

AVONBANK MINERAL SANDS PROJECT

ENVIRONMENT EFFECTS STATEMENT

PUBLIC COMMENT INVITED

OVERVIEW

WIM Resource Pty Ltd (the proponent) has prepared an Environment Effects Statement (EES) for the Avonbank Mineral Sands Project (the Project).

The EES, and the draft Planning Scheme Amendment (PSA) are now available for public comment for a period of 30 business days.

This notice is provided pursuant to the *Environment Effects Act 1978* (Vic) (EE Act), the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (Cth) (EPBC Act) and the *Planning and Environment Act 1987* (Vic) (PE Act).

Written submissions can be made between Friday 14 April 2023 and 11:59 pm on Friday 26 May 2023.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The Project is located in the Wimmera Southern Mallee (WSM) region of Victoria and will involve mining the Avonbank ore body to produce a premium quality mineral sands product comprising mainly zircon, titanium-rich mineral concentrate and minor amounts of rare earth products.

The mineral sands product will be transported to the Port of Portland for overseas export, supporting the increasing global demand for critical minerals. The Project aims to create and sustain significant long-term employment and economic activity in Victoria and the WSM region.

The key components of the Project include the following:

- ♦ Mining of the Avonbank ore body to produce approximately 12.75 million tonnes of product over 30-years.
- ♦ Progressive rehabilitation of mined areas to re-establish a productive agricultural end land use and to limit the area disturbed to less than 400 ha at any one particular point in time.
- ♦ Establishment of mineral sands processing infrastructure within the Wimmera Intermodal Freight Terminal Precinct around 15 km north-east of Horsham.
- ♦ Establishment of power and water supply to the mineral sands processing area via a minor utilities corridor that extends from existing services.
- ♦ Transportation of product from the processing area to the Port of Portland via the Henty Highway for temporary storage, loading and shipment overseas.

If the Project gains all required approvals, construction is anticipated to begin from late 2024 onwards.

QUESTIONS

Avonbank Mineral Sands Project

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In relation to the EES Process

Impact Assessment Unit

Department of Transport and Planning
Email: environment.assessment@delwp.vic.gov.au
Phone: (03) 8622 7633

In relation to making a submission or the Inquiry Process

Planning Panels Victoria
Phone: 136 186 (select option 6)
Email: planning.panels@delwp.vic.gov.au

EES PROCESS

In August 2019, the former Victorian Minister for Planning determined an EES would be required for the Project under the EE Act. In July 2020, the Commonwealth

Government determined that approval would also be required under the EPBC Act. An assessment of impacts on matters of national environmental significance (MNES) will occur via the EES process, which is accredited under the EPBC Act through a Bilateral Agreement with the Commonwealth.

In July 2020, the former Department of Land, Water, Environment and Planning issued draft Scoping Requirements for the Project's EES for public comment.

Following consideration of feedback, the final Scoping Requirements were issued, which identified the matters to be investigated and documented in the EES.

The key approvals required under Victorian legislation include an approved work plan and a mining licence under the *Mineral Resources (Sustainable Development) Act 1990* (MRSD Act), an amendment to the Horsham Planning Scheme to apply a specific control overlay to an area within the Wimmera Intermodal Freight Terminal Precinct, and an approved cultural heritage management plan under the *Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006*.

After considering the Minister for Planning's assessment under the EE Act, the Commonwealth Minister for the Environment and Water will decide whether the Project is approved, approved with conditions or refused under the EPBC Act.

The Victorian Minister for Planning will provide a final assessment of the effects of the Project following public exhibition of the EES and a subsequent inquiry. This EES has considered MNES for making a determination under the EPBC Act.

You can make a submission on the matters assessed for the purposes of the relevant provisions under the EPBC Act by making a submission on the EES.

Procedures for the EES are available on the Victorian Department of Transport and Planning website at: <https://www.planning.vic.gov.au/environment-assessment/browse-projects/projects/avonbank-mineral-sands>.

HOW TO MAKE A SUBMISSION

Anyone can make a submission on the EES and draft PSA. Submissions must be made in writing and be received by 11:59 pm on Friday 26 May 2023. Each submission is a public document and will be treated as a submission on the EES and the draft PSA. Only one submission is needed to address all of your views about the Project, its effects and the relevant documents.

Online submissions are preferred and can be lodged via the Victorian Government's engagement website: <https://engage.vic.gov.au/Avonbank-IAC>

Where a submitter is unable to lodge a submission online, they can contact Planning Panels Victoria (PPV) through the Call Centre on 136 186 (select option 6) and request a hardcopy submission coversheet. Each hardcopy submission must be accompanied by a coversheet issued by PPV for privacy reasons.

All submissions must state the name and address of the person making the submission.

Petitions will be treated as a single submission and only the first names from a petition will be registered and contacted. Pro-forma submitters will be registered and contacted individually if they provide their contact details. However, pro-forma submitters who want to be heard at the hearing may be encouraged to present as a group, given their submissions raise the same issues.

Submissions will be treated as public documents and will be published on the Engage Victoria website.

Do not include personal information in the body of your submission (such as your email address or phone number) or photos of people, particularly children. Your submission and your name will be made public.

The submission process is independently managed by PPV and any enquiries regarding the submissions and the Inquiry and Hearing process should be directed to it.

INQUIRY AND ADVISORY COMMITTEE PROCESS

The Minister for Planning will appoint a joint Inquiry and Advisory Committee (IAC) under the EE Act and the PE Act to inquire into and report on the environmental effects of the Project and provide advice on the draft PSA. The IAC will review the public submissions, the EES and draft PSA and will consider the environmental effects of the Project in accordance with the terms of reference issued by the Minister for Planning.

After the exhibition period, the IAC will hold a Directions Hearing online by video conference on Friday 16 June 2023 where the necessary arrangements and timetable for the public hearing will be established. Further information about the Directions Hearing arrangements will be published on <https://engage.vic.gov.au/Avonbank-IAC> when determined.

The public hearing process will commence in the week beginning Monday 31 July 2023 and will run for approximately four (4) weeks as required.

Members of the public and any other parties seeking to be heard at the public hearing are required to submit a written submission and indicate in the online submission form or hardcopy submission coversheet that they would like to be heard at the hearing.

Information on the hearing process and timetable will be published as it becomes available at: <https://engage.vic.gov.au/Avonbank-IAC>

HOW TO ACCESS THE EES AND EXHIBITED DOCUMENTS

The EES documents and the draft PSA are now available to read and download at www.avonbankproject.com.au. Hard copies of the EES and the draft PSA will be made available at the following locations during the exhibition period:

Avonbank Project EES Information Centre
81 Hamilton Street, Horsham VIC 3400

Horsham Rural City Council Civic Centre
18 Roberts Avenue, Horsham VIC 3402

Horsham Public Library
Mibus Centre, 28 McLachlan St, Horsham VIC 3400

State Library of Victoria
328 Swanston Street, Melbourne VIC 3000

You can request an EES information pack which contains:

- ♦ A downloadable electronic version of EES documents, draft PSA and Summary Brochure (via email); or
- ♦ Printed copy of the Summary Brochure and USB containing the EES documents and draft PSA.

For those who may have accessibility issues, or where electronic options are impracticable, hard copies of some documents may be requested, by phoning WIM Resource on 1800 580 787 or emailing avonbankees@wimresource.com.au.

Please note, the EES is a large document and we encourage the use of electronic versions.