

## **Kidston Solar Project construction to start before end of 2016**

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May 6, 2016, 10:30 a.m.

North QLD Register



An artist's impression of the Kidston Solar Project which will be developed on the site of a former gold mine in Far North Queensland.

A \$130 MILLION solar project at Kidston, 270 km north west of Townsville, is a step closer to reality, after the State Government honoured an existing environmental authority for the site. Genex Power Limited executive director Simon Kidston described the confirmation that an environmental authority for the former Kidston Gold Mine, which will house the project, does not require amendments, as a “major milestone”.

It paves the way for the 50 megawatt stage one to be developed. An announcement on a major international financier is expected to be made in the coming weeks.

“This is a major milestone because we are conscious that environmental approvals can be potential road blocks to development,” Mr Kidson said. “We have been delighted with the State Government.

“I think they have gone out of their way to get this project approved. “Now with the feasibility completed and all approvals in place we are now able to do the project finance.”

The environmental authority was granted for the former gold mine, which was operational in the 1980s.

Mr Kidson said the solar project would be constructed on the site’s former tailings dam.

“We have been working with the Department of Environment Heritage and Protection to understand what modifications we would need to do to allow another use on the site,” Mr Kidston said.

“There is a tailings storage facility which has now solidified into a deadflat, landmass which is ideal for a solar project.

“It is elevated above the natural ground level by 20 metres and it’s stable. It’s been extensively tested to ensure nothing will interfere with the glass panels.”

Mr Kidston said Genex expected to make an announcement on the construction contractor by the end of June.

“Between now and the end of the calendar year, we will put in place all the financing requirements and finalise the discussions with the construction firms which we have shortlisted for doing the works,” Mr Kidston said.

“They are currently in detailed design and we aim to select the construction firm by end of this financial year.

“With project approvals in place, Genex is now able to fast track development of the Kidston site into an important energy hub for the State of Queensland.”

It will take nine months to build stage one and another three months for commissioning, with the first renewable green energy expected to be

produced by the end of 2017.

Genex also plans to develop a hydroelectric pumped storage project on the site.