

Media Release

The Hon Lily D'Ambrosio MP

Minister for Energy, Environment and Climate Change
Minister for Suburban Development



Getting Things Done.
Making Things Fair.

Wednesday, 21 March, 2018

PUMPED HYDRO STUDY IN BENDIGO A SUCCESS

The Andrews Labor Government is calling for expressions of interest to investigate the viability of using pumped hydro to store electricity in Bendigo's empty mineshafts.

A pre-feasibility study co-funded by the Labor Government and City of Greater Bendigo has proven it's technically feasible and economically viable to store renewable energy using Bendigo's empty mineshafts.

The study investigated the viability of using pumped hydro to store electricity and support integration of renewable energy generation into the grid.

The study developed a pumped hydro project concept which has a generation capacity of 30 MW and could store 6 hours or 180 MWh of energy – boosting the reliability of the local power grid.

The study determined there was a strong prospect for cost-effective energy storage in regional Victoria, which could help the city achieve its goal of becoming a net exporter of renewable energy.

The Labor Government contributed \$100,000 to the initiative, with an additional \$50,000 provided by the City of Greater Bendigo. A full feasibility study will now be carried out.

If built, it's anticipated this project would create 50-60 jobs during construction and five jobs during operation.

The Government is seeking expressions of interest from industry and other parties over the next eight weeks to progress this work into a full feasibility study.

The pre-feasibility study found further issues that would need to be assessed in a full feasibility study, such as the accuracy of the 3D modelling of the mine shafts and rock stability.

Information sessions will be held in Melbourne and Bendigo to provide interested parties with an opportunity to seek further details – and we are encouraging industry to take the concept through to the next stage.

A copy of the pre-feasibility study is available at energy.vic.gov.au

Quotes attributable to Minister for Energy, Environment and Climate Change Lily D'Ambrosio

"There is enormous potential for Bendigo's empty mineshafts to store dispatchable, renewable energy and support generation into the grid."

"This is an exciting next step in potentially storing significant renewable energy capacity – which can be dispatched to the grid at any time as needed."

"New energy technology is delivering jobs and a more affordable and reliable energy system to regional Victoria."