

Construction to start on Kidston solar project

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Construction is starting this month on the Kidston Solar Farm near Georgetown.

Construction will start this month on a \$126 million, 50 megawatt solar project at Kidston, near Georgetown.

The building contractor, UGL, is also expected to deliver a series of seminars across the Etheridge Shire and in Townsville by the end of the year, as it moves to mobilise a workforce expected to number 150 for the project.

Project developer, Genex Power Limited, secured credit approval for a debt facility of up to \$110 million, paving the way for construction of the project at the former gold mine, 270 km northwest of Townsville.



Genex executive director Simon Kidston.

Genex executive director Simon Kidston said crews would be mobilised immediately, with an upgrade to the accommodation facility, Oaks Rush, which Genex has secured a lease over for the duration of the project, the first priority.

“It needs to be brought up to current specifications and we need to move additional dongas on site,” Mr Kidston said.

“Then they will move to the tailings storage facility where they need to mulch all vegetation that’s on that area.”

Construction of the solar panels is expected to begin in mid January.

Mr Kidston said UGL, which will also maintain the site under a 10-year contract after the project is commissioned, would run seminars in Townsville, Georgetown, Kidston and Einasleigh, regarding employment opportunities.

“They understand first preference, if at all practical, needs to be given to locals,” Mr Kidston said.

Genex managing director Michael Addison said the commencement of site works was a significant milestone.

“The project benefits from one of the best solar resources in Australia,” Mr Addison said.

“We will target the completion of construction in 2017, allowing first generation and revenue by the fourth quarter of 2017.

“Completion of the project in the fourth quarter of 2017 enables the project to potentially benefit from higher summer electricity prices during the commissioning phase.”

Mr Kidston said the support of the State and Federal Governments had been instrumental.



An aerial view.

“It’s been done with help of the State Government in Queensland, they gave us a 20 year contract to underpin our revenues and that enabled us to get our project finance,” Mr Kidston said.

“The Federal Government through ARENA have given us a grant which makes the project economic for us to develop.”

Genex expects the project to be fully commissioned by November 2017.

The company is continuing to work towards financial close for a hydro storage project it plans to develop also on the site.

The story [Kidston solar project all systems go](#) first appeared on [North Queensland Register](#).

<http://www.queenslandcountrylife.com.au/story/4335840/kidston-solar-project-all-systems-go/?src=rss>