

Media Release

The Hon Lily D'Ambrosio MP
Acting Minister for Planning



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FOR ALL VICTORIANS

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NEW LARGE-SCALE SOLAR GUIDELINES BOOST SECTOR CONFIDENCE

New planning guidelines for large-scale solar farms have been released by the Andrews Labor Government to help ensure Victoria's transition to a clean energy future is planned properly.

Acting Minister for Planning Lily D'Ambrosio today released the final Solar Energy Facilities – Design and Development Guideline, which will help inform a range of decision makers, solar farm developers and communities on planning requirements for large-scale solar farms.

The guideline was shaped by a nine-month development process including extensive consultation with communities, councils and industry and a review of best-practice standards interstate and internationally.

The release of the guidelines will provide more confidence to the solar sector and encourage greater investment, as part of Victoria's renewable energy boom.

The guideline also gives certainty for councils and developers as to what is required for developments to achieve acceptable outcomes for land, communities and the environment.

Businesses looking to establish large-scale solar farms in Victoria will use the guideline to ensure proposals are built in appropriate locations, easily accessible to the grid and consider high-productivity agricultural areas and sensitive landscapes.

The guideline also includes a range of best-practice approaches to help developers engage with communities and ensure the least possible environmental and social impacts of their proposals.

The guideline will be implemented through a future planning scheme amendment to the Victorian Planning Scheme. If the amendment passes the Minister for Planning will then become the responsible authority for all large-scale solar farm applications.

The guideline is available to download at planning.vic.gov.au/policy-and-strategy/solar-energy-facilities-design-and-development-guidelines

Quotes attributable to Acting Minister for Planning Lily D'Ambrosio

"With solar technology taking off in Victoria, we need to provide clear advice on how to establish best practice facilities in appropriate locations."

"The guidelines will help to ensure community consultation is part of the process from an early stage, so local residents are engaged, informed and have an opportunity to provide input before the planning permit is lodged."

"Along with providing more certainty to the community, the guidelines will reduce the burden on local councils and give the renewable energy industry more confidence to invest."

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