

Construction starts at Gladstone's \$16m biofuels pilot plant



Tegan Annett | 9th Nov 2016 4:58 PM Updated: 10th Nov 2016 3:51 PM



Southern Oil Refinery managing director Tim Rose.

Campbell Gellie

THE first stage of construction has started in making Gladstone a world leader in the advanced biofuels industry.

Work has begun at Gladstone's \$16 million biofuel pilot plant which will eventually turn general waste into fuel suitable for military, marine and aviation use.

Speaking in Parliament this week, Gladstone MP Glenn Butcher said the project had the potential to drive Queensland's economy.

The plant has employed 28 people for its pilot stage.

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Already earthworks, concrete flooring and protective structure work is underway.

"A fully-fledged biofuels industry has the potential to play a key role in our economic future, and this pilot plant is a giant step towards reaching that goal," Mr Butcher said in Parliament.

"This pilot plant is essentially the launch site for a Queensland biofuels industry."

The pilot plant has generated interest throughout Queensland and the world, with its nod to renewable energy a main driver.

Queensland Premier Anastacia Palaszczuk is seeking international investors for the project, and already the US Navy has expressed interest.

Southern and Northern Oil Refinery general manager Tim Rose said the plant was on schedule to begin with processing in April next year.

"I think the most exciting part is we're creating a next generation fuel out of waste products," he said.

"There isn't a part of Queensland that won't be touched by it in some way.

"Queensland has a lot of agricultural, commercial and industrial and residential waste ... that could all be used at this plant to turn in to fuel."

Mr Rose said anything from tyres to algae and macadamia shells could be used.

"The pilot scale will allow us to bring in all the different types of waste to trial and to work out the best economic and industrial processing pathway for each of those wastes," he said.

If the pilot plant is successful Mr Rose will move forward with constructing a \$150million commercial plant which will employ more than 60 people and produce 200 million litres of fuel a year.

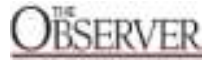
On Friday Mr Butcher will visit the plant to inspect the first phase of construction activity.



A map of the primary processing plant site.



\$16 million Northern Oil Refinery project: If successful, the new project will bring 60 full time jobs to the Gladstone region.



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