

# Media Release

**The Hon Lily D'Ambrosio MP**

Minister for Energy

Minister for the Environment and Climate Action

Minister for Solar Homes



Wednesday, 19 October 2022

## NEWSTEAD ON ITS WAY TO CLEAN ENERGY

The Andrews Labor Government is supporting community-owned renewable energy projects, driving down energy bills and reducing emissions to combat climate change.

Minister for Energy Lily D'Ambrosio attended the start of construction of a solar-battery project to power Newstead – a town 15 minutes away from Castlemaine – with 100 per cent renewable energy, and announcing funding for 15 new projects across the state.

Supported by a \$1.1 million grant from the Labor Government, the community-led Renewable Newstead Energy Project is a 3-megawatt (MW) solar farm and 5-megawatt-hour (MWh) battery system that will generate enough electricity to transition Newstead to 100 per cent renewable energy.

The community group Newstead 2021 Inc has spearheaded the project, made possible through unprecedented collaboration with Powercor and retailer Flow Power.

With construction set to be complete by July 2023, a retail offer will be made available for Newstead residents through Flow Power, offering power bill reductions of up to 30 per cent. Flow Power will reinvest a portion of profits back into the community for further renewable energy projects.

The Newstead volunteer group overcame significant challenges including the COVID-19 pandemic, grid constraints, market changes, weather events, and international supply chain issues to break ground on the project.

The Labor Government has committed a further \$1.15 million to Victorian renewable energy and energy efficiency projects through the latest round of the New Energy Jobs Fund (NEJF). The funding will support 15 new projects, boosting energy security, attracting private investment and creating jobs.

A total of \$20 million has been provided through the NEJF, which was designed to support community-based projects that create long-term sustainable jobs, increase the uptake of renewable energy, slash greenhouse gas emissions and drive innovation in emerging energy technologies.

For more, visit: <https://www.energy.vic.gov.au/grants/new-energy-jobs-fund>.

### Quotes attributable to Minister for Energy Lily D'Ambrosio

*"Newstead is leading the way – driving down their energy bills by up to 30 per cent and helping Victoria hit our target to reduce emissions by 50 per cent by 2030."*

*"This Fund is empowering communities and local businesses to take part in Victoria's clean energy transition while creating jobs, slashing emissions and sharing economic benefits locally."*

### Quote attributable to Member for Bendigo West Maree Edwards

*"Congratulations to the Newstead community who have led this incredible project and will soon see their town running on 100 per cent renewable energy."*

**Media contact:** Lily King 0432 279 396 | [lily.king@minstaff.vic.gov.au](mailto:lily.king@minstaff.vic.gov.au)