

Kangaroo Island Council

MEDIA RELEASE

10 February 2014

Clean and Green Island Gets a \$500,000 Solar Boost

Kangaroo Island's reputation as a clean and green island has received a solar boost with the opening of the \$500,000 Visible Solar Project.

The project by the Kangaroo Island Council and Regional Development Australia was funded by the State Government's RenewablesSA program, with Kangaroo Island chosen to be the "visible demonstration of advanced solar power technology".

The state-of-the-art, dual-axis solar array system installed at the Kangaroo Island Airport tracks the sun, increasing the energy output by 30 per cent compared to a fixed system, and generates 100,000kWh a year, enough to power 13 homes.

Its output powers 80 per cent of the needs of the Kangaroo Island Airport, saving the council at least \$24,000 a year in power bills.

In an added bonus - and within the budget - the council has also been able to install a 14kW solar system at the Kingscote Town Hall to offset its power bill there, install infrastructure to recharge electric cars (at the airport, Kingscote, Penneshaw, Parndana and American River) and leased three Nissan Leaf electric vehicles, two of which can be hired by the public.

Kangaroo Island Council chief executive officer Andrew Boardman said Kangaroo Island had an opportunity to build on the project.

"We are already receiving significant domestic and overseas interest in the potential expansion of green energy infrastructure on Kangaroo Island," he said.

The project was officially opened on Monday by the chief executive of the Manufacturing, Innovation, Trade, Resources and Energy Department Geoff Knight, Kangaroo Island Mayor Jayne Bates and Regional Development Australia (Adelaide Hills, Fleurieu and Kangaroo Island) chairperson Ann Ferguson.

Mayor Bates said the project had major environmental benefits but was also delivering a financial dividend to the community.

"It's a terrific project and part of this island's quest to generate more of its own electricity, which has been one of the key barriers to encouraging growth and development here," Mayor Bates said.

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Enquiries

Andrew Boardman, Chief Executive Officer, Kangaroo Island Council
Phone 08 8553 4506
Post PO Box 121, Kingscote SA 5223
Fax 08 8553 2885
Email kicouncil@kicouncil.sa.gov.au

Please find photos, including photos taken at the launch, at our website www.kangarooisland.sa.gov.au/gallery

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Further Information

On Monday 10 February 2014, Geoff Knight, Chief Executive Officer of the Department for Manufacturing, Innovation, Trade, Resources and Energy, along with Mayor Jayne Bates, Kangaroo Island and Mayor Ann Ferguson, Chairperson of Regional Development Australia (Adelaide Hills, Fleurieu and Kangaroo Island), officially opened the \$500,000 *Kangaroo Island Visible Solar Project*.

What is the 'Kangaroo Island Visible Solar Project'?

The Visible Solar Project, funded by RenewablesSA, sought to provide a 'visible demonstration of advanced solar power generation technology' on Kangaroo Island.

The main part of the project involved the installation of a 4 dual-axis Solar Photovoltaic (PV) tracking system at the Kangaroo Island Airport.



The solar array tracks the sun throughout the day, increasing annual output by more than 30% compared to a fixed north facing solar PV system. This system produces more than 100,000kWh each year – enough to power more than 13 average homes.

The output of the system off-sets the electrical consumption of the Kangaroo Island Airport, and also supports the charging of emission-free Electric Vehicles on Kangaroo Island.

Within the project budget, the Kangaroo Island Council was able to implement further value-added Renewable Energy initiatives that were not contemplated by the project at its conception stage. These additional components included a 14kW Solar PV system at the Council Office in Kingscote (which also off-sets Council's electrical consumption and the charging of Electric Vehicles), and also the procurement of 3 emission-free Electric Vehicles (Nissan Leafs) backed up by 6 charging stations across Kangaroo Island.



Two (2) of these Electric Vehicles are able to be hired by the general public at the Kangaroo Island Airport (contact 0427 887 575) and the third car is used by Council for work in the community. The Electric Vehicles are not only fuelled by green energy, but are also 'sign wrapped' to proudly promote and educate the public and tourists to Kangaroo Island about the benefits of Renewable Energy.



Andrew Boardman, Chief Executive Officer of the Kangaroo Island Council, especially acknowledged the contribution by Nissan Australia towards the project and the quality of the three Nissan Leaf electric vehicles.

Any Electric Vehicles can be charged at charge points located at the Airport, Kingscote (Council car park), Penneshaw (adjacent Community Business Centre), American River (camping ground adjacent to entry to boat ramp) and Parndana (adjacent Parndana Town Hall).

Environmental, financial and community benefit

The Visible Solar Project delivers a wide range of environmental, financial and community benefits, including:-

- Use of Renewable Energy to off-set energy consumption at the Kangaroo Island Airport and Council Office
- Use of Renewable Energy to fuel emission-free Electric Vehicles
- Environmental benefits through reducing reliance on use of fossil-fuels, and exporting excess solar energy to the grid
- Financial savings through use of Renewable Energy – both in the energy costs associated with the Airport and the Council Office and also in substituting fuel costs for vehicles with Renewable Energy

- A small revenue stream for Council through the leasing of Electric Vehicles and the sale of 'fuel' at the various Electric Vehicle charging stations
- Longer term community promotion, education and awareness – leading to potential future community based investment into Renewable Energy
- Opportunity for value-added business investment into Renewable Energy on Kangaroo Island through potential expansion of the existing infrastructure or allied renewable energy initiatives.

In relation to the above benefits, Mayor Jayne Bates proudly announced, *'Council is thrilled to note that apart from the significant environmental benefits the project is delivering, there has been a major financial benefit to the community through the use of Renewable Energy - where the Solar Trackers at the Airport have already shown an **80 percent reduction** in energy costs (inclusive of use of green energy and exporting surplus power to the grid), equating to around \$24,000 per annum in savings at the Airport alone'*.

The Kangaroo Island Council acknowledged how the infrastructure was installed through the use of SA Government grant funds, and was not reliant on Council's financial resources – it also noted what a significant achievement this was for a rural Council with a low rate income base.

As outlined earlier, the project is being actively promoted by Council and its partners – clearly and visibly demonstrating the benefits derived from using Renewable Energy to the Kangaroo Island community and visitors from around the world.

Potential value added opportunities

The project is already gaining considerable interest from national and international parties.

Apart from the Kangaroo Island Council achieving significant and long lasting environmental and financial results from the project, the project is already being a catalyst (within the first few months of commissioning the infrastructure) for interest in potential value added investment into the Renewable Energy and business sector on the Island.

Andrew Boardman stated that, *'We are confident that Kangaroo Island can build on this significant opportunity provided by the SA Government – we are already receiving significant domestic and overseas interest in the potential expansion of green energy infrastructure on Kangaroo Island'*.

Who funded the project?

Regional Development Australia (Adelaide Hills, Fleurieu and Kangaroo Island), in association with the Kangaroo Island Council, was successful in sourcing a \$500,000 RenewablesSA grant from the Premier of South Australia (Department for Manufacturing, Innovation, Trade, Resources and Energy).

Acknowledgements

Mayor Jayne Bates acknowledged a number of important contributors to the project:-

- The SA Government (RenewablesSA, Department for Manufacturing, Innovation, Trade, Resources and Energy) – for funding the project
- Regional Development Australia (Adelaide Hills, Fleurieu and Kangaroo Island) – for auspicing the project
- Ingenero Pty Ltd – for installing the solar infrastructure and overseeing the project
- Nissan Australia – for provision of the 3 Nissan Leaf electric vehicles
- ChargePoint Pty Ltd – for the 6 electric vehicle charging stations
- KI Transfers – project partners for hiring of the electric vehicles
- Kangaroo Island Council, Elected Members and staff for support and day to day management of the project