

# Media Release

**The Hon Harriet Shing MP**

Minister for Water

Minister for Regional Development

Minister for Commonwealth Games Legacy

Minister for Equality



Friday, 17 March 2023

## **NEW SOLAR FARM TO POWER MELBOURNE'S ESSENTIAL WATER SERVICES**

Construction of a new solar farm at Winneke Treatment Plant in Melbourne's north-east has been completed.

The project will help Victoria meet its ambitious target of net-zero emissions by 2045 and help the Victorian water sector meet its goal of 100 per cent of their electricity needs supplied from renewable energy sources by 2025.

The Winneke Treatment Plant solar farm boasts 19,000 solar panels, which will generate approximately 12,400 megawatt hours of power each year – the equivalent of powering 2,500 houses annually – and prevent 12,000 tonnes of emissions.

The solar farm will begin operations later this year, with the power it produces to be used by the Winneke Treatment Plant – an essential part of Melbourne's water distribution network and the third largest user of energy in Melbourne Water's infrastructure portfolio. Any excess power will be fed into the grid.

The solar farm spans across 10 hectares and uses the latest technology tracking sensors combined with rotational motors to allow for maximum sun exposure and energy generation year-round.

The solar farm also includes a walking track around the facility, allowing the public to see the solar panels in action.

The Winneke Treatment Plant solar farm is one of a number of projects underway across the water sector to generate renewable energy and reduce emissions, as part of the sector's target of achieving net zero by 2035.

A net zero water sector by 2035 will mean the industry has reduced its annual emissions by almost 900,000 tonnes per year – the equivalent to the annual emissions produced by more than 250,000 cars on Victoria's roads.

### **Quote attributable to Minister for Water Harriet Shing**

*"Victoria's water sector is leading the nation on emissions reductions with the Winneke Solar Farm delivering a cleaner and cheaper energy supply for Melbourne Water's operations."*

*"This solar farm utilises state-of-the-art technology that will help drive down their running costs and play a significant part in Victoria's target to meet net zero emission by 2045."*

### **Quote attributable to Member for Eltham Vicki Ward**

*"This solar farm will be a great attraction for the local community to see first-hand the beauty of our renewable energy revolution and know that their local water service is doing its bit to reduce emissions."*