



DONE DEAL: Chairman of Hepburn Wind Simon Holmes a Court and Danny Gallagher of REpower Systems with the signed contract for the construction of the wind farm. picture: **Tibor Hegedis**

Wind farm dream now a reality

AUSTRALIA'S first community-owned wind farm moved from a dream to a certainty last week with the signing of the major contract for the construction of a wind farm at Leonards Hill, according to Hepburn Wind chairman Simon Holmes a Court.

The announcement of the contract between Hepburn Wind and REpower was received by the members of Hepburn Wind when they packed into the Daylesford Town Hall for their annual general meeting last Wednesday evening.

"Hundreds of volunteers, helped by the strong support of our members, have been working towards this milestone for the last five years," Mr Holmes a Court said.

More than 1100 members of the co-operative have invested \$7.5 million so far.

Mr Holmes a Court said community funds, coupled with finance from Bendigo Bank and a \$975,000 grant from the State Government, had provided Hepburn Wind with the means to give REpower the green light for the \$12.9m project.

"The two-turbine wind farm is projected to generate 12,200 MWh annually, significantly more than the estimated 10,100 MWh used by the 1887 households of Daylesford."

Construction is scheduled to begin in October 2010," he said.

The wind farm is expected to start producing power in the second quarter of 2011.