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Great Southern Minister John Bowler today announced State Government support for common user infrastructure at the Mirambeena Timber Processing Precinct near Albany.

Mr Bowler announced the \$6.2million common user infrastructure package during a visit to Albany to officially launch the precinct.

The Mirambeena Timber Processing Precinct is designed to cater for businesses involved in value-adding to the region's vast plantation blue gum timber resource.

It is 82ha in size and consists of seven large industrial blocks. It is located at the west end of Down Road and adjoins the existing APEC woodchip mill. The package will support upgrades to roads, the development of power lines, water supply and a rail spur.

"The provision of common user infrastructure in a precinct dedicated to timber value-adding activities will not only encourage synergies between these industries but also encourage other timber value-adding opportunities," the Minister said.

"The Great Southern is already gaining an international reputation as an exporter of woodchips manufactured from plantation blue gums.

"On the heels of this burgeoning woodchip industry, I am pleased to see other significant timber value-adding proposals under development."

The package will enable the Lignor Pty Ltd strand lumber industry to establish within the Mirambeena Precinct, with commissioning expected during 2008 and creating 145 new jobs for the Great Southern when fully operational.

"I fully expect that the establishment of Lignor's within the Mirambeena precinct will only be the start of further development and economic benefits for the region," Mr Bowler said.

Lignor Pty Ltd is proposing to use eucalypt hardwoods to produce engineered strand lumber and Beacons Great Southern Bioenergy is proposing a 45MW power station fuelled by blue gum harvest residue. Both projects are aiming to locate in the precinct.

The Minister said the Labor Government identified the development of the precinct as a priority project for Albany during the last State election.

In launching the precinct, he acknowledged the work of the Timber Precinct Working Group, convened by the Great Southern Development Commission, in progressing the planning, necessary approvals and infrastructure components.

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