

GLENROWAN

solar farm

Community values survey: What we heard

AUGUST 2023



What we heard

August 2023

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1. Introduction

Glenrowan Solar Farm is committed to delivering social and economic benefits for the community in which it operates and seeks to develop constructive partnerships with local stakeholders to share project benefits in ways that have meaning and impact.

In March 2023, the Glenrowan Solar Farm Community Reference Group (CRG) was formed to act as a two-way link between the project team and the community.

Comprising 12 volunteers from the local community, the CRG has met twice in May and July 2023. The focus of these initial meetings has been development of a community-driven benefit sharing program.

To help inform the benefit sharing program, a community survey was launched in June-July 2023, with input on content provided by CRG members.

A copy of the survey is provided at Appendix 1.

The survey was made publicly available by a range of communication channels, including an email to the project's subscriber database, via information on the Glenrowan Solar Farm website, in a story published by the Wangaratta Chronicle on 12 July and an interview with local ABC radio on 13 July 2023.

A copy of the Wangaratta Chronicle online article announcing the survey is provided at Appendix 2.

As a result of this wide-spread communication, 45 responses were received to the survey, providing valuable community insights and suggestions.

Thank you to those who completed the survey. Your feedback was presented to the CRG at their second meeting on 26 July and has helped to shape the Glenrowan Solar Farm Community Benefit Sharing Program (the program).

This report provides a summary of what we heard.

2. Summary of responses

2.1. Who responded

Question 1 sought the respondent's reason for taking an interest in the project. Respondents could select more than one of the options or provide their own reason.

As shown in Table 1, of the 45 respondents, the highest representation was from people whose interest in the project includes:

- A **strong interest in renewable energy** projects (24 people)
- Those who **live in the Rural City of Wangaratta** (22 people)
- And those who are **members of community groups in the Rural City of Wangaratta** (21 people).

People nominating these three categories for their community group's interest in the project represented more than half of all respondents.

People who **live near** and **own land/ property near Glenrowan Solar Farm** (12), who **visit the area for recreation** and **for work** (2), who **represent community energy** (2 – see 'other'), or have an **interest in the local environment** (2 – see 'other') are also interested in the project.

TABLE 1 WHO RESPONDED

Options	No. of respondents	% of responses
I live near Glenrowan Solar Farm	11	24.4%
I live in the Rural City of Wangaratta	22	48.9%
I am a member of a community group in the Rural City of Wangaratta	21	46.6%
I own land/property near the Glenrowan Solar Farm but do not live there	1	2.2%
I don't live near the Glenrowan Solar Farm but visit the area for recreation	1	2.2%
I don't live near the Glenrowan Solar Farm but visit the area for work	1	2.2%
I have a strong interest in renewable energy projects	24	53.3%
Other	4	8.89%

2.2. What we heard

2.2.1. What's important to you

Question 2 asked for feedback on a range of possible options for benefit sharing initiatives. Respondents could nominate their support on a sliding scale, with a weighted average provided for results as shown in Table 2.

TABLE 2 FEEDBACK ON POSSIBLE BENEFIT SHARING OPTIONS

Options for benefit sharing initiatives	Strongly support	Moderately support	Somewhat support	Neither support nor oppose	Do not support	Total responses	Weighted average
Community grants program (funding to be allocated to community projects)	66.67% 30	17.78% 8	8.89% 4	6.67% 3	0% 0	45	4.44
First Nations benefit sharing program (through opportunities identified with Traditional Owners of the Yorta Yorta Nation Aboriginal Corporation. Engagement with the Bangerang Aboriginal Corporation may also inform this option)	55.56% 25	17.78% 8	13.33% 6	6.67% 3	6.67% 3	45	4.09
Local and social procurement policies (procurement, jobs and training)	41.86% 18	27.91% 12	16.28% 7	11.63% 5	2.33% 1	43	3.95
Education program for local schools	37.78% 17	31.11% 14	17.78% 8	6.67% 3	6.67% 3	45	3.87
Initiatives to attract tourism (e.g. viewing platforms, events, open days)	18.60% 8	18.6% 8	30.32% 13	13.95% 6	18.6% 8	43	3.05
Investment in community	48.84% 21	46.51% 20	2.33% 1	0% 0	2.33% 1	44	4.40

Options for benefit sharing initiatives	Strongly support	Moderately support	Somewhat support	Neither support nor oppose	Do not support	Total responses	Weighted average
infrastructure and services							
Sponsorship of installation of solar panels at local community facilities	77.27% 34	18.18% 8	2.27% 1	0.00% 0	2.27% 1	44	4.68
Higher education scholarships (focusing on skills relevant to the local renewable energy sector)	40% 18	35.56% 16	8.89% 4	6.67% 3	8.89% 4	45	3.91

The top four options with the strongest support and highest weighted average are shown below. Note that the percentages have been rounded up for ease:

1. Sponsorship of installation of solar panels at local community facilities – 77% / 4.68
2. Community grants program (funding to be allocated to community projects) – 67% / 4.44
3. First Nations benefit sharing program – 56% / 4.09
4. Investment in community infrastructure and services – 49% / 4.40

Of note was that initiatives to attract tourism were the least favoured of the options (19% / 3.05), with the lowest weighted average. A summary is provided in Table 3.

TABLE 3 WHAT'S IMPORTANT TO YOU

Options	Strongly support	Weighted average
Community grants program (funding to be allocated to community projects)	67%	4.44
First Nations benefit sharing program (through opportunities identified with Traditional Owners of the Yorta Yorta Nation Aboriginal Corporation. Engagement with the Bangerang Aboriginal Corporation may also inform this option)	56%	4.09
Local and social procurement policies (procurement, jobs and training)	42%	3.95
Education program for local schools	38%	3.87
Initiatives to attract tourism (e.g. viewing platforms, events, open days)	19%	3.05
Investment in community infrastructure and services	49%	4.40
Sponsorship of installation of solar panels at local community facilities	77%	4.68

Options	Strongly support	Weighted average
Higher education scholarships (focusing on skills relevant to the local renewable energy sector)	40%	3.91

2.2.2. Local priorities

Question 5 asked for thoughts on five local values and priorities to ensure that this was reflected in the program.

Protection of the local environment was the most important response with half (50%) of all respondents selecting this as their number one theme and priority for future community benefits.

According to the responses we received, in order of theme/priority respondents nominated:

1. Protection of the local environment (50%)
2. Climate change mitigation / natural disaster preparation (32%)
3. Investment in education, local jobs and infrastructure (7%)
4. Community spirit / sense of community (9%)
5. Health and wellbeing (2.5%).

2.3. Other feedback

Three open questions were provided to gather other thoughts and ideas for the program:

- **Questions 3** asked for other suggested options for inclusion in the program
- **Question 4** asked for any community events or initiatives that could benefit the community
- **Question 6** asked for other suggestions for community values and priorities.

More than **25 ideas** and thoughts were received in response to these questions for inclusion in our program, all with a common theme of the **need for collaboration**.

These ideas are summarised into the following key themes/categories:

COMMUNITY AND SOCIAL INFRASTRUCTURE

ENVIRONMENTAL OPPORTUNITIES

EDUCATION AND YOUTH INITIATIVES

FIRST NATIONS BENEFIT SHARING

2.2.3. Community and social infrastructure

We received suggestions and requests for funding of renewable energy initiatives for communities, subsidised access to solar panels / batteries and energy efficient equipment.

<p><i>“Support households and community groups who have invested in solar to now instal batteries to value add to their investment.”</i></p> <p>Survey response</p>	<p><i>“Part ownership in a community battery that feeds some of the profits back to the community.”</i></p> <p>Survey response.</p>
<p><i>“Upgrading of sporting ground lighting such as LED lighting.”</i></p> <p>Survey response</p>	<p><i>“I would like to see more research and development to enable sustainable forms of energy to be made to households and local commercial enterprises, e.g long lasting, reliable affordable batteries, economical accessible electric vehicle, support to locally based innovative enterprises that focus on commercial recycling and value adding to emerging forms of sustainable energy.”</i></p> <p>Survey response</p>

2.2.4. Environmental opportunities

Consistent with the top priority for benefit sharing, we received several suggestions for initiatives that would support the environment including native revegetation and native species as well as education regarding renewable energy and sustainability.

“Environmental repair and enhancement activities should have a place here.” Survey response\

2.2.5. Education and youth initiatives

Training and education related to renewable energy and sustainability; and initiatives tailored toward local youth were also mentioned in the feedback indicating the need for ongoing education in the renewables sector. Creating spaces for recreational opportunities for teenagers was also mentioned.

<p><i>“Training for local trades in selection and installation of home solar, battery, heat pump and other sustainable tech.”</i></p> <p>Survey response</p>	<p><i>“Creating spaces for recreational opportunities for teenagers.”</i></p> <p><i>“Sponsorship of student careers events.”</i></p> <p>Survey responses</p>
<p><i>“Education and community information to increase understanding benefits to current and future generations and how local communities can be innovative and commercially benefit from planning for more sustainable lifestyles for both humans</i></p>	<p><i>“Education about sustainable, energy efficient design for all new buildings, both private and commercial.”</i></p> <p>Survey response</p>

*and other creatures on this planet that we
need to care for.”*

Survey response

2.2.6. First Nations Benefit sharing

There were also several suggestions in support of First Nations people benefit sharing initiatives including contributing to the Winton Wetlands First Nations installation, and appropriate cultural activities to enhance high value native vegetation areas.

3. Next steps

Feedback has been shared with the CRG to inform the next stages of the Glenrowan Solar Farm Community Benefit Sharing Program.

This includes inviting the community to apply for Round 1 (2023) funding from August – October 2023, with evaluation and assessment in November-December 2023.

Appendix 1: Community survey

Glenrowan Solar Farm Community Values and Benefit Sharing Survey

Thank you for taking the time to complete this 5-minute survey.

Your feedback matters to our team at the Glenrowan Solar Farm. Your input will help us better understand community values and priorities, which will further inform our Community Benefit Sharing Program so that it meets the interests and needs of the local community.

To learn more about the Glenrowan Solar Farm, please visit [our website](#).

This survey will close at **11:59pm on 19 August 2023**.
Please take the time to share your thoughts.

* 1. What is the reason for your or your community group's interest in the project? Please select up to two answers.

- ☐ I live near Glenrowan Solar Farm
- ☐ I live in the Rural City of Wangaratta
- ☐ I am a member of a community group in the Rural City of Wangaratta
- ☐ I own land/property near Glenrowan Solar Farm but do not live there
- ☐ I don't live near the Glenrowan Solar Farm but visit the area for recreation
- ☐ I don't live near the Glenrowan Solar Farm but visit the area for work
- ☐ I have a strong interest in renewable energy projects
- ☐ Other (please specify)

* 2. We are developing our Community Benefit Sharing Program to deliver benefits to the local community.
Please provide feedback on the possible options below by indicating your or your community group's level of support for each option.

	Strongly support	Moderately support	Somewhat support	Neither support nor oppose	Do not support
Community grants program (funding to be allocated to community projects)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
First Nations benefit sharing program (through opportunities identified with Traditional Owners of the Yorta Yorta Nation Aboriginal Corporation. Engagement with the Bangerang Aboriginal Corporation may also inform this option)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Local and social procurement policies (procurement, jobs and training)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Education program for local schools	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Initiatives to attract tourism (e.g. viewing platforms, events, open days)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Investment in community infrastructure and services	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Sponsorship of installation of solar panels at local community facilities	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Higher education scholarships (focusing on skills relevant to the local renewable energy sector)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

3. We are also interested in your or your community group's thoughts and ideas on other options for inclusion in our Community Benefit Sharing Program.

If you have any suggestions you would like to share, please describe below.

4. Are there any community events or initiatives that could benefit the community in your area?

5. We would like our Community Benefit Sharing Program to reflect the values and priorities of the local community.

Below are some possible themes for future community benefits.

Please rate them in order of importance to you or your community group.

<input type="checkbox"/> Protection of the local environment	<input type="button" value="↑"/> <input type="button" value="↓"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Community spirit / sense of community	<input type="button" value="↑"/> <input type="button" value="↓"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Investment in education, local jobs, and infrastructure	<input type="button" value="↑"/> <input type="button" value="↓"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Health and wellbeing	<input type="button" value="↑"/> <input type="button" value="↓"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Climate change mitigation / natural disaster preparation	<input type="button" value="↑"/> <input type="button" value="↓"/>

6. If you have other suggestions for community values and priorities, please let us know below.

* 7. Would you like to receive project updates on the Glenrowan Solar Farm?

☐ Yes


☐ No

8. If you wish to stay updated, please provide your contact details below.
If you prefer to remain anonymous please leave blank.

First name	<input type="text"/>
Last name	<input type="text"/>
Community group (if applicable)	<input type="text"/>
Address	<input type="text"/>
City/Town	<input type="text"/>
State/Province	<input type="text"/>
ZIP/Postal Code	<input type="text"/>
Email Address	<input type="text"/>
Phone Number	<input type="text"/>

Thank you for sharing your feedback!

Done

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Appendix 2: Local media

Wednesday, 12 July 2023

15° Wangaratta >
Cloudy

WANGARATTA
Chronicle

LOG OFF MY ACCOUNT

COMMUNITY

Glenrowan Solar Farm survey

JUL 12 2023 > UPDATED 6 HOURS AGO

[Chloe Jaenicke](#)

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COMMUNITY INPUT: The Glenrowan Solar Farm is seeking locals' opinions on its Community Benefit Sharing Program through a survey.

GLENROWAN Solar Farm is seeking public input on ways it can help deliver social and economic benefits to the local community.

The solar farm, which is currently being constructed, is currently seeking the views of the community to help inform its Community Benefit Sharing Program.

As a part of the Community Benefit Sharing Program, there is a Community Reference Group that formed in March of this year.

Their aim is to act as a two-way link between the project and community through representing the opinions of locals, provide opportunities for individuals and groups affected by the project to be able to participate in developing the benefit sharing scheme, and to offer local perspectives on the project and communicate the projects benefits with the community.

The community survey aims to improve all these aspects while gaining perspective from the community on their current proposed options and allowing them to give suggestions on future initiatives.