

# Kanmantoo shows how it can be done



**ACTIVITY:** Dean Brown and Drew Simonsen in front of the new mine area at Kanmantoo yesterday.

**Picture:** TRICIA WATKINSON

SHORTLY after his appointment last year, Hillgrove Resources boss Drew Simonsen stood looking down at the company's Kanmantoo site.

It was a chilly July day as he met local managers at the revived copper project.

"There were questions about whether we were going to get the financing done and whether or not the project was going to go ahead," he recalled yesterday.

"What I saw in front of me were a number of uncertain people. They were doubting this was really going to happen. Well, here we are seven months later and look around you."

What in July were vacant paddocks and an open pit abandoned in 1978 was yester-

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day a humming construction site as Hillgrove races towards opening the mine by this December. Mr Simonsen said there were about 130 workers on site now and this would increase as the construction phase peaked.

"Over the next couple of months we will ramp up our employment," Mr Simonsen said.

The mine - between the towns of Kanmantoo and Callington - will be the closest operational mine to Adelaide.

Hillgrove aims to export 21,000 tonnes a year of copper from the site.

This will be in the form of concentrate averaging 27.5 per cent copper with gold and silver credits.

Hillgrove has an initial 10-year mining lease and expects to need about 150 people in ongoing operational jobs with another 200 to 300 people employed in support industry roles. "Our objective is to try to recruit locally," Hillgrove chairman and former South Australian premier Dean Brown said.

Hillgrove held its first on-site board meeting at Kanmantoo, in a site office block officially opened yesterday by Mineral Resources Development Minister Paul Holloway.

Mr Holloway said Kanmantoo was a terrific example of developing a brownfields site.

The construction phase was a significant milestone and an indicator of the economic benefits for the region.

"Mining has a very large multiplier effect," he said.

"You only have to drive through Callington to see the support industry that's springing up to see just how powerful the mining industry can be as a multiplier."

Hillgrove has an offtake agreement with JP Morgan Metals which expects to export to China.

Mr Brown said the mine was being established under a strict environmental regime and following extensive community consultation.