

Sun Brilliance to build Australia's biggest solar farm, by output

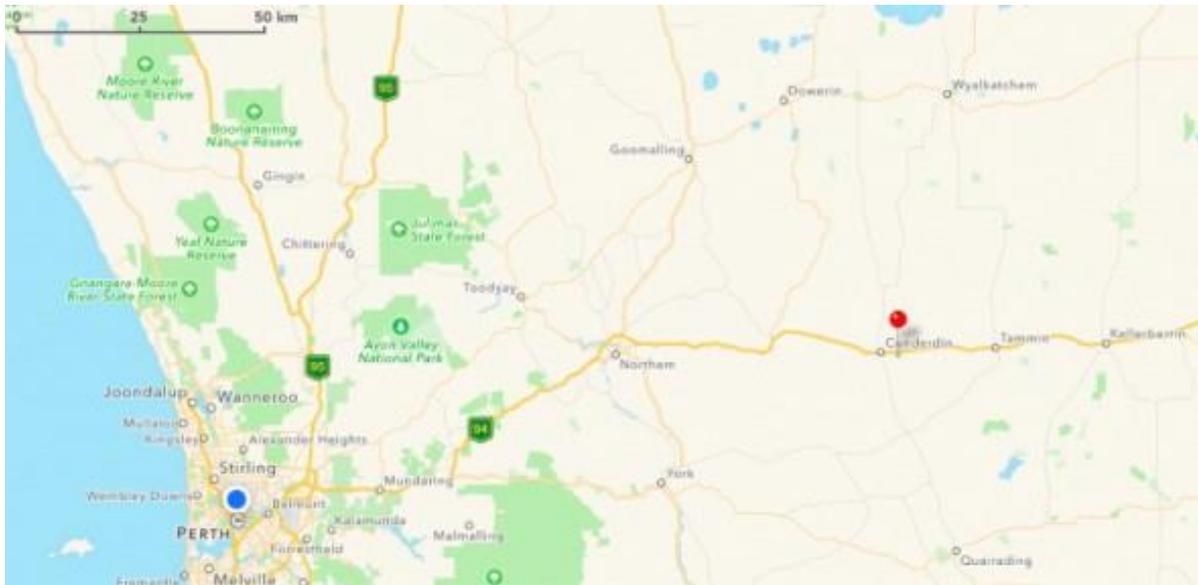
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By Giles Parkinson

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Perth-based solar power company Sun Brilliance says it plans to build a 100MW solar farm east of Perth, in what will be the biggest solar farm in West Australia by size, and the biggest to date in Australia by output.

Sun Brilliance says the solar farm on farming land on the outskirts of Cunderdin, in the middle of the state's wheat belt, will be built using single axis tracking technology, which means it will produce more electricity than Australia's current biggest solar farm, [the 102MW Nyngan facility](#) in western NSW.



The project was [originally envisaged as a 25MW solar farm](#), but Sun Brilliance says that because of rising prices for wholesale electricity, and large scale renewable energy certificates, and investor interest, it decided to increase the size to 100MW.

The biggest solar farms in WA to date are the [10MW Greenough River Solar Farm](#) and the 10.6MW solar farm at the Degussa copper mine.

Director Ray Wills, a former head of the WA Sustainable Energy Association, says the solar farm will be built on a "merchant basis" – meaning no fixed power purchase contract, and without any additional government grants such as those being allocated by the Australian Renewable Energy Agency.

The company says that the project stacks up commercially without the additional government assistance. Most solar projects in Australia are waiting to see if they qualify for grants [being allocated by ARENA](#), with announcements to be made next month.

"Rooftop solar has dominated the Western Australian market in the past 5 years, while the rest of the world has largely built utility scale solar farms – our competitively-priced 100 MW solar farm will change the way electricity generation in Western Australian is viewed," said Wills said.



The company has applied to connect to Western Power's grid, the South-West Interconnected System, via a 132 kV transmission line 2 km south of the solar farm, and proposes to build its own 120MVA, 132 kV/22 kV sub-station at the plant site.

The project partners are in final negotiations with several investors for a 30 per cent equity investment, and also several lenders for 70 per cent debt, with financial closure expected in December 2016. It hopes to begin construction in January and complete it by July.

Kalwant Dhillon, the executive director and CFO of Sun Brilliance, says the project economics stack up thanks to favourable interest rates, foreign exchange, and the price of LGCs. It hopes to begin construction in January and complete it by July.

The company plans a range of large scale wind and solar projects in Australia and India. It hopes to build 5GW in capacity, although most of this will be in India. Wills estimates around 450MW of capacity in Australia by 2020, when the current renewable energy target expires.

Sun Brilliance to date has focused on the rooftop market, including commercial scale systems. It opened a subsidiary in New Delhi last year.

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