

# Cairns Post

News

## Energy project building job boost

Tony Raggatt

7 July 2020

Cairns Post

A CLEAN energy hub of hydro, wind, solar and transmission projects is set to create more than 1000 construction jobs, developer Genex Power says.

The development company wants to begin construction of its Kidston pumped hydro storage project, about 404km southwest of Cairns, over the next few months.

It also plans two big wind and solar farms, while Genex CEO James Harding says he knows of at least two further wind farms planned by other proponents for the same area.

Also, state transmission corporation Powerlink would have to develop a new transmission line between Mount Fox near Ingham and Kidston to connect the generators to the grid.

Mr Harding said he was “very excited” about the prospects for the hydro project, with construction terms finalised with core contractors and equity investors lining up to take up to a 50 per cent interest in that project.

An agreement with the State Government over the construction and operation of the new transmission line was the remaining “key piece of the puzzle” that needed to fall into place, he said.

“There will be a period of a couple of months of preparatory work but by the beginning of next year there will be boots on the ground,” Mr Harding said. “That is 500-plus jobs and that number of people in accommodation on site.

“We estimate another 500 jobs across the wind and solar projects. There are four (projects) I know of: two we are developing, and the other two are wind projects.” Genex has restructured a power agreement with EnergyAustralia, which has committed to buying the power. Mr Harding said Kidston would be the first pumped storage hydro project developed in almost 40 years.