

Media release

JOINT STATEMENT

Premier and Minister for the Arts

The Honourable Anastacia Palaszczuk

Minister for State Development and Minister for
Natural Resources and Mines

The Honourable Dr Anthony Lynham

Minister for Main Roads, Road Safety and Ports
and Minister for Energy, Biofuels and Water
Supply

The Honourable Mark Bailey



Kidston hydro and solar project granted critical infrastructure

The Palaszczuk Government is looking to fast track jobs for North Queensland after giving 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.

“Kidston’s 50MW first stage solar farm is already under construction and has created 88 jobs, out of a total 500 construction jobs and 18 operational positions expected for the project,” Ms Palaszczuk said.

“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.”

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.

“The Palaszczuk Government’s \$386 million Powering North Queensland Plan, which will deliver future energy security and 5000 jobs for North Queensland, will support the pipeline of clean energy projects committed and proposed for North Queensland including Genex’s Kidston project. ”

Actions under the Powering North Queensland plan include:

- \$150 million reinvestment of Powerlink dividends for the development of strategic transmission infrastructure to support a clean energy hub, with up to 1000 jobs for Powerlink construction of infrastructure, in addition to the approximately 3600 jobs that will be created in the development of the three proposed renewable energy projects along the transmission line, include stage two of the Kidston project which includes 250 MW of pumped storage hydro and 270 MW of solar;
- \$100 million reinvestment of Stanwell dividends to help fund the proposed hydro-electric power station at Burdekin Falls Dam. Subject to feasibility investigations and other dam construction works, project construction will be targeted to commence from 2020, and support up to 200 jobs;
- \$100 million equity injection and reinvestment of dividends towards improvement works to ensure that the Burdekin Falls Dam continues to meet design standards, which is estimated to support around 250 jobs, and will support the proposed hydro-electric power station; and
- commissioning a hydro-electric study to assess options for deploying new hydro in the state, including North Queensland.

“The Genex project is part of a wave of renewable energy investment activity in North Queensland, with more than 830 megawatts of large-scale projects commencing construction or finalising commercial arrangements,” Mr Bailey said.

Kidston’s 50MW first stage is expected to be completed by late this year, the additional 270MW stage two is due to be completed in early 2020, and the 250MW hydro-electric power station in 2021.

Media contact: Susan McGrady 0488 996 667