

1000 clean energy jobs



CEO James Harding.

TONY RAGGATT

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

The development company is looking to begin construction of its Kidston pumped hydro storage project about 270km northwest of Townsville 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 hydro power.

Core contractors are McConnell Dowell/John Holland (engineering, procurement and construction), ANDRITZ Hydro GmbH (electromechanical), Beon Energy Solutions (connection assets infrastructure), ISS Facility Services Australia

(camp construction) and Hydro Tasmania (owner's engineer).

Mr Harding said Kidston would be the first pumped storage hydro project developed in the national electricity market area in almost 40 years.

He said it would provide much-needed synchronous firming capacity to unlock additional renewable energy projects in North Queensland.

"We remain focused on delivering the financing such that we can commence construction in the coming months," he said.

Street library a big hit with neighbours

ELISABETH SILVESTER

KEEPING a family legacy burning bright has been the idea behind a Cranbrook father's new housemate.

Parnell Crt Street Library was launched last Wednesday in honour of Ben Freedman's 19-year-old cousin, Sebastian Robinson.

Mr Robinson was an avid bushwalker who tragically died hiking in Tasmania on June 18 after a suspected fall.

Mr Freedman said the new front garden library was a way to honour his young family member.

"Sebastian was a very talented artist and he was keen on sharing his videos about the bush on YouTube so I think the library would fit with his ethic really well," he said.

"We started the idea the very next day after his death and it is something I thought about for a while and it was finally time to do it."

Building the library has proven valuable bonding time with his six-year-old twin children, Elijah and Sarah, who helped pick and paint the project.

"They love it and they are out in the front yard every morning and every afternoon checking the books and telling everyone they see about it," he said.

The response has been positive so far with Mr Freedman saying people had embraced the new resident in the street since moving in a week ago.

"There has been some good activity and the books have been changed and there seems to be a good turnover with some books disappearing, some appearing and some reappearing," he said.

"We went around to our neighbours and introduced the library and we have met people that we hadn't connected with before which has been nice."



TRIBUTE: Ben Freeman has started the Parnell Crt Street Library in memory of his cousin.

Picture: ALIX SWEENEY

Granddad blasted by magistrate for 'deterrent' bedroom weapon

A MAGISTRATE has told a grandfather with an unrestrained gun in his bedroom he did not live in America.

Lindsey William Sargent pleaded guilty in the Townsville Magistrates Court to one count of insecure storage of weapons.

Police prosecutor Cody Rowe told the court on April 1 this year police attended Sargent's Townsville residence on unrelated matters.

Mr Rowe said Sargent had a rifle, a centrefire rifle and a shotgun registered to him and police questioned the whereabouts of the guns.

"Police accessed the gun safe and located the air rifle and the centrefire rifle," he said.

"Police spoke with the defendant and said the final weapon was located in a bedroom cupboard."

The cupboard was unlocked



Lindsey William Sargent.

and open, the court heard.

Mr Rowe said Sargent originally told police he was cleaning the weapon but later

confessed he kept the gun in the bedroom to use against intruders. Defence solicitor for Sargent Helen Armitage told the court her client did not feel safe in his own home after an attempted break-in.

"It is not a case where he has been blatantly disrespectful to the rules.

"He has had a moment of fear and wanted the gun closer to where he was sleeping," she said.

"He is a family man with a daughter and granddaughter."

Acting Magistrate P. R. Smid rebutted Ms Armitage.

"If we all did that, we would be back in America," he said.

Ms Armitage told Mr Smid the gun was not loaded and the gun "was more just to show that he had that just as a warning".

Sargent was fined \$300. Convictions were not recorded.

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