

Bomen Solar Farm



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Bomen Solar Farm commits \$500,000 to long term partnership with Mount Austin High School in Wagga Wagga

Spark Infrastructure's Bomen Solar Farm, in partnership with Westpac, is excited to have commenced a long-term partnership with Mount Austin High School in Wagga Wagga with grant funding of \$500,000 to support two important programs at the school over a decade.

The 'Transition Program' and 'Girls @ the Centre' program, both run from the school, support students' engagement with school, not only encouraging them to remain in and complete high school, but also equipping them with the skills they need to successfully embark on their chosen endeavours after finishing school. This year, all 44 final year students (boys and girls) are involved in the Transition Program and 60 girls from years 7-12 are participating in the 'Girls @ the Centre' program. Supporting these programs forms a key part of the broader \$1 million community funding program which Bomen Solar Farm has committed to over the next ten years (in partnership with Westpac).

Located near Wagga Wagga in NSW, Bomen Solar Farm is committed to contributing positively to the community. Improving the social, educational and employment outcomes for students at Mount Austin High School was identified as a way in which the Bomen Solar Farm could bring significant benefit to the local community.

The 'Girls @ the Centre' program, which will receive a \$25,000 annual donation from Bomen Solar Farm Community Fund each year for 10 years, supports female students to stay in school and complete Year 12, and provides opportunities to enhance students' career options. The program was developed four years ago by Mount Austin High School, in partnership with The Smith Family. It has delivered real benefits within the student community, engaging girls with coaches and providing a supportive environment for girls to address barriers to school attendance and to engage with their studies.

The 'Transition Program' will benefit from a \$25,000 annual donation from Bomen Solar Farm each year for 10 years. This Program was conceptualised by Mount Austin High School, which identified that the best way to assist students graduating was not by supporting one or two students to go to university, but rather by supporting as many students as possible to transition from school into the wider society.

The School found that for many of its students, making the transition into tertiary education or employment is not straightforward, and students benefitted from ongoing support.

The donation by Bomen Solar Farm, which is matched by funds from the School, allows important resources to be devoted to helping students to achieve success in their post-school lives.

Principal of Mount Austin High School, Michelle Waugh, explained:

“Graduating Year 12 is an accomplishment and is significant for students and families. It is the culmination of years of schooling. At MAHS we want to ensure that each student has a known destination and is supported to achieve beyond the school.

The Transition Program will ensure that each student has a transition plan for after school and is supported to reach their goals beyond school. With this funding and support, MAHS will be able to undertake intensive transition planning based on individual need - for some students this may be guidance in the development of necessary documents for enrolment in University, for others it may be employment certificates and skills such as White Card training, for others still it may be support for licenses. Our first cohort to be part of the program are our HSC students 2021.”

Mayor of the City of Wagga Wagga, Councillor Greg Conkey OAM congratulated everyone involved in creating the two programs which support the education and transition into post-school life for young students.

“Navigating the period between leaving high school and entering wider society can be challenging, and Mount Austin High School’s Transition Program is a great way to help students stay connected and feel supported on that journey,” Cr Conkey said.

“Likewise, the ‘Girls @ the Centre’ program is a crucial step towards helping our community’s young women access the education they deserve and support them in preparing for successful and rewarding careers.”

Independent Member for Wagga Wagga, Dr Joe McGirr, has welcomed the announcement of the long-term partnership with Mount Austin High School.

“These two programs are providing significant opportunities for Mount Austin High School students and I thank Spark Infrastructure’s Bomen Solar Farm for making the commitment to being involved in these important programs,” Dr McGirr said.

Anthony Marriner, Head of Renewables at Spark Infrastructure said:

“We are delighted to have finalised this donation to two very important programs at Mount Austin High School. We have one of the largest solar farm community funds in Australia and are pleased to be giving back to the local community.”

About:

Bomen Solar Farm is a 120MW_{DC} solar farm project. The Farm is located on approximately 250 hectares of land zoned for industrial use, 10kms northeast of Wagga Wagga. Completed in mid-2020, the Farm generates enough electricity annually to power the equivalent of 36,000 homes. Bomen Solar Farm provides power to Westpac and Flow Power under power purchase agreements. Westpac’s 10-year power purchase agreement enables it to achieve 45% of its commitment to transition to 100% renewables by 2025 and forms the basis for the partnership between Bomen Solar Farm and Westpac to deliver the community fund. The Bomen Solar Farm is owned by Spark Infrastructure, operated by Beon and the asset is managed by RES Australia.

Contact us:

For more information, or to provide any feedback, please visit the project website www.bomensolarfarm.com.au | email info@bomensolarfarm.com.au