



Media Release

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Making the case for energy-independent suburbs

A new investigation by Brookfield Energy Australia (Brookfield) could pave the way for the new Huntlee residential development in the NSW Hunter Valley to be built off-the-grid and powered by renewable energy.

The \$1.1 million initial study is receiving \$442,000 from the Australian Renewable Energy Agency (ARENA). Huntlee, developed by LWP Property Group, will be the first new town in the Hunter Valley in 50 years and will house 20,000 new residents in 7,500 homes.

ARENA CEO Ivor Frischknecht said substantial connection costs and the falling cost of renewable energy made it a good time to explore the option of forgoing grid connection.

“If this latest work shows renewables, battery storage and enabling technologies can reliably and cost effectively power new suburbs, it could set a precedent for residential developments and potentially accelerate the uptake of renewables in Australia,” Mr Frischknecht said.

“There are a number of regulatory challenges and constraints and technical risks facing microgrids. Brookfield will share key insights about overcoming these barriers with the energy industry.”

Brookfield Energy CEO Richie Sheather welcomed today’s announcement.

“We are excited to be exploring sustainable alternative solutions for energy and water infrastructure solutions and see an emerging competitive market for large-scale local microgrids leveraging high penetration renewable,” Mr Sheather said.

Flow Systems, a Brookfield company, is spearheading Brookfield’s sustainable multi-utility initiative across Australia.

“Our goal is to develop a model that has 10 times the penetration of renewables for the equivalent cost of energy. Proving this can be done technically and commercially will be a real step change for embedded renewables in this country,” Flow Systems Managing Director Terry Leckie said.

Huntlee Project Director Stephen Thompson said Huntlee would be an entirely master-planned community designed for 21st Century living and embracing the very latest in renewables would be a key factor in ensuring the town’s prosperous future.

“For quite a number of years, we have been investigating ways to incorporate cutting-edge renewable technology into the very fabric of the town,” Mr Thompson said.

“We’re excited by the possibility of developing Australia’s first town-scale greenfield microgrid and all of the advantages that level of innovation would bring to our residents and commercial operators.

“If the proposed model for Huntlee is successful, it will positively influence the nature of housing, employment, business, transportation and education for our future residents.

“The Huntlee team welcomes the opportunity to work with Brookfield Energy Australia and Flow Systems on delivering an entirely new model for off-grid living in Australia, made possible with support from ARENA.”

About ARENA

ARENA was established by the Australian Government to make renewable energy technologies more affordable and increase the amount of renewable energy used in Australia. ARENA invests in renewable energy projects, supports research and development activities, boosts job creation and industry development, and increases knowledge about renewable energy. ARENA is currently supporting more than 200 projects and is actively seeking new projects to support.

About Brookfield

Brookfield is a leading global alternative asset manager with more than \$200 billion of assets under management. We have a more than 100 year history of owning and operating real assets with a focus on property, renewable energy, infrastructure and private equity.

We offer a range of public and private investment products and services which leverage our expertise and experience, and provide us with a distinct competitive advantage in the markets in which we operate. Brookfield has 700 investment professionals and 30,000 operating employees in 20 countries around the world. Further information is available at www.brookfield.com.

About Flow Systems

Flow Systems is leading Brookfield’s sustainability multi-utility business in Australia, offering water and energy solutions for new housing and urban infill developments. Flow’s mission is to build low carbon communities of the future that enhance livability, are self-sufficient and reduce costs to government, developers and the community. www.flowsystems.com.au