

# Ross River Solar Farm

# COMMUNITY UPDATE

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Above: Artist impression of the completed solar farm

Construction of the Ross River Solar Farm is well underway. When complete, Ross River Solar Farm will be one of Australia's largest solar energy facilities and will use the region's abundant sunlight to generate a new supply of clean, renewable energy.

## What's happening onsite?

Construction workers have established the site office, workshop facilities, a car park, levelled pads for the substation and a new site entrance. A new perimeter fence has been installed around the whole site.

Installation of the steel piling supports for the solar panels is also taking place. Piles are being fixed into the ground using

single-operator drill and pile rigs. In all, over 62,000 piles will be installed on the site to hold over 413,000 solar panels.

At present, around 90 workers are onsite and nearly \$15 million of work has been contracted out to local subcontractors and suppliers. To date over 50 QLD businesses have received work through this project. Very soon, we expect up to 250 workers will be employed onsite.



## Solar Panels arrive onsite

The first of Ross River Solar Farm's 413,000 solar panels have arrived, having come via the Port of Townsville.

Manufactured by JA Solar, the high-performance solar panels look very similar to those installed on rooftops, only larger. Careful planning will go into the delivery of panels to the site to reduce impacts on traffic, especially along Riverway Drive.

An SMS Alert service is available for residents wanting to know more about potential road and construction impacts. To subscribe, text your full name and number to **0475 802 063**.



## Transformer delivery

A new 105 tonne transformer has been successfully delivered by an oversize truck to the Ross River Solar Farm site.

The high voltage transformer will 'step up' the voltage of the electricity generated by the solar farm to 132 kV for use in the local electricity transmission system.

Following its delivery, the transformer will be installed in the solar farm substation.



## Environment

Dust and water use are specific issues we are proactively managing as construction work continues. Water spraying has increased in response to dust from site clearing using bore water sourced from site.

A wildlife spotter is working alongside construction crews to ensure clearing and construction works does not impact any animals, birds or other species that may be present on the site. Should wildlife enter your property or if you see animals on the road, please call NQ Wildlife Emergency Services on **0414 717 374** for assistance.

Piling works are generating noise that may be audible from nearby properties. Noise monitors are being used to ensure any construction noise from the site does not exceed reasonable levels.

We are very grateful to all residents for their patience as construction works continue to progress.

### Vegetation buffer

Screening of the site is planned to reduce visual impacts of the solar farm for nearby residents. A Landscape Plan has been developed using local knowledge of what plant species will do best given Townsville's climate and weather conditions.

A 3-metre-wide vegetation screen will be planted inside the perimeter fence, along the northern and southern boundaries and partially along the west and east side of the site. By choosing vegetation that is local to the area, we expect trees and shrubs will grow reasonably quickly – helping to screen the solar farm from view. A maintenance program will also be employed, including a drip-fed irrigation system from the bore water on site to maintain plants until they are fully established.

### Ground covers

A few residents have asked what will be planted on the site when the solar farm construction is complete. Native grasses are preferred given their ability to reduce dust and sediment runoff from the site. Like the vegetation buffers, maintenance works will take place to reduce weeds and support groundcovers to establish in the first few years of operations.

## COMMUNITY FUND OPENS

As a local business with plans for long-term operation in the Townsville region, Ross River Solar Farm is keen to support the local community in which it operates. Ross River Solar Farm has established a \$20,000 Community Fund to provide sponsorship funding to eligible local groups. Applications are now open and can be made at any time. Local groups or organisations that are looking to make a positive and sustainable difference in their community are invited to apply.

More information, including a copy of the Ross River Solar Farm Community Fund Application Form, can be found at [www.rossriversolarfarm.com.au](http://www.rossriversolarfarm.com.au)

## CONTACT US

To ask a question or get in contact with the Ross River Solar Farm team, please call **0475 802 063** or visit [www.rossriversolarfarm.com.au](http://www.rossriversolarfarm.com.au)

