

Builder's green project points way



The dam adds a calming dimension to the workplace environment

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An enchanting view of the park's man-made creek

Rainwater is harvested from the park's road surfaces and channelled into gross pollutant traps before moving into one of several 45,000-litre concrete tanks.

The water that runs off buildings' roofs travels to separate tanks from where it is filtered and made potable.

Excess water is directed into a 4-megalitre dam, which is shaded by native flora and is home to a variety of wildlife.

Mr Mitchell has installed six large tanks and plans to put in five more to lift the park's water storage capacity close to 500,000 litres.

“I am waterproofed. I won't run out of water,” he said.

“I can operate for two years without any rain.”

“I will have almost half a million litres of water to service the park's needs.”

On completion later this year, the park will comprise five industrial sheds ranging from 500sqm to 4000sqm, a takeaway outlet and 320sqm of office space.

All sheds will have been reconditioned after either being bought from demolition companies or saved from destruction.

One shed, relocated from Surfers Paradise, was formerly the home of Snow World.

Mr Mitchell said he had saved a substantial sum on the first shed, a 2000sqm building now leased to Q1 Packaging.

He said that single saving alone had more than covered the cost of the project's environmental initiatives.

All sheds will be north-facing and have insulated roofs and western walls to achieve energy efficiencies.

They will also be partially built with ultra-panel, a recycled newspaper product that cuts down heat and noise.

Habitat Environment Management managing director Matt Keys, who undertook the ecological assessments and management plans for the park, said working water and energy efficiencies



Above: Bruce Mitchell with Pauline Walsh of Habitat Environment Management... water and energy efficiencies are the smart way to go

Right: The park's barbecue area... a lunchtime retreat for staff



into a project was a smart economic, environmental and social move.

“Good design becomes the gift that keeps giving due to perpetual operational cost savings being achieved,” he said.

Mr Keys said the principles employed at the park had delivered a world-class estate that was cheaper to build and operate and that provided a better environment for workers.

“This type of industry park has the potential to

revolutionise the way we look at laying out these developments,” he said.

The sheds are taking shape around the dam which is partly fed by a man-made creek, designed to carry oxygen into the dam to prevent algae growth and control mosquitoes.

There is also a barbecue area beside the dam that allows staff to enjoy lunch in cool and attractive surrounds.

Common area lighting and water pumps are

solar-powered and, eventually, energy surplus to needs will be sold into the power grid.

A recycling system separating bottles, cardboard, steel and general rubbish is also planned.

Mr Mitchell, who once ran a chain of vegetarian restaurants, said he hoped that other developers would follow his lead.

“If I can influence other developers in this fashion it would be fantastic,” he said.

“They should come and have a look and go somewhere between 5 per cent and 100 per cent of what I have done.”

Mr Mitchell said he had received strong support from the city council, which had ‘wanted to hear what I had to say’, and also from State Government.

He said the city council did not place headworks charges on the portion of the site given over to the environment, saving a substantial sum.

by Tracey McBean
business property
editor

A GOLD Coast developer is creating one of Australia's first ecology-sensitive industrial parks at Stapylton.

The 4ha Mitchell Eco Industry Park, on Jacobs Well-Stapylton Road, is not connected to the city council's water and sewer systems, uses recycled buildings and employs solar power for some energy needs.

The industry park has been created by Bruce Mitchell, principal of Mitchell Builders, who said he expected the project to show a 20 per cent return despite employing a range of significant environmental initiatives.

He said prospective tenants were lining up to lease space in his \$14.5 million estate, which was expected to set benchmarks for ‘green’ industrial developments.

The park relies on the capture and storage of stormwater for water needs and has an onsite system to process sewage for irrigation.