

Media Release

Yindjibarndi Energy Corporation receives DA approval for Jinbi solar farm

Monday 9th December 2024

Yindjibarndi Energy Corporation (YEC) is pleased to announce that the City of Karratha's Joint Development Assessment Panel (JDAP) has granted development application approval for Project Jinbi, located on Yindjibarndi Ngurra (country) in the Pilbara region.

This development approval from JDAP marks a significant milestone in the advancement of this project and is the first of YEC's renewable projects to receive development approval. While the project is still subject to a number of other internal, external, and regulatory approvals, this approval represents a crucial step forward. The project includes 75MWac of solar power, with the potential to expand to 150MWac on a greenfield site. Future plans may also incorporate a Battery Energy Storage System (BESS).

"We are thrilled to receive this approval for Project Jinbi, which brings us one step closer to realising our vision for a First Nations led, greener future in the region," said Craig Ricato, CEO of Yindjibarndi Energy Corporation. "As one of Australia's largest Indigenous-led renewable energy initiatives, YEC is proud to be developing large-scale renewable energy projects to decarbonise Pilbara mining and industrial companies."

Michael Woodley, CEO of Yindjibarndi Aboriginal Corporation, said the approval marked a significant moment for the community which has been directly involved in conducting heritage and environmental surveys.

"This project represents not only a step towards an environmentally sustainable future but also the empowerment and economic development of the Yindjibarndi community. Through our partnership with the ACEN Corporation, we are demonstrating the vital role Indigenous leadership can play in driving innovative renewable energy solutions which can benefit both communities and industry. I also want to take the opportunity to thank both Rio Tinto and the WA State Government for their support in bringing this project closer to fruition."

The first stage of the project will involve the installation of 160,000 solar panels, which will generate enough electricity each year to power 40,000 Australian homes.

Receiving this approval means that Jinbi can continue to move forward with detailed commercial agreements, planning and preparation for construction, ensuring that all necessary resources are in place for successful implementation.

Project Jinbi is expected to commence construction in late 2025 and be operational in the 2nd half of 2027, subject to satisfaction of all necessary conditions and approvals. Once fully approved and operational, it is intended that Jinbi will connect directly to existing Rio Tinto transmission infrastructure for electricity supply to Rio Tinto's operations.

The Jinbi solar project is one of three projects, totalling over 1GW of wind and solar generation, which YEC currently has in development (noting Rio Tinto's involvement is only in relation to the Jinbi solar project).

Formed in 2023, YEC is one of Australia's largest Indigenous-led renewable energy initiatives, aiming to develop up to 3GW of wind, solar, and energy storage projects within the 13,000 km² in the Yindjibarndi Native Title Determination Areas.

Yindjibarndi Energy Corporation (YEC) is a partnership between Yindjibarndi Aboriginal Corporation (YAC) and ACEN Corporation. YEC's projects represent a significant step towards decarbonising the Pilbara, showcasing our commitment to innovative energy solutions and the empowerment of Indigenous communities.

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