



01 Jul 2017

North West Star, Mount Isa QLD

Author: Derek Barry • Section: General News • Article type : News Item  
Classification : Regional • Audience : 1,260 • Page: 8 • Printed Size: 245.00cm<sup>2</sup>  
Market: QLD • Country: Australia • ASR: AUD 401 • Words: 228 • Item ID: 802773664

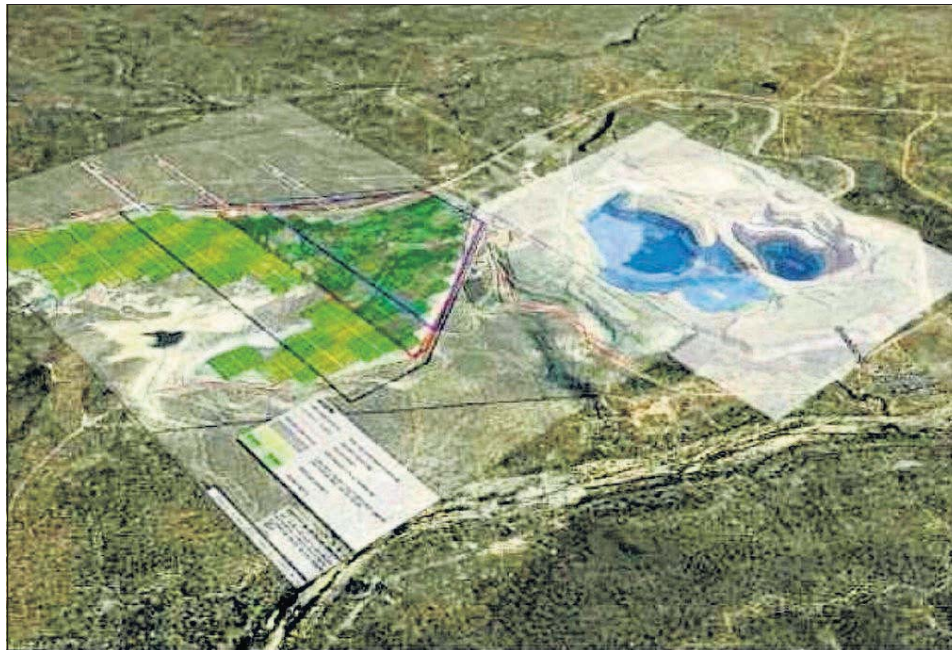
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**CRITICAL INFRASTRUCTURE:** Kidston solar and pumped storage project near Georgetown has been given special status.

## Kidston gets special status

THE state government has given special status to the \$1.05 billion Kidston hydro and solar project to reduce “red tape” road blocks and give the project even greater certainty.

Premier Anastacia Palaszczuk said the project now had critical infrastructure status with Kidston’s 50MW first stage solar farm already under construction.

“This decision highlights our commitment to generate 50 per cent of Queensland’s electricity needs from renewable energy by 2030 and the job-generating effect

that action will have,” Ms Palaszczuk said.

State Development Minister Dr Anthony Lynham said prescribed project powers and critical infrastructure status allowed Queensland’s independent Coordinator-General to employ special powers to help deliver a project and ensure timely approvals.

“This is about supporting a project that will help deliver a reliable renewable energy source and support hundreds of jobs,” Dr Lynham said.

“It will help deliver energy

stability and contribute to our commitments to deliver more renewable energy over the coming years.”

Minister for Energy Mark Bailey said Kidston’s 50MW first stage was the first solar farm to begin construction under the Palaszczuk Government’s Solar 150 program.

“We’re committed to transitioning to a clean energy future responsibly which will see Queensland’s energy system powered by a mix of renewables, gas and traditional baseload generation,” Mr Bailey said.

– DEREK BARRY