

## MEDIA RELEASE

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### Historic solar agreement delivers significant benefits to Bland Shire

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An historic solar power agreement is set to deliver significant long term financial savings to Bland Shire Council.

A landmark Solar Power Purchase Agreement between Bland Shire Council and the Riverina based Solar Professionals has allowed Bland Shire Council to access cheaper electricity without making a significant capital investment to purchase solar infrastructure.

A solar Power Purchase Agreement is an arrangement in which a solar service provider designs, builds, owns, operates, monitors and maintains a solar PV system and a customer agrees to purchase the system's electricity output from the solar provider for a predetermined period and price.

After an audit of Council's sites, an agreement was struck to install solar technology across 12 locations with a total registered solar capacity of 211kWh. Five solar systems are located on roofs and seven are fixed to ground mounted infrastructure at the specific Council sites including -

Kurrajong Street, West Wyalong	Swimming Pool - roof
Kurrajong Street, West Wyalong	Swimming Pool - ground mount
Copeland Street, West Wyalong	Treatment Works
2 Shire Street, West Wyalong	Council Administration Office
Boundary Street, West Wyalong	Boundary Street Pump
72 Ungarie Road, West Wyalong	HACC Centre
3 Chauvel Street, West Wyalong	Depot
Operator Street, West Wyalong	Sports Stadium
37 Ethel Street, Ungarie	Ungarie Pool
Neeld Street, West Wyalong	Treatment Works
Neeld Street, West Wyalong	Treatment Works
Condobolin Street, Ungarie	Ungarie Treatment Works

Under a Solar Power Purchase Agreement, Solar Professionals will supply Council with electricity at a tariff which is approximately 39 percent less than previously paid to energy retailers. The electricity tariff will remain fixed for the term of the contracts and will only be indexed to CPI annually. The contract terms are 10 and 15 years.

The reduced tariffs equate to fiscal savings in the first year alone of about \$14,000.

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At the end of the contract term, the solar systems become the asset of Council with no payout cost.

The establishment of a Solar Power Purchase Agreement Panel by The Department of Planning, Industry & Environment and Local Government Procurement in 2018, has been enormously beneficial for Local Government Agencies both as a means to reduce costs and increase energy efficiency and also to provide Local Government Agencies with access to pre-qualified preferred solar PV suppliers. Solar Professionals were appointed to the PPA panel and subsequently began discussions with Bland Shire Council soon after. Although Council did not utilise the Vendor Panel for this particular project, Solar Professionals were appointed as the Contractor to deliver the Bland Shire Council PPA Project due to their NSW Government Preferred solar PPA supplier status.

Installation of solar across all 12 sites will be completed this week and Council can now monitor the solar production and consumption and environmental benefits thanks to live 24/7 solar analytics monitoring.

Bland Shire was one of the first Councils in NSW to enter into a power purchase agreement for solar - making the Bland Shire a regional leader in its approach to power savings and environmental sustainability.

“With the ever increasing financial pressures facing Local Government, Council is always looking for ways to reduce expenditure without directly affecting service delivery,” Bland Shire Council General Manager, Ray Smith said.

“The Solar Power Purchase Agreement with the Solar Professionals allows Council to achieve long term savings and help the environment without having to spend a cent.”

Solar Professionals Managing Director, Andrew Meurant said Bland Shire Council’s PPA commitment will enable long term price certainty and will be an effective strategy in managing electricity price volatility and budget uncertainty.

Mr Meurant said, “We are incredibly proud to have collaborated with Bland Shire Council to deliver this ground breaking regional Council PPA solar project”.

For more information contact:

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