

# Future: We're finding our place in the sun

## Creating jobs while harnessing Queensland's excellent solar resource

A COMMUNITY drop-in afternoon to inform locals about the new Solar Park development for Emerald will be held at the end of this month, providing details about the \$100,000,000 development which is expected to generate enough energy for 35,000 homes.

Global energy company RES received planning consent for the development earlier this year, and are now in the pre-construction phase of the project, which will consist of 250,000 solar panels set on 160 hectares

**“One of the best things about renewable energy is that the fuel is free...”**

— Rebecca Meek

and set to be one of the largest renewable energy sources in northern Australia.

RES Australia Project Development Manager Rebecca Meek said yesterday that the 70-megawatt solar farm would harness Queensland's excellent solar resource, create local jobs, and put central Queensland on the map.

She said Emerald had great solar resource, good proximity to electrical infrastructure and a workforce to facilitate this type of development.

“One of the best things about renewable energy is

that the fuel is free, which means projects like Emerald Solar Park can help reduce the exposure of Queensland to high gas prices.”

Ms Meek said the project would have many benefits for the community in terms of local investment and employment.

“RES are committed to using local resources where possible and, with a workforce in the region of 150 people during the construction, it is hoped many of these will come from people who are in the region.”

A spokesperson for RES Australia - which is a subsidiary of UK-based group of companies known as Renewable Energy Systems - said this week the company had partnered with RCR (RCR O'Donnell Griffin) to build the solar park. Construction, due to take 12 months, will begin in the last few months of this year.

This month's information session is to ensure residents living close to the sites are aware of the plans and residents can learn more about the project.

Key consultants will provide information about the solar park, to be built on the west side of Emerald at Munro Rd, and answer questions.

“As our plans progress, we will be keeping the local community up to date with newsletters, adverts in the local newspaper and project website. We want to provide the public with an understanding of the project



FREE ENERGY: Rebecca Meek, Project Manager for RES for Emerald Solar Park.

PHOTO: CONTRIBUTED

scope and time lines. We will answer their questions and also want to inform people where they can go to register their interest in one of the many jobs that come available with the construction of this project.”

The RES spokesperson said Emerald had been

chosen because of its close proximity to available grid capacity, availability of flat, cleared land for highly competitive construction costs, it was not within a flood area, and there were no ecological or heritage constraints.

Last month Telstra said it

had entered into a long-term power purchase agreement with RES, which means they will secure long-term supply and price security for the renewable energy source while providing RES with the security of the offtake for the plant.

Other recent RES projects

include Taralga Wind Farm in NSW, Ararat Wind Farm in Victoria and Murra Warra Wind Farm in Victoria.

■ The drop-in community information session will be held on Monday, August 28, from 3-7pm at Emerald Town Hall.

## EMERALD SOLAR PARK Set to power 35,000 homes

We are proud to announce that construction of the 70MW Solar Park is soon to commence leading to new jobs and opportunities in the local area. For enquiries please call 1800 118 737 to find out more about the project and RES or visit [www.emerald-solar.com.au](http://www.emerald-solar.com.au)

