

Lincoln Minerals gains initial approval for graphite mine north of Port Lincoln

By [Chris McLoughlin](#)



[Photo: Dr John Parker says the mined graphite could be used at a proposed solar plant for Port Augusta. \(Supplied: Lincoln Minerals\)](#)

The Eyre Peninsula is poised to become the nation's leading source for graphite — a mineral vital to the expansion of the renewable energy industry — after a project was given approval by the South Australian Government.

Key points:

- Lincoln Minerals gains initial Government approval for graphite mine
- The graphite could be used for Solarstor's proposed solar plant
- The company says most of Australia's graphite is located on the Eyre Peninsula

Lincoln Minerals wants to invest \$40 million in a graphite mine about 30 kilometres north of Port Lincoln and has just received initial approval for the Kookaburra Gully project.

Its managing director, Dr John Parker, said it could process graphite which might eventually be used for a [\\$1.2 billion solar energy power plant at Port Augusta planned by Solarstor](#).

"They put a 10-tonne block of graphite on a tower and they heat that up to about 800 degrees centigrade with the sun's rays reflected off a series of mirrors," he said.

"They are talking about 1,700 of these towers in the system they're proposing for Port Augusta.

"If you add all of that up that's 17,000 tonnes of graphite sitting up on top of all these towers."

Solarstor was planning to use synthetic graphite, but Dr Parker said the project meant further opportunities for mining in South Australia.

"Most of Australia's graphite is located on Eyre Peninsula," Dr Parker said.

"You could produce the purified graphite for the graphite blocks from Eyre Peninsula graphite ... somewhere like Whyalla ... and send these blocks off not only just to Port Augusta but around the world."

Final approvals for Kookaburra Gully a year away

Graphite is also used in lithium ion batteries for domestic renewable power supplies and has proven to be more efficient in electric car batteries.

"For us it [graphite] is extremely important," Dr Parker said.

"We [have been] seeing a steady growth over the past couple of years and it's growing in electric vehicles, so that's in lithium ion batteries, and the one that's about to take off is in the storage systems for homes which are solar powered."

The final approvals for Lincoln Minerals' Kookaburra Gully should be in place in about 12 months when groundbreaking work could begin.