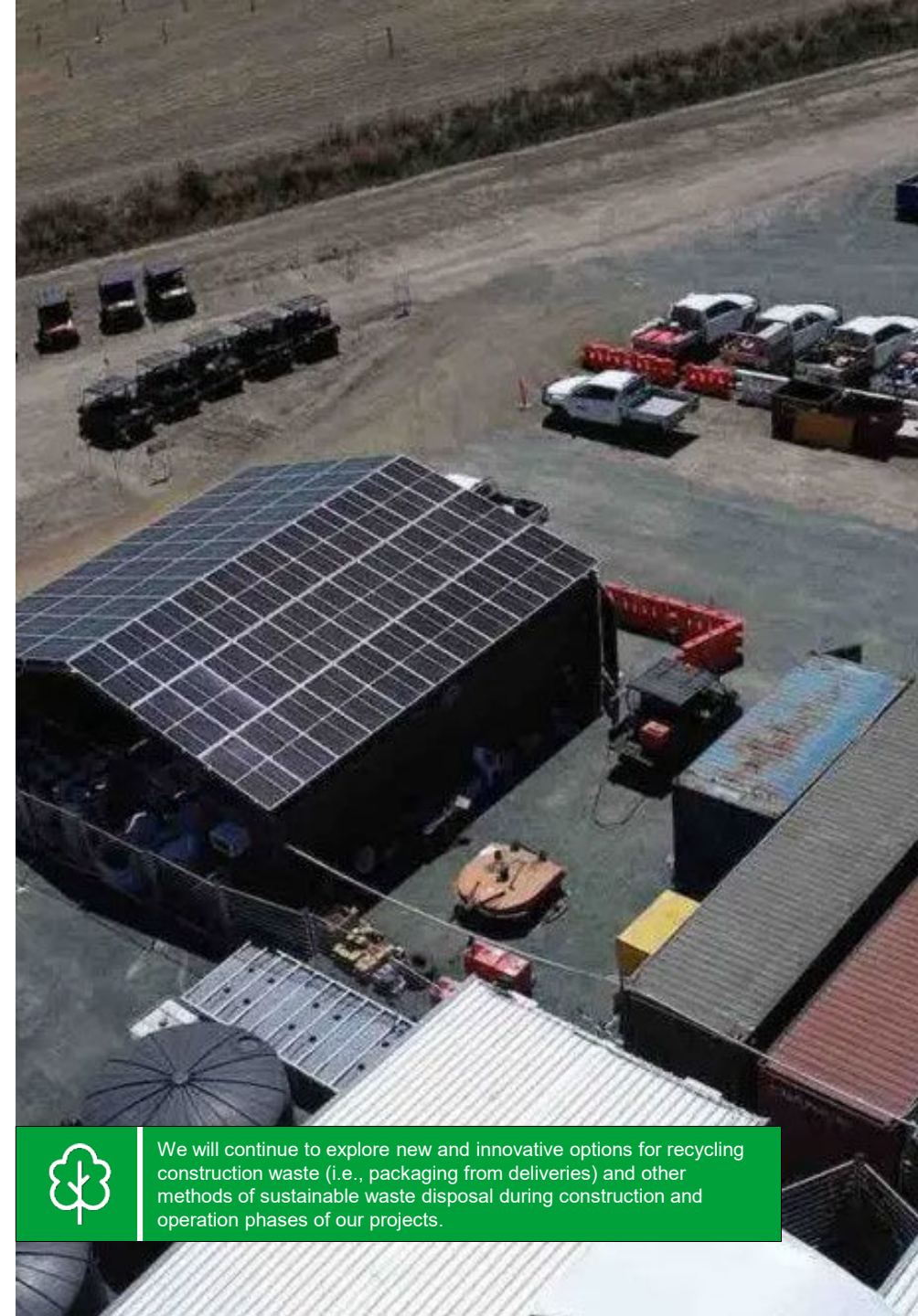
There is opportunity for further explore land stewardship options to support the industry's understanding of the impacts or benefits of renewable energy on agricultural land remediation.



## Commitment 10

**During the life of the project, we will recycle waste materials where feasible and commit to responsible decommissioning or refurbishment/repowering of the site at the end of the project's life.**

Potentia Energy are committed to responsible resource management at all project stages and disposal of equipment according to good practice. We are committed to ensuring construction and operation of the plant has a positive impact. At recommissioning or decommissioning, Potentia Energy are committed to reusing or recycling materials and structures such as foundations, modules and racking systems, piles, cables and control room structures wherever possible.



### Sustainable Construction Site model \*All projects

Potentia Energy's Sustainable Construction Site model contains a collection of best practices for minimising the impact on the environment, waste, water and people. Starting from the conception and design phase, the focus for the site is to be sustainable, maximising the potential environmental and social benefits for the construction site, and later the operational power plant. The model is based on three essential pillars: measuring, mitigating and off-setting. Performance Indicators are based on the UN's 17 Sustainable Development Goals

### Committing decommissioned solar panels to circular economy - Partnership with Elecsome \* All projects

Potentia Energy has committed to responsibly recycling solar panels across its Australian projects at their end of life. In July 2024, Potentia Energy signed a long-term agreement with Elecsome, a Melbourne-based industrial solar panel upcycling company. The partnership will advance EGPA's plans to upcycle panels across its portfolio of solar assets. Elecsome produce a pre-mix concrete product from end-of-life solar panels by upcycling glass into concrete aggregate and have been researching methods for recycling silicon for reuse in solar panels or alternative use in construction materials.



We will continue to explore new and innovative options for recycling construction waste (i.e., packaging from deliveries) and other methods of sustainable waste disposal during construction and operation phases of our projects.



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