

BREAKING: Australia's biggest solar farm planned for Gympie

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by [Frances Klein](#)

GYMPIE is earmarked for Australia's largest solar farm with a \$2 billion facility that will aim to supply 15 per cent of south-east Queensland's power and bring with it 450 jobs during construction.

Queensland company Solar Q has lodged a development application with Gympie Regional Council to build a solar farm and battery storage facility at an existing substation at Lower Wonga, the ABC reports.

Mayor Mick Curran told ABC News if approved it would be the most significant project ever planned for the Gympie region, creating 450 jobs during an 18 month construction phase and up to eight full time jobs during servicing periods.

The 3 million solar panels on the 17-square-kilometre site of cleared grazing land will provide enough electricity to power about 315,000 homes, making it the biggest solar farm in Australia the way the market is.

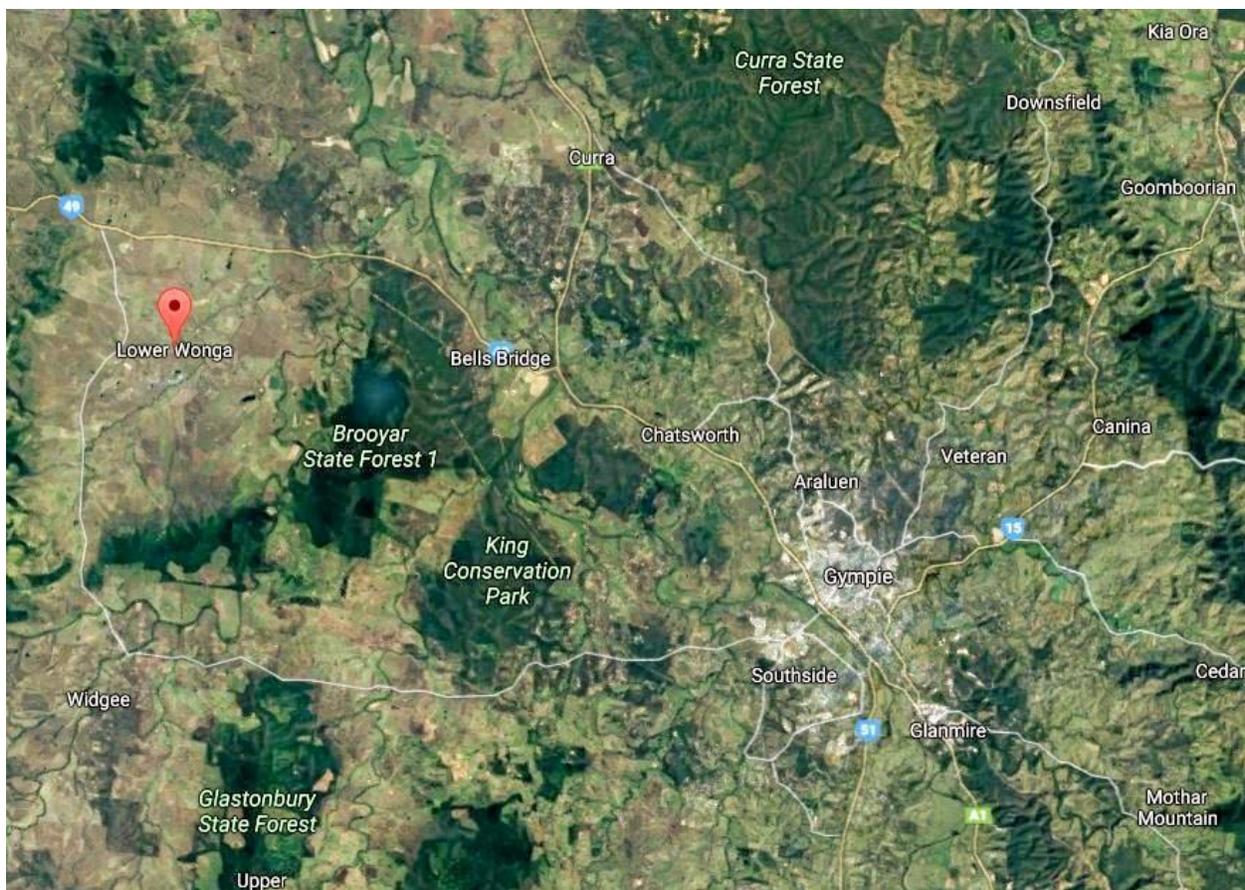
Initial approval is sought for a 350-megawatt facility with a proposal to increase to 800 megawatts within four years.

Managing director Scott Armstrong told the ABC it will provide around 15 per cent of the state's south-east energy requirements from both the solar panels and the 4,000 megawatt hours of energy storage.

"That sub-station will actually feed energy to Kilkivan, Gympie and Palmwoods on the Sunshine Coast," he said.

"It will cover the Caboolture, Beerwah areas and also feed into north Brisbane and it also has a capability of feeding north back up into Gin Gin, back up into Central Queensland so it is a significant connection point."

Cnr Curran said while the project is subject to council and state approval, there does not appear to be any great hurdles to overcome following discussions between Solar Q and Gympie Regional Council town planners.



Equally optimistic, Mr Armstrong said he was not expecting anything to derail approval from the Gympie Regional Council or State Government agencies.

Mr Armstrong expects the connection agreement with the transmission company will be finalised and work to start by the end of the year once the approvals are in place.

He said the project, which will reduce carbon emissions of around 666,700 tonnes of CO₂, or equivalent of 180,000 cars, would be funded by private investors, including superannuation management funds.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

- Solar PV nominal 350MW(ac)
- 30 minutes NE of Gympie on the Wide Bay HWY
- Located on 572 hectares
- Adjacent to High Voltage Substation located in Lower Wonga
- Proposed site is on cleared grazing land
- Around 60 hectares allocated for transmission line easements
- Close to SE Qld domestic consumption
- Close proximity to labour markets and transportation corridors.
- Create approximately 450 full time jobs over an 18 months construction phase
- Create 6 to 8 fulltime jobs with higher levels of employment during servicing periods
- Produce the lowest cost /mw electricity from around 1,300,000 panels
- Generate approx 735,000MWh/an, supplying 127,000 homes, or 3% of SEQ energy demand
- Reduce carbon emissions of around 666,700 tonnes of CO₂, or equivalent of 180,000 cars