

# Involving the Community

## Ark Energy's approach

Ark Energy appreciates the importance of engaging, listening to and involving community members and other local stakeholders throughout the project's development, and ensuring that local priorities and concerns are considered.

Ark Energy's approach to consultation is informed by the International Association for Public Participation's (IAP2) Core Values, Code of Ethics and Public Participation Spectrum, widely accepted as the industry benchmark. It is open, inclusive, responsive, accessible and transparent.

The company is also signatory to the Clean Energy Council's *Best Practice Charter for Renewable Energy Projects*, a voluntary commitment to engage respectfully with communities, be sensitive to environmental and cultural values, and make a positive contribution to the regions in which we operate.

We are focused on providing opportunities for interested community members and stakeholders to participate, and maximising opportunities for the local community to benefit from the project in meaningful ways.

We value input from local community members and community consultation is ongoing. There are many ways to stay informed, provide feedback and participate in the process, and where possible the community's input is incorporated into project plans to improve outcomes and lasting benefits.

## Ways to stay informed & participate

### Website & online feedback form

The project website - [richmondvalleysolar.com.au](http://richmondvalleysolar.com.au) - provides up to date project information, maps, previously issued newsletters and an online feedback form.

### Project newsletters

Project newsletters will be issued regularly and are available by post and email.

To receive newsletters by email register online at [arkenergy.com.au/mailling-list-details](http://arkenergy.com.au/mailling-list-details). To receive newsletters by mail, please send your postal address and a request to be added to the mailout list to [info@richmondvalleysolar.com.au](mailto:info@richmondvalleysolar.com.au).

We respect your privacy and your details will only be used for this purpose.

All previously issued newsletters are also available under the 'News' feed on the project website, [richmondvalleysolar.com.au](http://richmondvalleysolar.com.au).

### Community information sessions

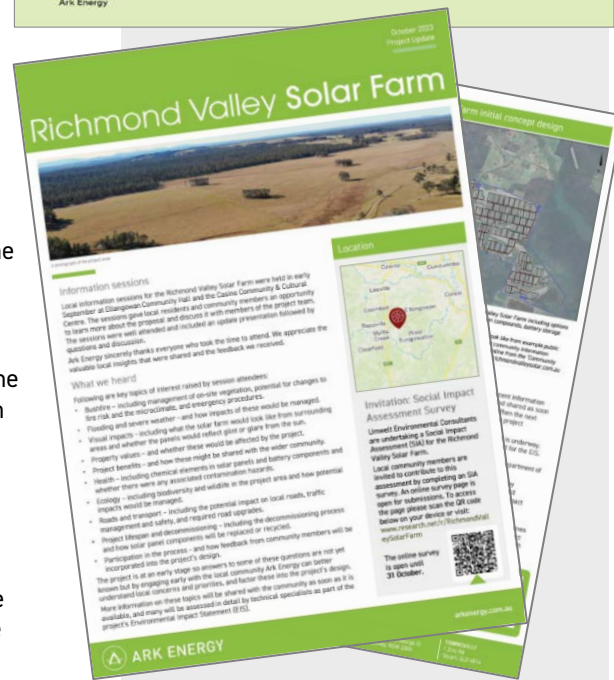
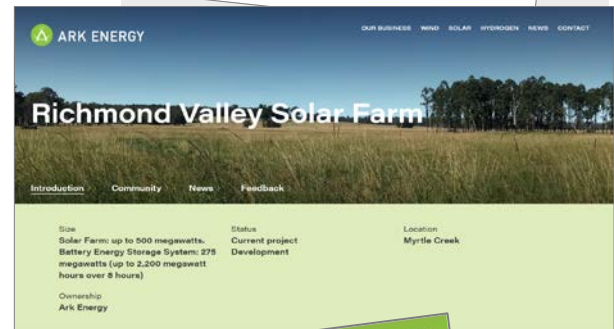
Local information sessions will be held at key times during the planning process. Details of information sessions and when these are scheduled will be included on the website and in project newsletters.

### Public exhibition period

After the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) has been lodged and accepted by the NSW Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure (DPHI) it will be placed on public exhibition and open for submissions.

### Community benefit sharing

The project will involve a community benefit program with funding from the start of construction and for the life of the solar farm. Suggestions on priorities for the community benefit program are welcome and can be sent to the project team. There will also be a Neighbour Benefit Sharing Program for those who own property close to infrastructure. If you think you may be eligible please contact the project team.



## Tell us what's important and help design Richmond Valley Solar Farm's Community Benefit Program

The Richmond Valley Solar Farm will involve a Community Benefit Program with funding from the start of construction and for the life of the project. Subject to final design it is estimated that funding to support the program will be approximately **\$200,000** per year.

It is intended that the program will be designed in consultation with the local community, and will:

- **Share** benefits with the local community.
- Make a **meaningful contribution** to issues the community cares about.
- Be **flexible** to focus on changing priorities over time.
- Ensure the project is a **positive, rewarding** and **beneficial** development for the local community.

Community members are invited to help inform the design of the program by sharing their views on what is important for the local community. This can be done through a feedback form or by emailing the project team directly - contact details below.

## Questions and feedback welcome at any time

Questions and feedback are welcome at any time.

Please send your comments directly to the project team via email or the online feedback form on the project website.

We appreciate all input and will do our best to respond to you as quickly as possible.

## Ark Energy's engagement goals & commitments

Ark Energy's goals for community engagement include to:

- Ensure community members are well informed and kept up to date on project status and developments.
- Obtain feedback and provide ample opportunities for community members to communicate their views, concerns and aspirations for the project.
- Address any community member's issues or concerns promptly.
- Work to avoid and minimise the impacts and maximise the benefits of the project for the local community.
- Wherever possible utilise input from community members to optimise the design of the project.

Ark Energy commits to:

- Be proactive – connect early in the process and regularly share information so community members know what is happening and how to interact with the project team and provide feedback on the project.
- Be transparent – be honest and ethical in our dealings with all.
- Seek solutions – engage to understand, explore and collaborate on ways to avoid and minimise impacts and maximise the benefits of the project.
- Be flexible and inclusive – ensure that our engagement provides opportunities for all interested community members to have access to information and members of the project team.



Local community information sessions for the Richmond Valley Solar Farm.

### More information

**Tel** - 1800 731 296

**Email** - [info@richmondvalleysolar.com.au](mailto:info@richmondvalleysolar.com.au)

**Newsletters** – register at [arkenergy.com.au/mailling-list-details](http://arkenergy.com.au/mailling-list-details) for email news, or to receive newsletters by post, send us your postal address and a request to be added to the mail (post) list.

**Website** - [richmondvalleysolar.com.au](http://richmondvalleysolar.com.au) or scan the QR code right



Scan QR code to visit the project website