

Renewable Avenel Energy (RAE)

Towards 100%

STRATEGIC PLAN – 2022-2025

*This Strategic Plan sets out our vision for the community of Avenel to transition to a **renewable energy future**.*

*It is our **blueprint** for how our community will become 100% self-reliant on renewables.*

RAE acknowledges and pays respects to the Taungurung People as the traditional owners of the land where we live around Avenel. We pay our respects to their elders, past, present and emerging.

August 2022

1. Introduction and Context

1.1 Climate Emergency Context

We are living in a time of climate emergency.

Global temperatures are steadily rising and putting at risk the beautiful environment that we and all other creatures live in. It threatens our food and water sources, the air we breathe, our health and safety, the economy and our way of life.

A major cause of global warming has been shown to be energy production from the burning of fossil fuels. This is an evidence-based position that is widely accepted globally. It is underpinned by support from a majority of the world-wide scientific community.

Many members of the Avenel community have already taken positive action to transition towards renewable energy. But most of the electricity we use in Avenel still comes through the national electricity grid and is generated from non-renewable, fossil fuel sources (gas and coal-fired power stations).

This strategic plan aims to support the Avenel community to continue and accelerate our transition to a renewable energy future, to reduce our reliance on fossil-fuel energy sources and to contribute to a safer, cleaner climate for future generations.

1.2 The Avenel Community

The Avenel community comprises around 1,000 people. The township itself contains a health care facility (Avenel Maternal Child Health Centre), a childcare centre (Avenel Early Childhood Service) and a primary school. It also has a senior citizens' centre. Commercial services include a post office, pharmacy, clothing, take-away food, butcher and nearby petrol station and wineries. The land around the town is predominantly rural. The nearest larger commercial centre is Seymour, 16km to the south-west, with a population of around 7,000.

Avenel (Township) Demographics (2km radius):

Population	973
Dwellings	430
Health care facilities	1
Care facilities	1
Schools/pre-schools	1

1.3 Solar Installations and Capacity

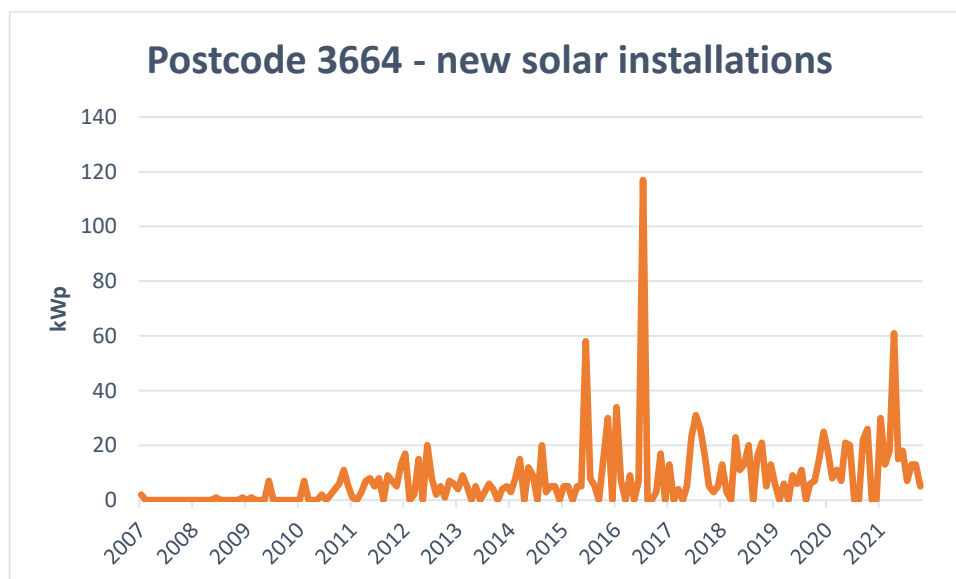
According to the Australian Photovoltaic Institute (APVI), Avenel and its surrounds have the following solar systems installed:

Metric	Avenel (Postcode 3664)	Avenel ¹ (Township only)
Dwellings	519	430
Solar installations	249	203
Solar installation %	45.7%	47.2%
Solar capacity	1,333kW	
Systems under 10kW	237	
Systems 10kW to 100kW	12	
Systems above 100kW	0	

LG Energy makes the following estimates with regard to panel production in and around Avenel:

Metric	Per kWp	Typical (6.6 kWp) ²
Annual solar production	1,496 kWh ³	9,873 kWh
Lowest month – June	48 kWh	316 kWh
Best month – December	201 kWh	1,328 kWh

Based on APVI estimates, the following solar capacity has been installed on rooftops (Avenel and surrounds) over the last fifteen years:

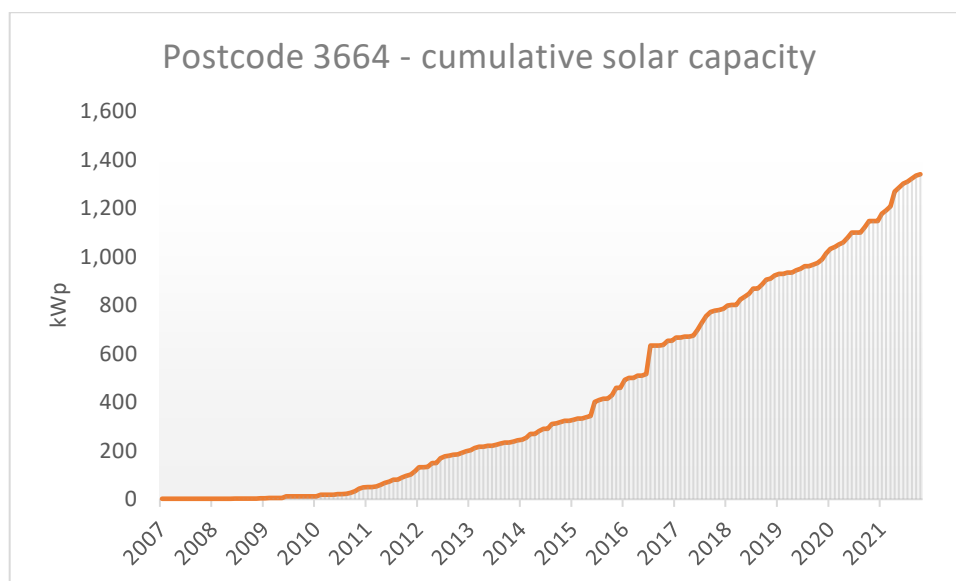


¹ Estimated based on number of dwellings

² Avenel's average solar PV system has panels rated at 6.6 kW

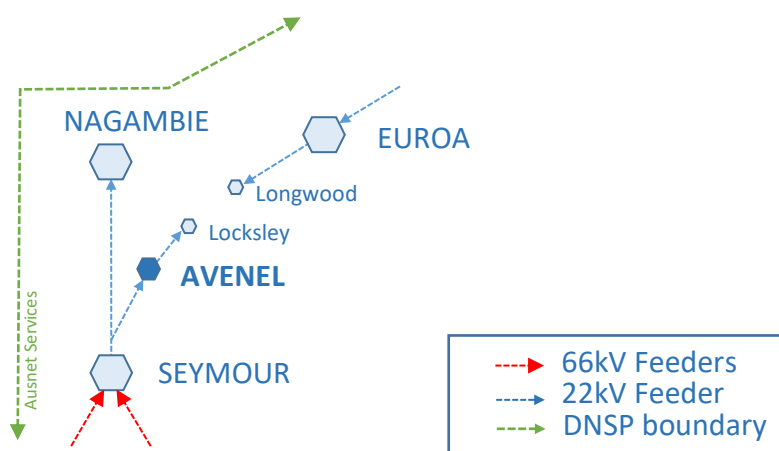
³ Annual production for a solar PV system with panels rated at 1 kW

This has led to the following cumulative solar PV capacity in Avenel:



1.4 National Electricity Market (NEM) Grid Context

Avenel's grid-sourced electricity is imported through a 22kV feeder line that comes from Seymour to the south. Our NEM grid context is important in our plan to transition to renewables – it is shown in the schematic map below:



As shown above, the local Avenel grid network is situated on a 22kV spur line that comes up from Seymour from the south and extends further north only as far as Locksley. It is separated from the supply for Euroa which comes from Benalla in the north east.

The Distribution Network Service Provider (DNSP) for Avenel is Ausnet Services. Ausnet owns and operates the electricity distribution assets (as illustrated above) in and around Avenel.

1.5 Renewable Avenel Energy (RAE)

RAE was formed in 2019 and is currently an unincorporated sub-group of Avenel Active Inc. Avenel Active, which auspices RAE, is a broader-based community association with a focus and interest in a wide range of community issues including but much broader than renewable energy only.

RAE was formed out of a recognition by community leaders that the renewable energy issues and challenges faced by the Avenel community are of such criticality, complexity and scale, they need a separate, dedicated and focused organisation to address them over the next few years.

The future governance and structure of RAE, including its relationship with Avenel Active, are key aspects addressed in this Strategic Plan. Key achievements of RAE to date include:

- Strong engagement with the community to start conversations about our transition towards renewables.
- Focus on talking to people about the value and benefits of installing rooftop solar panels and sharing learning and knowledge in this regard.
- Established relationships with key sector stakeholders including Strathbogie Shire, Ausnet Services and Mondo.
- Focus on developing within our lead group a baseline understanding of issues /challenges.
- With the help of Strathbogie Shire, established solar/battery powered heat refuge in the Avenel Memorial Hall.
- Established Avenel Pilot Program Renewable Energy (APPRE Inc) to offer/manage interest free loans as an incentive for the installation of solar panels.

1.6 This Strategic Plan

In this context, our Strategic Plan is our blueprint to respond to and address the challenge of transitioning Avenel to a renewable energy future.

This Strategic Plan provides a framework for setting up Renewable Avenel Energy as an inclusive and broad-based community organisation to lead our renewable energy programs and initiatives in future. It sets out our strategic directions and priorities for the next 2 – 3 years.

The renewable energy landscape is extremely fast-changing and dynamic. So, a key to our success in this space will be to remain ‘nimble’ and flexible to adaptation and change as government policy, funding and directions become clearer.

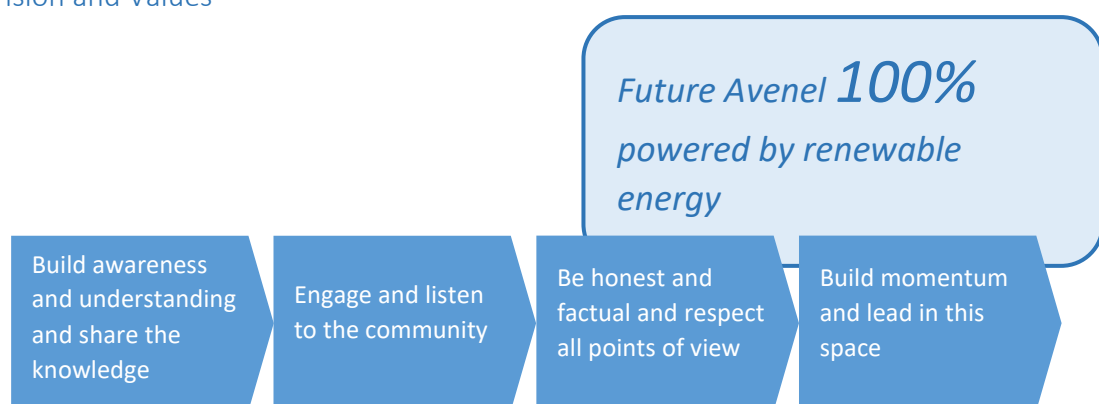
So, this strategic plan will constantly change and need to be updated.

2. Our Mission, Vision and Values

2.1 Mission

- Work with the Avenel community to transition our energy supply to be cleaner, renewable, more reliable, and affordable.
- To build awareness and support the community to source energy from renewable sources, supported by contemporary generation and storage systems.
- To make the community of Avenel more energy resilient in times of emergency.

2.2 Vision and Values



RAE's legacy will be a community that is **better informed** about climate and human impacts, has **more reliable access to affordable power** in Avenel, and a greater appreciation of our **natural environment**.

3. Our Strategic Priorities

RAE's strategic priorities for the next 3 years are summarised below:

3.1 Establish RAE's Capability - Structure and Governance

Next 6 Months:	2023 to 2025:
- Get RAE's 'house in order' with an organisational structure that will support our directions and priorities. - Seek to attract younger people to RAE's membership and mission. - Identify interested local people with relevant skills/capabilities and seek to recruit them to be part of RAE's mission, organisation and endeavours. - Establish RAE as an incorporated association (separate to Avenel Active Inc.) - Ensure continuity between the existing committee and the new association by maintaining the current committee initially, as well as new members. - Divide up RAE's role and allocate specific areas/responsibilities to committee members based on skills, capability.	- Ensure RAE as a community organisation, is relevant and appeals across all age groups and sections of the community - Review our governance and meeting structure to be consistent with an independent community organisation. - Liaise with Strathbogie Shire Council (SSC) to gain support for RAE's priorities and directions (as set out in this Strategic Plan).

3.2 Engagement the Community and Position RAE as a leader on climate

Next 6 Months:	2023 to 2025:
- Commence a process of community engagement about renewable energy with a focus on making it directly relevant at the household level. IE pamphlets, letter drops, etc. Re APPRE, advantages of solar PV and batteries, potential savings. - Showcase the existing PV and battery installation at the Avenel Memorial Hall. - Media articles re "electrifying".	Arrange public forums/community speakers on climate change and renewable energy.

3.3 Building an Evidence-Base about Local Energy Use and Generation

Next 6 Months:	2023 to 2025:
Analyse the current electricity situation in Avenel - consumption data (Ausnet), smart meter data (Ausnet), solar (APVI).	Continue working with CFA, SSC and the local Primary School to build PV capacity on large roof spaces.
Use data from all sources to develop a reliable summary/picture of Avenel's current energy use and profile (included imported energy and locally generated sources).	Prepare a list of properties/buildings in Avenel (and surrounds) which have high potential for a renewable energy project/installation.
Obtain energy consumption data (past and current) from Council for all Council-owned buildings and facilities in Avenel.	Develop a prioritised 'hit-list' potential renewable energy projects for Council-owned buildings and facilities in conjunction with the Shire.
Utilise evidence from Yackandandah/Mondo on successful renewable energy projects/programs.	
Identify evidence of successful programs we have already established in and around Avenel, APPRE.	

3.4 Educate and Provide Practical Help for Community

Next 6 Months:	2023 to 2025:
Improve RAE's internal knowledge by providing opportunities for members to undertake personal education in PV and battery technology.	Reach out to other Avenel community groups and organisations to provide practical advice and assistance in relation to renewable energy (ie; become a community resource).
	Develop close strategic relationships with a network of local trusted suppliers and installers of renewable energy systems and facilities.
	Conduct information sessions/briefings (evenings / afternoons) with key community groups in Avenel with a view to broadening understanding and ownership of the community's renewable energy issues and challenges.
	Gain trust of community to support grant applications based on perceived benefit for the whole community.

3.5 Initiate, Facilitate and Develop Renewable Energy Projects (BTM ⁴ and FOM ⁵)

Next 6 Months:	2023 to 2025:
Continue to support and promote the APPRE Solar PV and Battery loan program (whilst funds are available).	- Identify and explore potential future funding opportunities (from government and philanthropic sources) to extend or replicate the APPRE household loan program. - Investigate potential to install an EV battery charging station in centre of Avenel, including lobbying of local council and politicians to support this. - Explore further opportunities to install PV panels and batteries on public buildings in Avenel – primary school, fire station etc. - Investigate potential sites, options and the financial feasibility of establishing a solar farm /battery in/around Avenel. - Explore potential sites for and the feasibility of wind generation around Avenel.

3.6 Advocate for and Communicate Avenel's Interests in the Renewable Energy Space

Next 6 Months:	2023 to 2025:
- Proactively advocate and promote the renewable energy cause through all available local media and community information channels. - Publish articles in local media on benefits of solar energy and household batteries, including: - local newspaper. - school/other newsletters. - flyer inserted into 'Welcome to Avenel' new residents' kit.	Advocate to SSC, Hume Community Energy, Red Energy, Ausnet etc, local Members of Parliament both Federal and State.

⁴ Behind-the-Meter

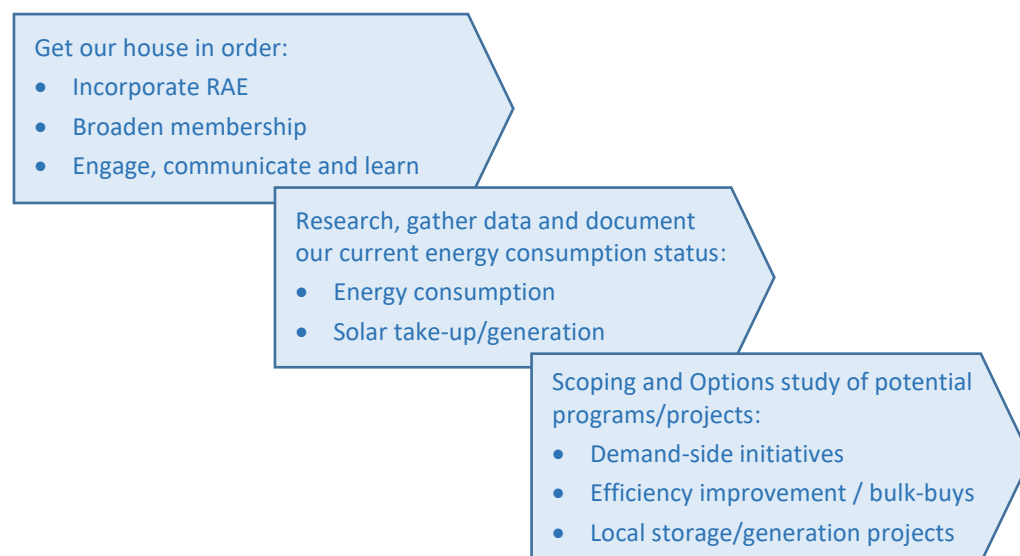
⁵ Front-of-Meter

3.7 Apply for Grants for Projects and Build Local Financial Capacity

Next 6 Months:	2023 to 2025:
- Promote Avenel widely as a model solar/battery township/community and use this as a foundation to apply for grants from Federal and State governments. - Develop (and apply for a grant for) a bulk-buy project to incentivise and increase the take-up of BTM generation, storage and efficiency improvement assets, including: - solar panels/batteries. - heat pumps. - Develop (and apply for a grant for) an Avenel Energy Efficiency Audit Project, potentially including: - conduct of household energy audits. - costing of potential financial impact of investments in renewable energy assets. - costing of potential energy efficiency improvements.	- Promote Avenel as model solar/battery town and use this to apply for grants from Federal and State governments. - Use this strategic plan as evidence of commitment to programs and management of Solar Battery installations.

4. The Next Steps

The next steps towards implementing this Strategic Plan are as follows:



5. Review and Update

This Strategic Plan is to be reviewed and updated by the RAE Committee on an ongoing basis, taking account of the fast-changing renewable energy sector context. It is to be formally reviewed at least annually.