

For Public Notice via Internet**REASONS FOR DECISION UNDER *ENVIRONMENT EFFECTS ACT 1978*****Title of Proposal:** The Wimmera Mineral Sands Project**Proponent:** Iluka Resources Limited**Description of Project:**

The Wimmera Mineral Sands Project is located approximately 40 kilometres southwest of Horsham, in the Wimmera bioregion of Victoria, with an approximate mining footprint of 2,600 hectares. Iluka is proposing to extract approximately 10 million tonnes of ore per annum, which will be refined onsite to produce 192 kilotonnes per annum of recoverable mineral product (zircon, titanium oxide and rare earth products), over the projected 25-year mine life.

The proposal includes the development of a mineral sands mine, mineral separation plant, zircon and rare earth refinery, ore receipt and liquification system, water pipelines, pit dewatering infrastructure, mine by-products and containment infrastructure, electricity supply infrastructure, additional onsite infrastructure (e.g. administration buildings, fuel storage and laydown areas) and offsite infrastructure (e.g. pipelines and temporary construction village). The proposed mining method has not been finalised. However, it is likely to be progressively mined using mobile earthmoving equipment.

It is anticipated that approximately 5.5 gigalitres of water per annum will be required primarily for mineral processing, tailing disposal, dust suppression and rehabilitation.

Decision:

The Minister for Planning has decided that an environment effects statement (EES) is required for the proposed Wimmera Mineral Sands Project, as described in the referral accepted on 17 July 2019.

Reasons for Decision:

- The project has the potential for a range of significant environmental effects, in particular on:
 - native vegetation, wetlands and associated biodiversity values, including large old trees and listed threatened species and communities;
 - surface water and groundwater (i.e. flows, quality, availability) and their associated beneficial uses;
 - Aboriginal cultural heritage values; and
 - existing land uses, amenity (i.e. air quality, noise) and landscape values of the project area and those associated with the region.
- An integrated assessment of potentially significant effects is necessary to ensure there is sufficient investigation of their extent, significance and related uncertainties. This includes examining the scope for further avoidance, minimisation and mitigation of effects, as well as evaluating acceptability of residual environmental effects.
- An EES will enable a single, rigorous and transparent process for consideration of potentially significant adverse effects of the project, prior to any relevant statutory decision-making, including under the *Mineral Resources (Sustainable Development) Act 1990*, *Planning and Environment Act 1987*, *Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006* and *Water Act 1989*.

Date of Decision: 17/08/2019