

Cairns Post

News

Sophisticated recycling job

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RECYCLING is a constant of modern life.

Recycling is heavily promoted by governments, councils, schools and workplaces. We are urged to recycle everything from car and phone batteries to drink cans and beer bottles.

An old gold mine, more than 400km southwest of Cairns, is being recycled by Genex to become the site of a significant solar farm as well as a hydro storage facility.

It is the first joint solar and pumped hydro scheme in Australia. The project, on the site of the Kidston gold mine which dates back more than 100 years, will be a showcase for renewable energy.

The solar projects will make 50 megawatts of electricity in the first stage (\$126 million) and then 270mW in the second (\$184 million). In between will be the \$282 million hydro

project, supplying 250 megawatts.

Construction of the first stage started yesterday.

When completed next year, the project will have the highest capacity of all solar projects in Australia; a testament to the strong solar resource in the Far North.

It's been backed by the Federal Government to the tune of \$58 million while the Queensland Government has guaranteed to buy power from the first stage for 20 years.

Genex says confirmation of stage 1 will enable the company to fast track development of the second stage expansion and, importantly, the 250mW pumped storage project.

It's quite an achievement and proves "there's gold in them thar hills", well after the mine has been exhausted.