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MEDIA RELEASE

Gold Coast claims country's first certified green industrial site

A Gold Coast developer is leading the way in sustainability with his Stapylton project unveiled today (12 November 2008) as the first fully certified eco-industrial estate in Australia.

The four hectare *Mitchell Enviro Industrial Estate* was awarded full EnviroDevelopment certification at a special ceremony on the site this morning, making it the first of its kind to receive sustainability accreditation at this level.

An initiative of the Urban Development Institute of Australia, EnviroDevelopment is a scientifically-based branding and certification system rewarding exemplary sustainable development projects with environment marketing symbols relevant to their achievements.

Viewed by some as the last frontier of sustainability, industrial style developments can present major challenges because of the intense nature of their operations. At the event today, *Mitchell Enviro Industrial Estate* was awarded all six EnviroDevelopment symbols, making it a stand-alone model of eco-industrial excellence in the country.

Developer Bruce Mitchell said his project was the result of a long term dream to prove that industrial estates can be environmentally and financially viable.

"My vision was to develop a site primarily focussed around sustainability to show not only that this can be done economically, but also while operating in unison with the environment, without compromise," Mr Mitchell said.

The Project

Due for completion in June 2009, the site will eventually comprise of six industrial factories ranging from 400 sq m to 4,000 sq m all located around a 4-megalitre dam, which is shaded by native flora and home to a variety of wildlife.

"It doesn't look anything like what you would expect of an industrial estate with our commitment to retaining as much green space as possible," he said.

It also doesn't function anything like a typical industrial estate. In a first for Australia (and rare throughout the world), the park includes an in-house sewage and water treatment system, with water supply from rainwater run off from the roofs and roads being filtered, stored and used as needed for drinking water and irrigation.

Recycled material has been used whenever possible; the existing three buildings are recycled industrial sheds relocated from other sites and the majority of windows and fully recycled or purchased second hand.

Mr Mitchell said that sustainability was a central consideration in every aspect of the development.

“The buildings face north, maximising daylight and minimising the amount of powered lighting required throughout the day.

“We’ve got six, 45,000 litre underground water tanks to capture roof and surface rainwater run-off, all walls and roofs are insulated to create a comfortable temperature without artificial heating or cooling and it even has onsite sewage treatment and reuse,” Mr Mitchell said.

The estate warehouses incorporate energy-efficient lighting and street lighting, water pumps and recycling systems are all run by solar power that is grid connected, which will eventually provide enough energy to feed excess power back into the grid.

Mr Mitchell used the EnviroDevelopment standards guide as a reference when planning the development and was determined to meet every criterion.

“One of the EnviroDevelopment standards is for ecosystems. I wanted to provide a haven for local wildlife such as birds so I made a feature of a large lake in the centre of the site. This was also designed to create a pleasurable working environment for tenants.

“Not only is this a positive for the environment and the industry, but the site’s operational costs are set to be less than other industrial developments of the same size due to the energy and water efficiency mechanisms in place,” he said.

The sustainable charter of *Mitchell Enviro Industrial Estate* extends all the way to the choice of tenants for the park being businesses that operate with the same environmental ethos. Tenants include Anika Products, who make organic soaps and shampoos; Yatala Environmental Solutions, who recycle 95 per cent of their building products; and solar energy businesses, Solar Green and Eco-kinetics.

Speaking at the EnviroDevelopment ceremony, UDIA Gold Coast President Col Dutton said the project was a sign of changing times in the industry.

“Creating environmentally sustainable industrial sites to this level has previously been unexplored by the development industry because of the associated challenges.

“I commend Bruce for showing that a site of this kind can be holistic in its environmental design and provide rewards for the developer, tenants and the environment,” Mr Dutton said.

Passion behind the project

Bruce Mitchell has been in the commercial and residential development industry for years, but it was this eco-entrepreneur’s passion to leave a legacy that threw him head-first into the project.

“I had looked around and seen an increasing number of sustainable residential estates, but no industrial estates,” he said.

“Given the importance and finite nature of our energy and water resources, I wanted to actively and consciously conserve it and hope that future industrial developments will take on board some of the initiatives included in this development.”

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