

27 November 2014

## **URALLA ANNOUNCED AS MODEL FOR ZERO NET ENERGY TOWN**

Uralla Shire Council Mayor, Mr Michael Pearce, today announced Uralla as the model town for the Zero Net Energy Town (ZNET) project.

“Uralla is delighted to be chosen as Australia’s first ZNET town. Council, business, the community and residents want to know how renewable and alternative energy can play a greater role in our local economy. This project will show us how.”

ZNET will develop a business case examining the financial feasibility and technical possibilities involved in switching to alternative and renewable energy sources in Uralla.

“Similar projects overseas are delivering multiple economic, social and environmental benefits for small regional localities. We hope that the Business Case will identify similar opportunities for Uralla.”

Uralla was chosen through a competitive tendering process. High levels of awareness, knowledge and strong support from members of the community were key factors in the judge’s decision to choose Uralla as the model town.

“Uralla Shire Council wants to say a big “thank you” to those community members who helped to write the Tender, and to those who sent emails and letters in support of our application. It wouldn’t have succeeded without your contribution.”

Uralla Shire Council applied on behalf of the community and will continue as a significant stakeholder in the findings of the Business Case. Mayor Pearce puts strong emphasis on the whole-of-community nature of ZNET.

“Participation by business, community groups and ordinary residents of Uralla now will be vital to ensure the success of any on-ground projects that may follow-on from the Business Case. “

After the Business Case assessment, making an alternative energy economy a reality will be a much longer process. “Change doesn’t happen over night.” Mayor Pearce cautioned. “The Business Case is a vital first step in moving Uralla to a lower carbon economy. Without it we can’t begin to understand what needs to be done in a practical sense to make this a reality.”

State government funding for the project was secured by a consortium of agencies led by Starfish Enterprises. The Moreland Energy Foundation Limited will write the Business Case for Uralla.

“On behalf of the Uralla community Council would like to thank Starfish Initiatives ZNET Consortium for developing the project and securing the funding from the Office of Environment and Heritage. “

[ENDS]

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