



Ensham plans to expand

ENSHAM Mine, near Emerald, has the potential to become one of Queensland's largest thermal coal exporters, with plans for a major expansion of the mining operation.

Ensham Resources yesterday said it would extend open cut mining and develop an underground longwall mine as part of the Ensham Central Project.

Ensham Resources general manager of development Peter Smith said the company was in the early stages of investigating the extension of open-cut mining in the central area of the existing mine and the later development of a new high-capacity underground longwall mine, adjacent to the existing operations.

The expanded operation is expected to employ more than 700 people, while it could produce up to 20 million tonnes of coal a year over 20 years.

The mine now produces around eight million tonnes a year.