

**MEDIA RELEASE**

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**Dawn of a new solar power era at Midland Railway Workshops**

Western Australia's first creative industries centre – the Midland Atelier – is again producing its own power, 100 years after the historic workshops generated their own electricity.



Minister for Planning; Culture and the Arts John Day today flicked the first switch in the Pattern Shop at the Midland Railway Workshops, powered by 201 SunPower solar panels.

The Midland Railway Workshops solar power system is the second of five iconic solar installations under the Perth Solar City project. This installation is jointly funded by the Australian Government's Solar Cities program and the Midland Redevelopment Authority.

The 60kW solar power system will power artisans working within the Atelier. The installation will reduce up to 94 tonnes of carbon dioxide being released into the atmosphere per year.

Midland Redevelopment Authority CEO Kieran Kinsella said it is clear that we are witnessing a renaissance for Midland.

“This is very much the dawning of a new era for the Midland Railway Workshops, an era of activation, residential living and community and institutional use” said Mr Kinsella.

“This renaissance has been built upon pursuit of a new vision for Midland: one of creativity and innovation. The project that we are here to celebrate this morning exemplifies this innovation and the ways that the new Midland is building on its past whilst carving out a very modern future.

“In fitting with this new era, the power being generated is clean, green and renewable and uses SunPower technology, which is considered to be among the most efficient and innovative solar power technology available.

A Protea shaped light designed and made by local artist Tim Whiteman was the first to be illuminated, as the largest roof-mounted solar system of its kind in WA started generating electricity.

Perth Solar City Program Manager Andrew Blaver said the solar system was part of a broader community initiative which is trialling practical and innovative ways to be more energy efficient.

“Perth Solar City is part of the Australian Government’s \$94m Solar Cities program bringing together industry, business, government and community to change the way we produce, use and save energy.” Mr Blaver said.

“Residents have access to free home eco-consultations as well as valuable discounts on solar PV and solar hot water systems to help them generate their own energy.

“Perth Solar City is delighted to welcome such an innovative and unique project to Midland. The Midland Foundry Workshops are part of our collective history having utilised steam, coal, oil and now sunlight to not only power our imagination but also our local industry.”

The Midland Atelier is borne of a partnership between FORM and the Midland Redevelopment Authority.

The Pattern Shop is the core of the work area, where wood, furniture and object design facilities are used daily by artists.

### **Background: Perth Solar City**

Perth’s Eastern region is home to Perth Solar City and includes the Shire of Kalamunda, Town of Belmont, Shire of Mundaring, City of Swan, Town of Bassendean and Town of Bayswater.

Perth Solar City is part of the Australian Government’s \$94 million Solar Cities Program.

Residents in Perth’s Eastern region will gain access to valuable discounts off solar hot water systems, solar energy systems, and take part in other energy saving projects.

Western Power is leading the Perth Solar City program, with other consortium members being the Botanic Gardens and Parks Authority, Mojarra, EMRC, Prospero Productions, SolaHart, SunPower, and Synergy.

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