



16 JUN, 2023

SILICA SAND BOOST

Courier Mail, Brisbane

Page 1 of 1

CITY BEAT

with
Glen Norris



SILICA SAND BOOST

Some big news for the **Wayne Swan**-chaired Diatreme with the silica sand mine's North Queensland project potentially worth \$1.4bn over a 25-year life span and set to be the world's biggest supplier of the raw material needed for solar panels and mobile phone screens.

Diatreme this week released the results of a scoping study for the project north of Cooktown, with some attractive economics being revealed. Diatreme chief executive **Neil McIntyre** says the mine has the potential to generate substantial employment opportunities, estimated at about 100 jobs, for the Hope Vale and Cooktown region, together with investment and other economic benefits.

Last year Diatreme announced a near doubling of the estimated silica sand resource near Cape Flattery Port.

McIntyre says Diatreme is set to produce about 3 million tonnes a year when it opens in about two years, then quickly move to 5 million tonnes. That will require about \$340m in start-up capital for the first stage of the mine and about \$500m in the second stage.

The company has a strategic partnership with global material solutions provider Sibelco that is set to speed the development of this resource for the booming solar PV industry. And with Prime Minister **Anthony Albanese** calling for the development of solar panel manufacturing in Australia, this is an increasingly strategic resource.