

## Future Prospects

The following are some key projects expected to contribute to the Territory economy over the next decade.

- Inpex and joint venture partner TOTAL are undertaking the front end engineering and design process for a proposed LNG plant able to produce 8 million tonnes a year at Blaydin Point on Darwin Harbour. An estimated \$12 billion would be spent over four to five years constructing the plant, with up to 2000 workers needed during construction. A decision on whether to start construction is expected at the end of 2009, or early in 2010. As a final investment decision is not made, Treasury has not included this project in forecasts or projections over the forward years.
- ConocoPhillips and the joint venture partners are examining options for obtaining sufficient gas reserves to expand the Wickham Point LNG plant from the current 3.7 million tonnes a year to around 10 million tonnes a year.
- Major mines expected to start or expand production in the medium term include the Arafura Resources Nolan's Bore rare earths mine (estimated development costs of \$600 million) and the Minemakers Wonarah phosphate mine.
- Processing of copper, cobalt and nickel at the Browns Oxide mine near Batchelor. Some manufacturing occurred at this mine in late 2008, but ceased when the mine owner went into voluntary administration in January 2009. Recovery in commodity prices or a better capitalised operator provide the prospect that the mine and processing facility will operate again.
- The availability of gas and the advent of emissions trading and carbon pricing also means the Territory has the potential to become the home of energy intensive industry, with gas providing a cheaper and cleaner energy source for the manufacture of alumina, magnesium and other ore concentrates, and for the production of electricity used in other manufacturing activities.
- As the Territory continues to develop as a service and manufacturing hub for the northern Australian mining and energy sectors, further opportunities are likely to be created for the Territory construction industry.
- The Commonwealth and Territory governments are to spend more than \$1 billion over five years to support Indigenous housing and related infrastructure including up to \$672 million in the Strategic Indigenous Housing Infrastructure Program.