



March 27th, 2009

Local, green power one step closer

Media Release

Planning approval has been granted by the City of Greater Bendigo for the new solar park to be built adjacent to the Bendigo Livestock Exchange in Huntly. The park forms part of the \$41 million Central Victorian Solar City project.

The facility will be capable of producing enough energy to power 150 homes. The solar park will demonstrate how photovoltaic (PV) systems can provide a local, renewable energy source.

A solar park of the same size is also being built in Ballarat. This means a total of 300 homes in the Central Victorian region will soon be able to buy local, green power.

“City of Greater Bendigo Councilor Keith Reynard said this is a very exciting project that has the potential to provide significant environmental, economic and social benefits to both the Greater Bendigo and Central Victorian region. The solar park is a first for Greater Bendigo and Council was pleased to lease the land in Huntly for the park to proceed”.

Central Victoria Solar City Project Director Michael McCartney said the solar parks are a great example of how energy can be created locally.

“Creating energy for households can be done locally, on our rooftop by installing PV panels or buying energy from the solar park. People who sign up to the project will be able to rent the solar panels in the park which is like buying local, green power. Signing up to the solar park is an ideal option for people who want to support clean, green energy yet cannot put solar panels on their roof,” said Mr McCartney.

“The next step is for building approval to be granted. Once building approval comes through we can finalize construction contracts and sign the leases. The parks will take less than six months to build once these planning steps are complete,” said Mr McCartney.

The Central Victoria Solar City project is part of the Australian Government’s \$94 million Solar Cities program. 2500 homes and businesses will be invited to participate in the project and create local energy solutions.

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Australian Government
Solar Cities



Participants will be eligible for financial incentives and Commonwealth and State Government rebates.

Homes and businesses will be able to participate in the following ways:

- **Education, audit and retro-fitting services** to help you identify changes you can make to reduce energy use and cost at home and at work
- **Demand Management trials** which are special energy tariff options (choices that allow you to pay less for your energy if you agree to use less during periods when energy network or generation capacity is constrained)
- **Photovoltaic technology installations** to help you generate your own local energy through PV panels or support energy production from a local solar park in Ballarat and Bendigo
- **Solar hot water installations**
- **Research** that will examine our energy use and play a critical role in creating Australia's future policy in renewable energy.

The \$41 million Central Victoria Solar City project is funded by the Australian Government through the Department of the Environment, Water, Heritage and the Arts, the Central Victoria Solar City Consortium and other supporting organisations.

Consortium members include Bendigo Bank, Central Victorian Greenhouse Alliance (CVGA), Origin, Powercor Australia and ZCO2e, the commercial entity set up by CVGA to manage the project. The Victorian Government, through Sustainability Victoria and the Sustainability Fund, is also a key funding contributor. 14 local councils in Central Victoria support the project.

For more information and to register your interest in the project go to:
www.centralvictoriasolarcity.com.au.

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