ARK ENERGY

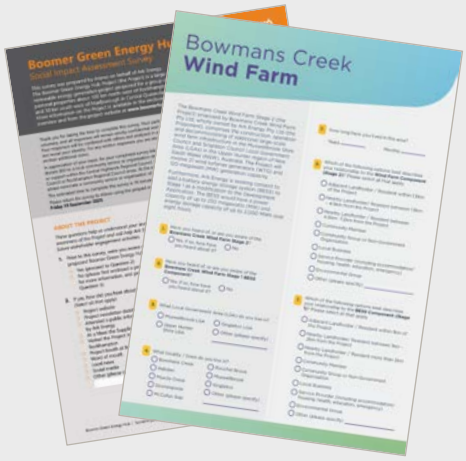
# Best Practice Charter for Renewable Energy Projects **Annual Report 2025**

Best Practice Charter Signatory

Ark Energy is a renewable energy company specialising in utility-scale wind and solar energy generation, battery energy storage systems and renewable hydrogen production. Ark Energy's portfolio consists of several utility-scale renewable generation and storage projects in development in New South Wales, Queensland and Tasmania, operation of the Sun Metals Solar Farm and the SunHQ Hydrogen Hub in Queensland, a 30% share in MacIntyre Wind Farm operated by ACCIONA Energia, and several smaller operating solar energy generation assets in the Northern Territory.

## 1

We will engage respectfully with the local community, including Traditional Owners of the land, to seek their views and input before submitting a development application and finalising the design of the project.


Ark Energy engages with local stakeholders and communities from early in the planning process, and for years before a development application is lodged.

The approach is based on the International Association of Public Participation's (IAP2) Core Values, Code of Ethics and Spectrum of Public Participation. It reflects the company's values of care, integrity and respect, and aims to be inclusive, transparent, genuine, responsive, accessible and collaborative.

Guided by comprehensive, project-specific engagement plans engagement is focused on building long-term relationships and partnerships. Methods include meetings and workshops, local information centres, local public consultation sessions, community consultation groups, participation in community events and ongoing feedback mechanisms.

Engagement is focused primarily on providing opportunities for participation and maximising meaningful benefits and outcomes. Community members are reminded of ways to stay informed and participate through 'Involving the Community' information sheets. Project feedback forms are available in both printed and online formats, and stakeholders and community members are surveyed for independent social impacts assessments.

Engagement with First Nations stakeholders including Native title holders, Prescribed Body Corporates, Registered Aboriginal Parties and Land Councils commences early and is ongoing. Traditional Owners are involved in site surveys to protect cultural heritage and help inform project design. The approach is customised. It is based on principles outlines by the Clean Energy Council and First Nations Clean Energy Network, and also free, prior and informed consent, self-determination and cultural safety.

Input from community members, Traditional Owners and other local stakeholders is sought proactively, welcomed, valued, considered and incorporated into project design to minimise impacts and optimise outcomes.

2

We will provide timely information and be accessible and responsive in addressing the local community's feedback and concerns throughout the life of the project.


3

We will be sensitive to areas of high biodiversity, cultural and landscape value in the development and operation of projects.


4

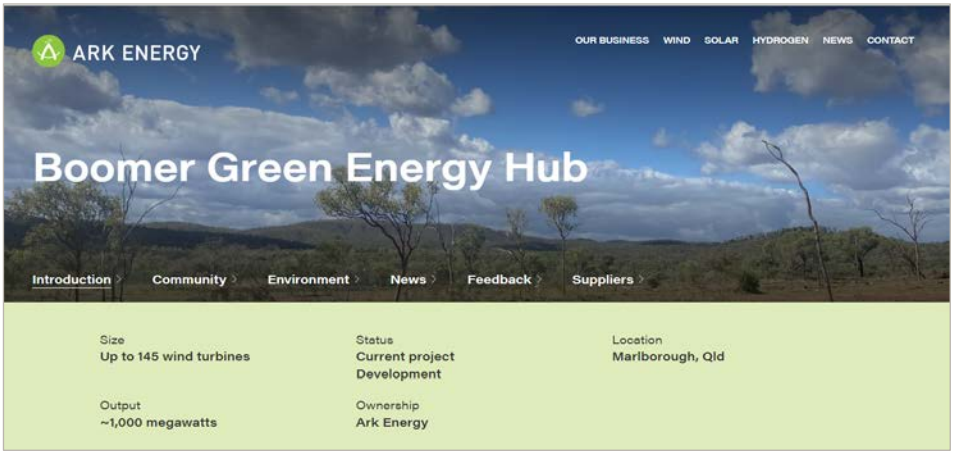
We will minimise the impacts on highly productive agricultural land and explore opportunities to integrate agricultural production.

Project teams use a variety of channels and methods to provide timely information, be accessible, and respond to community feedback and concerns.

Each project has its own website, info@ email address, 1800 number, and a suite of information materials about the project, topics of interest and ways to participate in the planning and assessment process.

Project newsletters are issued regularly by post or email to subscribers and through unaddressed mailouts, and communicate the latest and next activities, engagement opportunities, and responses to community feedback and concerns.

Enquiries are usually responded to within 24 hours and concerns are addressed as promptly and fulsomely as possible, with input from specialist technical consultants when required.




Ark Energy's projects are carefully designed to avoid and minimise impacts to biodiversity, cultural and landscape value. During early development, avoiding high value environmental areas and minimising impacts to flora and fauna that might utilise project areas is a priority. The approach is to:

- Iterate the project's design as more information becomes available, to avoid and minimise negative environmental impacts to the maximum extent achievable.
- Consult widely with stakeholders and collaborate on solutions where required, to find workable compromises with meaningful benefit.
- Invest and collaborate on strategies and commitments for environmental repair such as rehabilitation of the initial construction disturbance.
- Develop strategic initiatives to improve the quality and size of habitat and habitat connectivity for key species, such as environmental offset management areas with strategic benefits and tailored management regimes for fire, feral pest species and weeds.
- Focus on how to achieve net gains for biodiversity and key species in the project area over the longer term.

Traditional Owners are involved in studies to protect and manage cultural heritage. For operating projects such as the Sun Metals Solar Farm environmental management plans and mitigation strategies are in place and periodically reviewed and adapted to protect flora and fauna on the site.

Ark Energy's wind energy projects are proposed for pastoral properties that are currently used for livestock, with infrastructure to be located in areas less suitable for grazing.

Impacts on operations will be minimised by working closely with host landowners and co-locating and integrating infrastructure with farming operations where practicable. Once operational the project and livestock will co-exist. For example, the introduction of sheep grazing as a dual land use is being explored for the Sun Metals Solar Farm, which is located on land that had low agricultural productivity.

## Case study
### Set up shop & join the community early



Ark Energy established two local information centres for projects in Queensland at the start of the planning and assessment stage.

The Collinsville Green Energy Hub Information Centre was established in the nearest town of Collinsville, north Queensland, in 2022, shortly after the project's feasibility stage and when the project was announced to the community.

The Boomer Green Energy Hub Information Centre was established in Rockhampton in 2023, the year after engagement activities commenced. Rockhampton was selected as a central location for landowners, community members, government representatives, non-government organisations and businesses.

Both centres were formally opened with a special event attended by landowners, Traditional Owners, local councillors and representatives from business and community organisations. The information centres are staffed by locally based project team members and open most weekdays during regular business hours.

Having a local presence is a visible demonstration of commitment and provides community members with direct access to members of the project team when it suits them.

They are used for consultation sessions and offer take-away copies of a wide variety of third-party information materials from sources such as government departments, industry organisations, community advocacy groups, media and technical authorities – providing an opportunity to empower visitors with accurate information, help them understand how issues of interest are managed and address concerns.

## Case study
### Meet people where they are


Ark Energy's regional project information centres are also equipped with marquees for project teams to set up a stall at community events.

For the Collinsville Green Energy Hub, which is proposed for the Whitsunday Regional Council local government area, Ark Energy sponsors community events including the annual Whitsunday Show held in Proserpine and the annual Great Barrier Reef Festival held in Airlie Beach.

The project team set up the marquee with a variety of materials, to meet people where they are, literally and figuratively.

The stall is equipped with take-away information about the project and related topics of interest and giveaways including popular Ark Energy shortbread cookies and make-your-own mini windmills made of all recyclable materials for children.

5

We will consult the community on the potential visual, noise, traffic and other impacts of the project, and on the mitigation options.

Communities and local stakeholders are consulted on the various potential impacts, both formally and informally, as part of the assessment process. Project teams also work with stakeholders including local councils and community service providers to avoid, minimise and mitigate the potential impacts on community resources and infrastructure, such as housing, community services and roads.

Project teams also consult directly with potentially significantly impacted residents and property owners to work with them collaboratively on mitigation options and compensation measures.

6

We will support the local economy by providing local employment and procurement opportunities.


Ark Energy is committed to maximising local and in-region economic opportunities and participation, including for First Nations peoples and businesses. This is done by ensuring consideration of existing capabilities, collaborating with industry and government to improve local participation and capabilities, optimising opportunities for local businesses and employment of local personnel.

From early development project teams include local personnel and whenever possible services and supplies are sourced from local businesses.

Each project website has a 'Supplier' form and Ark Energy encourages interested local suppliers and contractors to register their interest to provide services to be involved in the project during the construction period.

Project personnel often participate in forums hosted by local and regional industry networks, council economic development units and local chambers of commerce, to enable local job seekers, contractors, suppliers and businesses to better understand opportunities.


7

We will offer communities the opportunity to share in the benefits of the project, and consult them on the options available, including relevant governance arrangements.

Every project will involve significant funding for community benefits.

During early development input on priorities and opportunities for community benefit sharing are sourced from community members and local stakeholders including councils, community centres and service providers, chambers of commerce and non-government organisations.

Ark Energy is focused on developing community benefit arrangements that are contextually appropriate, make a meaningful contribution to issues the community cares about, are flexible to focus on changing priorities over time, and ensure the project leaves a positive, rewarding legacy for the local community.

Ark Energy aspires to co-design community benefit programs with community stakeholders when possible (such as alternatives to agreements that would be administered by the local council) including governance arrangements that involve community member representatives.

## Case study
### Be attuned to what makes a difference


During the early development phase Ark Energy's projects allocate an annual budget to community investments and project teams seek to maximise this through contributions that deliver meaningful benefit to residents.

More than the funds or size of the investment, this requires being attuned to the community and able to identify needs and opportunities that make a positive difference.

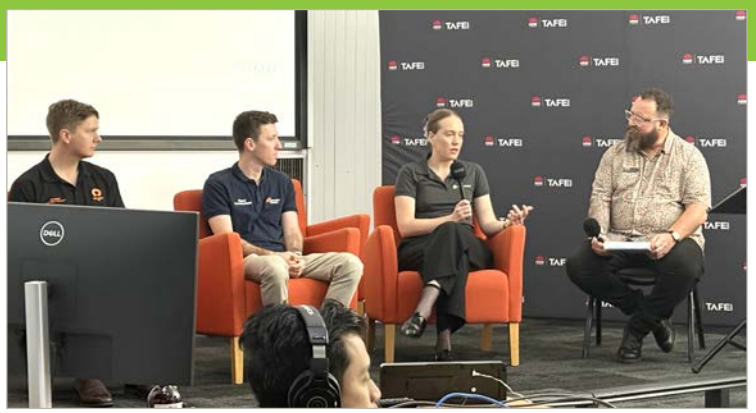
An example of this is the Collinsville Green Energy Hub project team's support of the Collinsville Connect Telecentre (CCT).

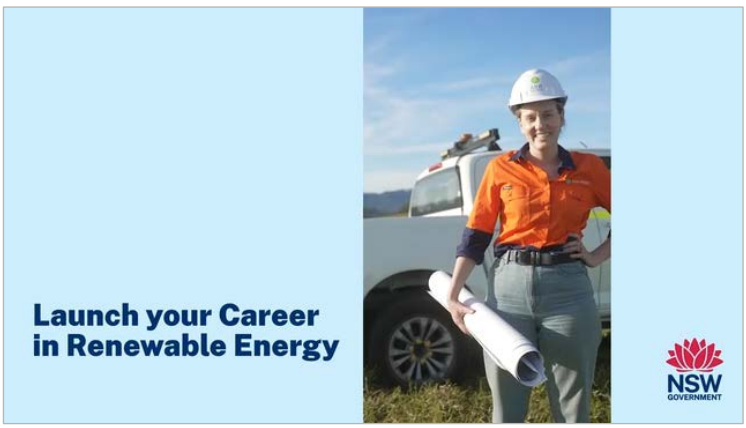
Located on the Collinsville main street and operating for more than 20 years, CCT provides free computer and internet access, skills training, and IT support to local small businesses. It is a valuable social hub for residents of all ages from the Collinsville and Scottville communities.

When the centre manager mentioned to Collinsville Green Energy Hub's development manager that the centre was planning to fundraise to buy a 3D printer, the team offered for Ark Energy to buy it. 3D printing is a feature of the centre and is used to make saleable souvenirs, toys and other items for fundraising, custom orders by request and teach digital skills.

It delivers a variety of benefits to the centre and community that are of much greater value than its monetary cost.

## Case study
### Collaborate to show students opportunities



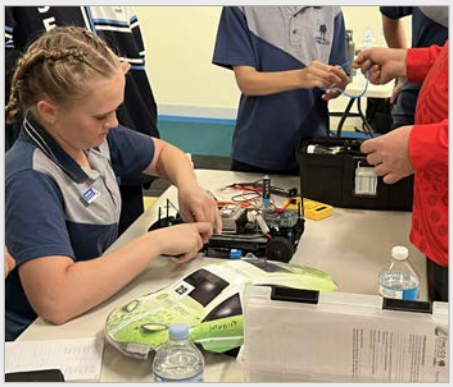

Ark Energy collaborates with education providers, other renewable energy companies and government, to help students from schools and tertiary institutions better understand the study and career opportunities linked to the renewable energy sector.

Ark Energy's project team for Bowmans Creek Wind Farm, proposed for the NSW Hunter-Central Coast Renewable Energy Zone, started working with the NSW Government's Regional Industry Education Partnerships (RIEP) program, which connects secondary school students with industry, in 2024. In 2025 the project team participated in a range of activities including presenting to students at local schools and TAFE campuses, being part of the Renewable Energy Skills and Careers Expo delivered in partnership with EnergyCo as part of National Skills Week, and participating in the NSW Department of Education's Launch your Career (LyC) in Renewable Energy program, delivered in partnership with TAFE NSW.

The NSW Government's RIEP activities are intended to inspire, inform and prepare the next generation of energy professionals by engaging students from primary to Year 12 with real world examples, and highlighting the training and career pathways that can lead to local job opportunities.

## 8

We commit to using the project to support educational and tourism opportunities where appropriate.



Project personnel participate in various programs and activities to support education about renewable energy technologies and industry career opportunities. Over the past year this has included:

- Sponsoring secondary school teams to participate in the Horizon Educational Hydrogen Grand Prix PRO steam-based education program.
- Hosting educational site visits for students and education providers at the Sun Metals Solar Farm and SunHQ Hydrogen Hub.
- Participating in high school STEM Punk workshops in Queensland.
- Participating in the NSW Government's Regional Industry Education Partnerships (RIEP) program, including presentations at several NSW schools and TAFE campuses.
- Participating in renewable energy career expos for school students in NSW, Queensland and Tasmania.
- Contributing resources for CQ University's Hydrogen Central education and community information hub.
- Representing industry in the NSW Department of Education and TAFE NSW joint Launch your Career in Renewable Energy career and pathway program, including videos and a webinar for teachers and schools.

## 9

We will demonstrate responsible land stewardship over the life of the project and welcome opportunities to enhance the ecological, cultural and / or agricultural value of the land.


Project teams are committed to collaborating with host landowners, Traditional Owners and other stakeholders to implement environmental management plans and responsible land stewardship of project areas. An aim of each project is to achieve net gains for biodiversity and key species in the project area over the longer term. Measures to achieve this could include rehabilitation of the initial construction disturbance, improved management regimes for threatening processes such as feral pests, weeds and fire, and environmental offset areas that present the opportunity to increase and improve habitat for key species.

As an example, at Sun Metals Solar Farm, land management practices monitor and maintain the ecological value of the site including native species, waterways and wildlife corridors.

Ark Energy also seeks opportunities to support environmental stewardship organisations and collaborate with environmental stakeholders to improve outcomes. An example of this is Ark Energy's membership of the Healthy Rivers to Reef Partnership, a collaboration between community, Traditional Owners, farmers and fishers, industry, science, tourism, and government, to protect and improve the Mackay-Whitsunday-Isaac region's waterways and the health of the Great Barrier Reef.

## 10

During the life of the project, we will recycle waste materials where feasible and commit to responsible decommissioning or refurbishment / repowering of the site at the end of the project's life.

Comprehensive waste management, recycling, decommissioning and rehabilitation plans will be developed for each project and updated during operations, as technology and practices evolve. Ark Energy is committed to ensuring end of life management for each project aligns with the best recycling technology and practices available at the time.

Secondary battery materials and resource recycling are strategic business focus areas for Ark Energy's parent company Korea Zinc, which has a battery recycling business that utilises its existing non-ferrous metals refining capability. End-of-life batteries from Ark Energy's projects will likely be recycled within the Korea Zinc Group.

For projects currently in operation such as the Sun Metals Solar Farm, Ark Energy recycles as much waste as possible. In the event of an Ark Energy owned project's decommissioning, above ground infrastructure will be removed within 18-24 months of operations ceasing and as far as practicable the site returned to its former state.