



PAYMENT PLAN AIDS RECORD-BREAKING SCHOOL SOLAR PROJECT

EDUCATION | NZ

Kaitaia College, situated in the very Far North of Aotearoa in New Zealand, is a co-educational secondary school with 900 students. Founded in the 1930s, it has strong ties to its Māori and local communities.

Like most schools, costs for energy use at the College were high, with annual

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bills of almost \$10,000. An assessment of its expenses determined that solar could meet up to 60 per cent of its electricity needs.

“Schools make sense for solar because a lot of their energy is actually being used...during the day time [when] there’s plenty of generated power,” explains Dwayne Cocker from the Sustainable Energy Association.

But the project’s price tag meant that, unless Kaitaia College could find a way to fund the solar system, the School’s dream of converting to solar would remain out of reach.

THE SOLUTION

Through its partnership with solar installer SuperPower Technologies, Kaitaia College principal, Jack Saxon,

PAYMENT PLAN SNAPSHOT

Costs for energy use at Kaitaia College in New Zealand were high, with annual bills of almost \$10,000 and no upfront capital available to invest in solar.

After being introduced to an Energy Ease payment plan, the school was able to cut its energy bills and fulfil its dream of converting to solar. The system will be cash flow positive from day one and savings will rise to hundreds of thousands of dollars over the 25-year guaranteed life of the solar system.

Equipment

101.2 kW Solar System

- 368 x REC Panels
- 5 x Fronius Inverters



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discovered Energy Ease payment plans, and the dream became a reality.

Amazingly, on a payment plan, the numbers stacked up making the project a cash flow neutral proposition.

With solar installed, the School could cut its electricity bill substantially - savings which could then cover the payments with Energy Ease.

What's more, no upfront capital was needed under the funding arrangement which meant Kaitaia College was not out of pocket for the project.

Thanks to Energy Ease the project "is cost neutral, so what we save as a result of the solar power we will pay out in less than ten years," Mr. Saxon says.

It also has significant spin-offs that go well beyond the development of a renewable energy source and cost savings.

The school also plans to help by passing excess energy it doesn't need during the holidays back onto the grid for the community.

"If we can pass that on and give ratepayers more cents in the dollar back...it's going to improve their quality of life," he adds.

THE WIN

Cost savings to the College over the 10-year payback period will amount to tens of thousands of dollars, rising to hundreds of thousands over the 25-year guaranteed life of the solar system.

Additionally, the School plans to use the solar project as a springboard to building understanding around renewable energies and have its ākonga (students) lead community projects around developing solutions to local challenges.

Mr Saxon explains, "The kura (school) is working with SuperPower Technologies and other community groups, including Muriwhenua iwi, to develop an integrated curriculum around renewable energy."

"Our ākonga lead community projects around developing solutions to local challenges," he adds, "and one of the most exciting elements, currently being scoped with a local power provider, is the potential for the school to send excess power back to the grid and have their whānau access this."

"Having that benefit passed to our students' whanau, and...trying to create a wider community imperative, that was really integral for us, and thanks to Easy Energy and SuperPower Technologies, we've been able to achieve that."

At the time of installation, Kaitaia College houses the biggest solar power system in any New Zealand school.

More payment plan case studies available at energyease.co.nz/news

