

Community Reference Group

MEETING #4

17 Oct 2025

Today's Agenda

Agenda Item	Start	Duration	Finish	Lead
Lunch	12:30	0:30	13:00	
Welcome & Introductions	13:00	0:10	13:10	Chair
Project Progress, Monitoring & Studies	13:10	0:30	13:40	Michelle, Allison
GCM Ownership & Governance	13:40	0:20	14:00	Michelle
Community Engagement & Formats	14:00	0:30	14:30	Ryan
BREAK	14:30	0:10	14:40	
Mining & Rehabilitation Demonstration Pit	14:40	1:40	16:20	Loretta
Q&A	16:20	0:25	16:45	All
Meeting Wrap Up & Next Steps	16:45	0:15	17:00	Chair



Welcome & Introductions



John Mitchell
CRG Chairperson

Gippsland Critical Minerals acknowledges the Gunaikurnai People as the Traditional Custodians of Country that encompasses the proposed Fingerboards Project area.

We pay our respects to their Elders past and present and recognise their enduring connection to the land, waters, culture, and community.

Role & Composition of the CRG

The Community Reference Group (CRG) is a key advisory body designed to facilitate engagement between our project team and the local community.

The CRG provides feedback and input to guide our project decisions, ensuring community perspectives are considered throughout the process.

The CRG:

- consists of **16 members** appointed for a two-year term
- is facilitated by an Independent Chairperson
- attended by Project Representatives, specialists, and observers who are invited as needed

Today's Presenters

**Project Progress
Monitoring & Studies
GCM Ownership & Governance**



Michelle Wood
CEO

**Mine Rehabilitation &
Demonstration Pit**



Loretta Fallaw
Project Lead - Environmental

**Community Engagement /
Town Halls**



Ryan Leslie
Project Director – Community & Stakeholder
Engagement



Pat Harton
Rehabilitation Specialist



Marcus Binks
Process Lead



Allison Hesky
EES Project Manager

Project Progress Monitoring & Studies



Michelle Wood
CEO

Approvals Timeline



Environmental & Technical Studies

Baseline Monitoring:

- Air Quality / Dust
- Surface Water
- Groundwater
- Radiation
- Noise and Vibration

Biodiversity	Soils and Rehabilitation	Land Use and Planning
Agriculture and Horticulture	Noise and Vibration	Cultural Heritage
Air Quality and Greenhouse Gases	Radiation	Economics
Groundwater	Traffic and Transport	Human Health
Surface Water	Landscape and Visual	Social

To inform this assessment, the Environmental Assessment requires a range of technical, social and scientific studies to evaluate potential risks and develop strategies to avoid, mitigate, or manage impacts.

Environmental and Technical Studies

Ecology	Assessment of ecological values and sensitive areas
Flora and Fauna	Species surveys, habitat assessments, biodiversity significance
Cultural Heritage	Studies of Aboriginal and historic cultural heritage
Visual and Landscape	Assessment of visual impacts and landscape character
Land Use and Planning	Compatibility with current and future land uses
Traffic and Transport	Impacts of construction and operations on road networks
Economic Development	Economic contribution and regional development benefits
Social Impact	Community wellbeing, population, and amenity impacts
Human Health	Potential effects on public health from project activities
Agriculture and Horticulture	Assessment of potential impacts on local agriculture and horticulture
Geotechnical Conditions	Subsurface conditions relevant to project safety and design
Soils	Soil characteristics, erosion potential, and handling requirements
Rehabilitation	Panning for progressive rehabilitation and final landform restoration

Baseline Monitoring Studies

To inform the specific technical studies within the Environmental Impact Assessment, GCM has commenced a comprehensive baseline monitoring program.

This monitoring is designed to establish a clear understanding of existing environmental conditions across the project area and its surrounds.

Weather	Ongoing climate and atmospheric data collection
Air Quality and Dust	Includes particulate monitoring and rainwater tank sampling
Surface Water	Monitoring of flow rates and water quality in local waterways
Groundwater	Includes both regional and site-specific (re-supply) monitoring
Noise	Existing noise levels to inform modelling and future management of operational impacts
Radiation	Background radiation levels at and around the project site

GCM Ownership & Governance



Michelle Wood
CEO

GCM Ownership & Governance



Community Engagement & Formats



Ryan Leslie

Project Director – Community & Stakeholder Engagement

Engagement Channels

Community
Reference
Group

One-on-one
Meetings

Briefings,
Presentations
& Site Tours

Drop-in
Sessions

Events &
Field Days

Local
Bairnsdale
Office

Website
+ Chatbot

Webinars

Virtual
Showroom

Newsletters

Mailouts

~5km Mail Drop

WEBSITE VISITS:

9,429

ASKME CHATBOT:

339
INDIVIDUALS
EXCHANGING 3,105 MESSAGES

DROP-INS, EVENTS, BRIEFINGS & WORKSHOPS:

16
(ESTIMATED 320 INDIVIDUALS)

Local
Media

Advertisements
Media Releases
Print, Radio

Social
Media

Facebook
LinkedIn

Information

Info Sheets
Flyers
Maps

MEETINGS

312

PHONE CALLS

465

EMAILS

1,868

5km Mail Drop





1265 Fernbank-Glenaladale Rd,
Fernbank Vic 3864



1800 791 396



contactus@gippslandcriticalminerals.com



www.gippslandcriticalminerals.com

Dear Local Resident,

I am writing to update you on our work to rescope the Fingerboards Critical Minerals Project, the process for the project from here, and connect you with team members who can directly answer your questions.

As you may be aware, in October 2024, the Victorian Government renewed GCM's Retention Licenses for the project. Over the past nine months, we have been working to rescope and design a new project that responds to community and government feedback on the 2021 proposal, creates greater environmental protections, and contributes to the growth of the local economy.

Enclosed is a summary of the proposed key initial changes and an overview of the approval process. You can also view an interactive map showing the new mining and retention license area on our website. An updated map with additional detail, including our proposed mining sequence over the life of the mine and areas proposed for equipment and storage, will be released in the coming months.

What's next

Over the coming year, we will be conducting new environmental and technical studies, including monitoring, to better understand the baseline local conditions and environment. These studies will examine economic benefits and jobs as well as potential impacts such as dust and air quality, ecology, water and cultural heritage. To complete these studies, our scientists and technical specialists will undertake minor works, such as installing monitors within the new mining and nearby areas.

Please note: GCM will only need access to a small number of properties to complete our studies, and we will make direct contact with the property owner before accessing any property. This may include putting in place a Land Access Agreement with appropriate compensation.

Once these studies are complete in 2026, they will be exhibited for public review and feedback before the Minister for Planning assesses the project and determines whether it can go ahead. This is a multi-year process determined by the Victorian Government and the full process is outlined in the attachment to this letter.

Your input matters

As we undertake this work, we want to ensure that community feedback continues to shape the project. We welcome ongoing input and are available to meet with residents, landholders and local organisations to better understand local priorities and expectations. We are also exploring how the project can deliver lasting benefits, including local jobs, partnerships with regional organisations, and investment in initiatives that support the community beyond the life of the mine.

Stay connected. Stay informed.

Over the next few weeks, our team will also be visiting some households surrounding the proposed project area to share information and answer any questions directly. Scan the QR code, email us, call, or text a GCM team member to provide us with your best contact details and receive regular updates. You can also opt out of any communications. GCM will continue to provide regular updates on our website, on Facebook as well as via local newspapers and our community newsletter.

As there are currently several projects underway in East Gippsland, if you are unsure if it is GCM that is working in your area, you can always call us on 1800 791 396 to verify. If you would like to meet with us or to update your details, contact Allison Heskey 0474 500 196 or Murray Holland on 0400 216 811 or email us at contactus@gippslandcriticalminerals.com

We look forward to hearing from you.

Michelle Wood
Michelle Wood
Chief Executive Officer



Scan the QR Code:



Project

Gippsland
Critical Minerals

Project overview

Informational panel titled "Project overview" featuring a blue information icon, a photo of a mining site, and financial data: ~300+, \$300m, and \$180m.

Informational panel titled "About Fingerboards" featuring a blue information icon and a photo of a mining site.

Informational panel titled "Minerals essential for everyday life" featuring a blue information icon and a photo of a mining site.

Informational panel titled "Our approach to mining" featuring a blue information icon and a photo of a mining site.

Informational panel titled "Where we are and where we are going" featuring a blue information icon and a photo of a mining site.

Informational panel titled "What are the benefits?" featuring a blue information icon and a photo of a mining site.



Virtual Showroom

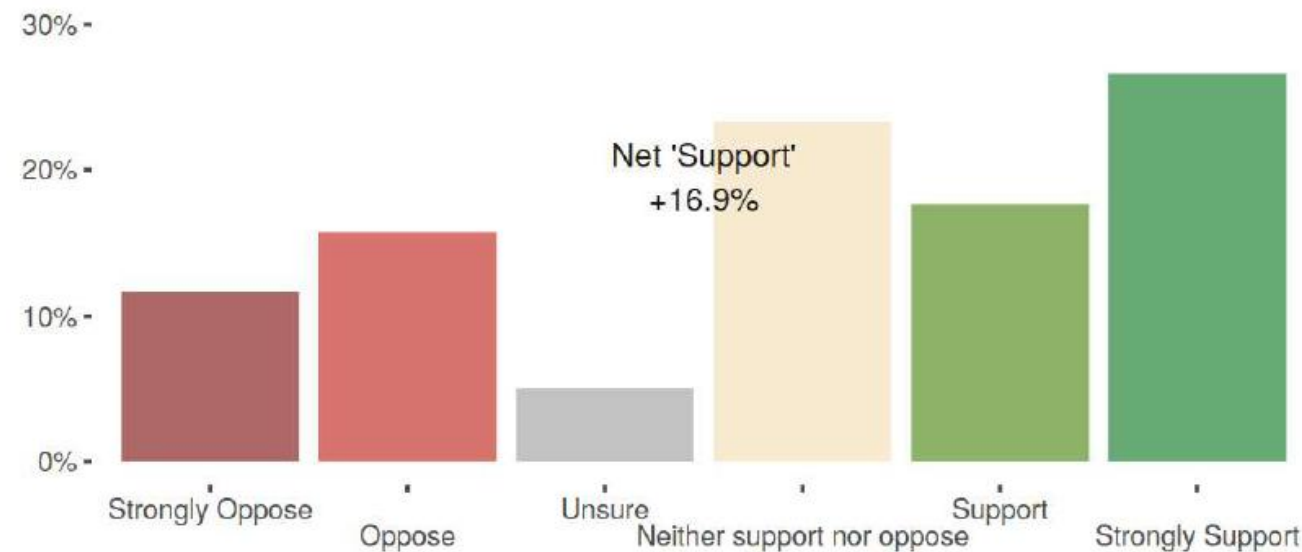


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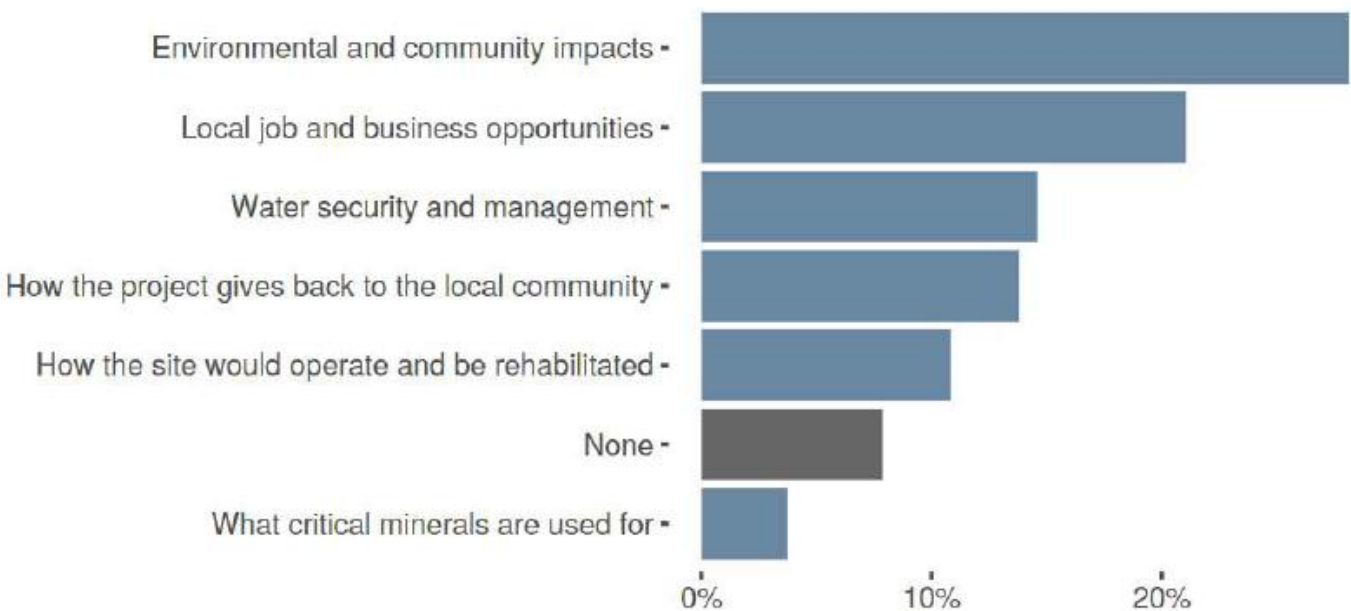
3.12 Overall Project Support

The Fingerboards project would extract critical minerals that are used to produce technology devices like smart phones, and components for batteries, electric vehicles, wind turbines and other sources of renewable energy. It is estimated that the project would have a life of around 22 years. Overall, do you support or oppose the establishment of a Fingerboards Critical Minerals project?

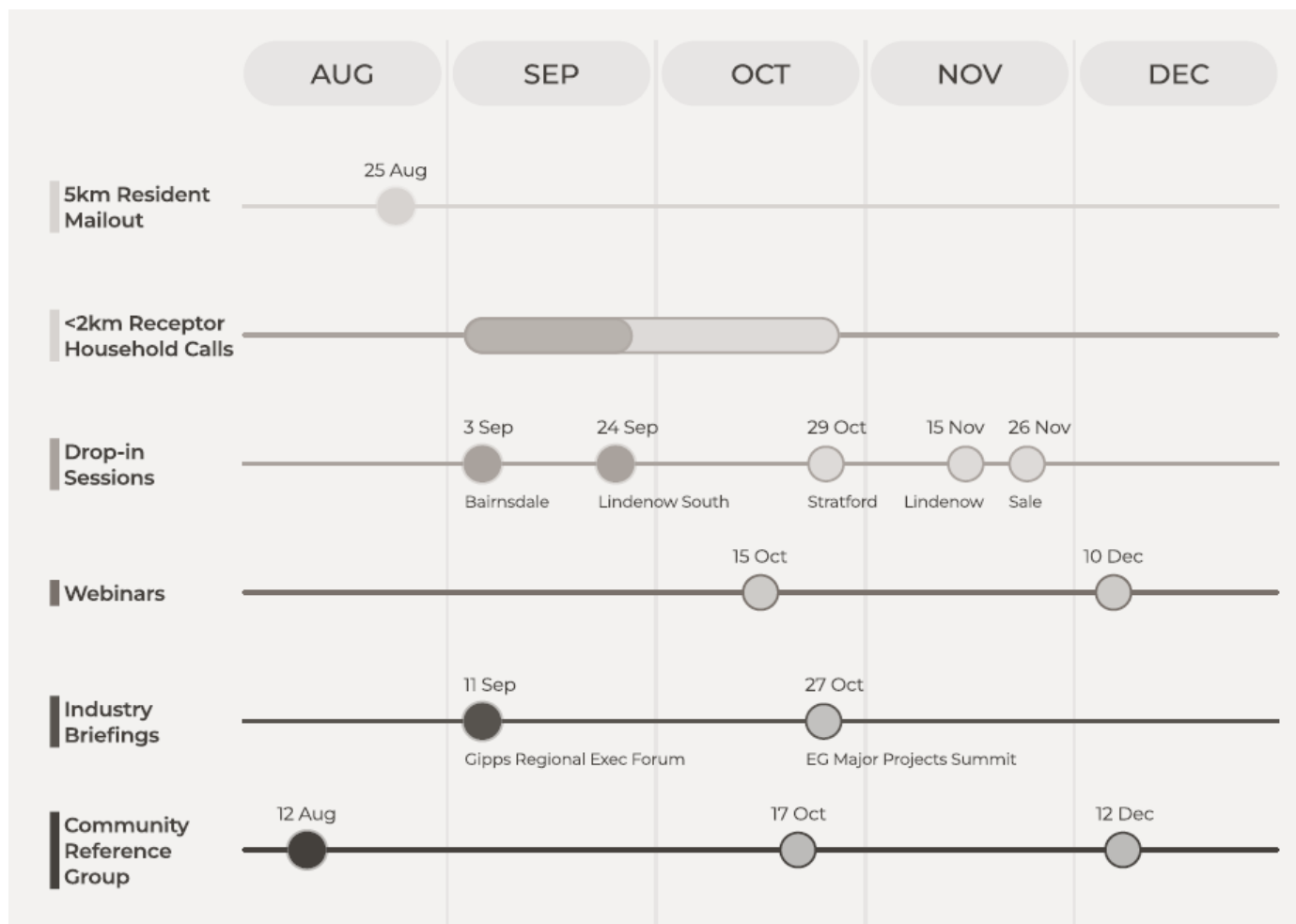


3.14 Determining Support

Of the following, what is most important in determining whether you support or oppose the project?



Key Public Engagements



Bairnsdale
CHAMBER OF COMMERCE & INDUSTRY

MAJOR PROJECTS SUMMIT

Monday 27th October 2025
7:30 - 11:00 am
Bairnsdale RSL
2 Forge Creek Rd, Bairnsdale

INVITATION TO OUR FREE BREAKFAST EVENT

Proudly hosted by the Bairnsdale Chamber of Commerce & Industry, this is your front-row seat to the major projects that will shape our region's future. The event is about sharing knowledge, building relationships, and ensuring East Gippsland businesses are well placed to seize the opportunities that come with significant investment.

From unlocking a world-class rare-earths resource and driving local jobs through Gippsland Critical Minerals' Fingerboards Project, to harnessing Gippsland's coastal winds with Southerly Ten's offshore wind developments, and positioning the South East Coast as a hub for Australia's clean-energy transition through Pentarch Offshore Solutions' operations, these projects together showcase the region's pivotal role in powering a sustainable future.

KEYNOTE SPEAKER: ARNOLD DIX

From Global Hero to Gippsland Guardian

Arnold Dix captured global attention leading the 17-day rescue of 41 workers trapped in a Himalayan tunnel. Now, he brings those lessons home. With decades of service to Gippsland, Arnold's insights guiding how major projects can overcome complexity to deliver opportunity, resilience, and community benefit.

SCAN HERE TO BOOK YOUR FREE TICKETS

Proudly sponsored by:

Gippsland Critical Minerals

SOUTHERLY TEN

PENTARCH OFFSHORE SOLUTIONS

Public Engagement Formats

Let's have a
discussion



Let's take a break

Mine Rehabilitation & Demonstration Pit



Loretta Fallaw
Project Lead – Environmental

Purpose & Context

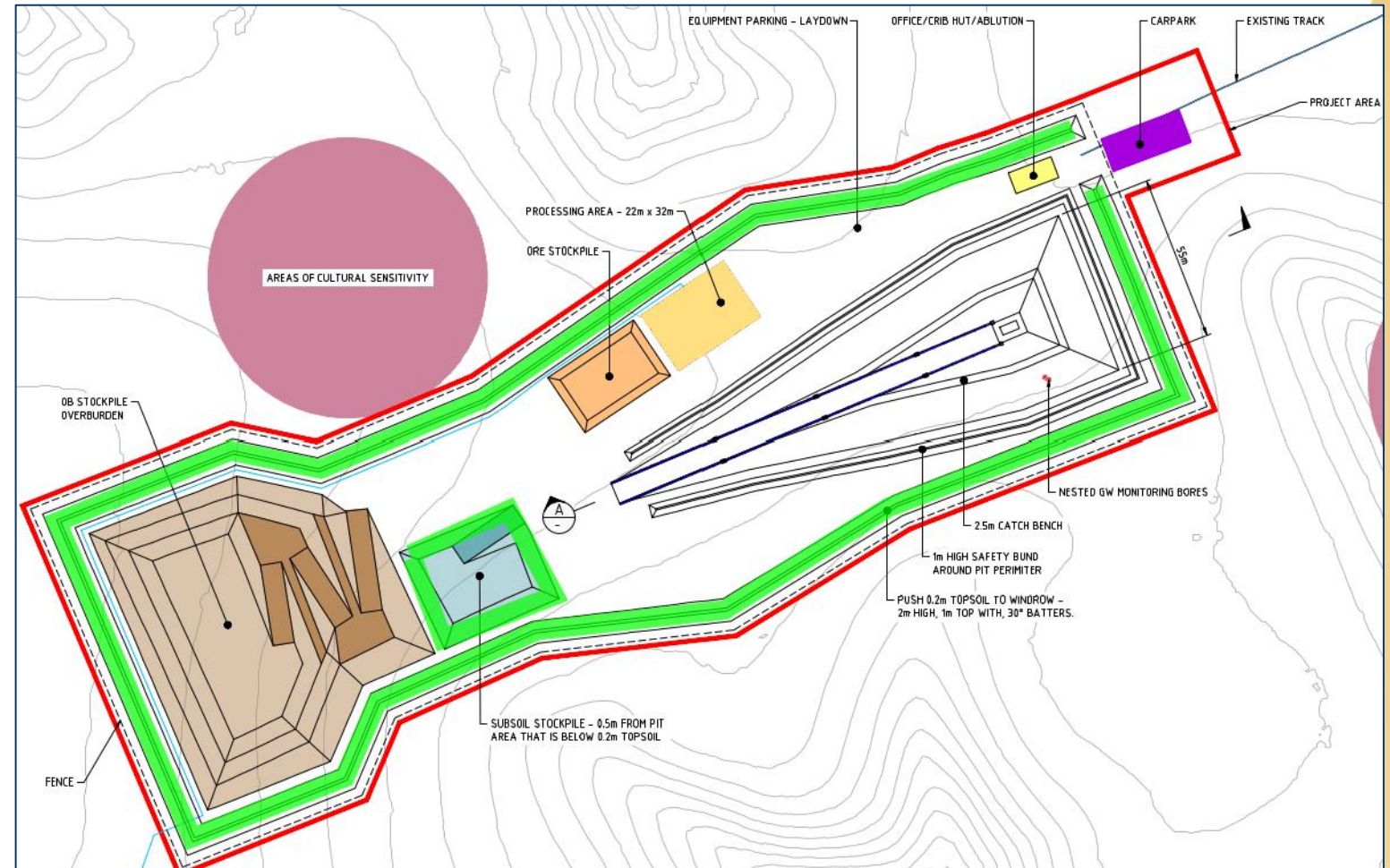
- Responds to 2021 IAC recommendations and fulfills **RL2026 Milestones #35 & #46**
- Supports rehabilitation trials, water recovery validation, and community demonstration
- Builds on extensive historical data and EES findings through practical implementation

Year 3	
Milestones	Status
#23 Rescope – boundaries and buffer changes	■
#24 Commence Concept Definition Study (CDS or FS)	■
#25 Complete assay samples from Fingerboards 2022 infill drilling	■
#26 Community Engagement Plan	■
#27 Key Stakeholder Policies and Procedures	■
#28 Community Benefits	■
#29 Community Sentiment	■
#30 Assess Stakeholder Expectations and Priorities	■
#31 Inform Community	■
#32 Advance access agreements	■
#33 Environmental Baseline Monitoring	■
#34 Climate Modelling	■
#35 Rehabilitation Trials	■
#36 Impact Assessment Studies – Commenced	■

Year 4	
Milestones	Status
#37 Continue Concept Definition Study	■
#38 Community Engagement	■
#39 Community Benefits	■
#40 First Nations	■
#41 Community Sentiment	■
#42 Assess Stakeholder Expectations & Priorities	■
#43 Advance Access Agreements	■
#44 Environmental Baseline Monitoring	■
#45 Climate Modelling	■
#46 Rehabilitation Trials	■
#47 Impact Assessment Studies – Commenced/ Continued	■
#48 EES Decision on new referral	■
#49 Water Sources & Supply	■

Approval Process & Historical Data

- Builds on over a decade of technical studies and EES investigations
- Informed by the Minister's 2021 assessment under the Environment Effects Act
- Uses existing geological, hydrological, ecological, and social data
- Approval under the MRSD Act for exploration:
 - Exploration project and does not support economic gain from mining.
 - Do not require planning permission.
 - Need to prepare series of approval documents:
 - Work plan
 - Risk Management Plan – risk treatment plans and management plans
 - CHMP



MRDP Considerations

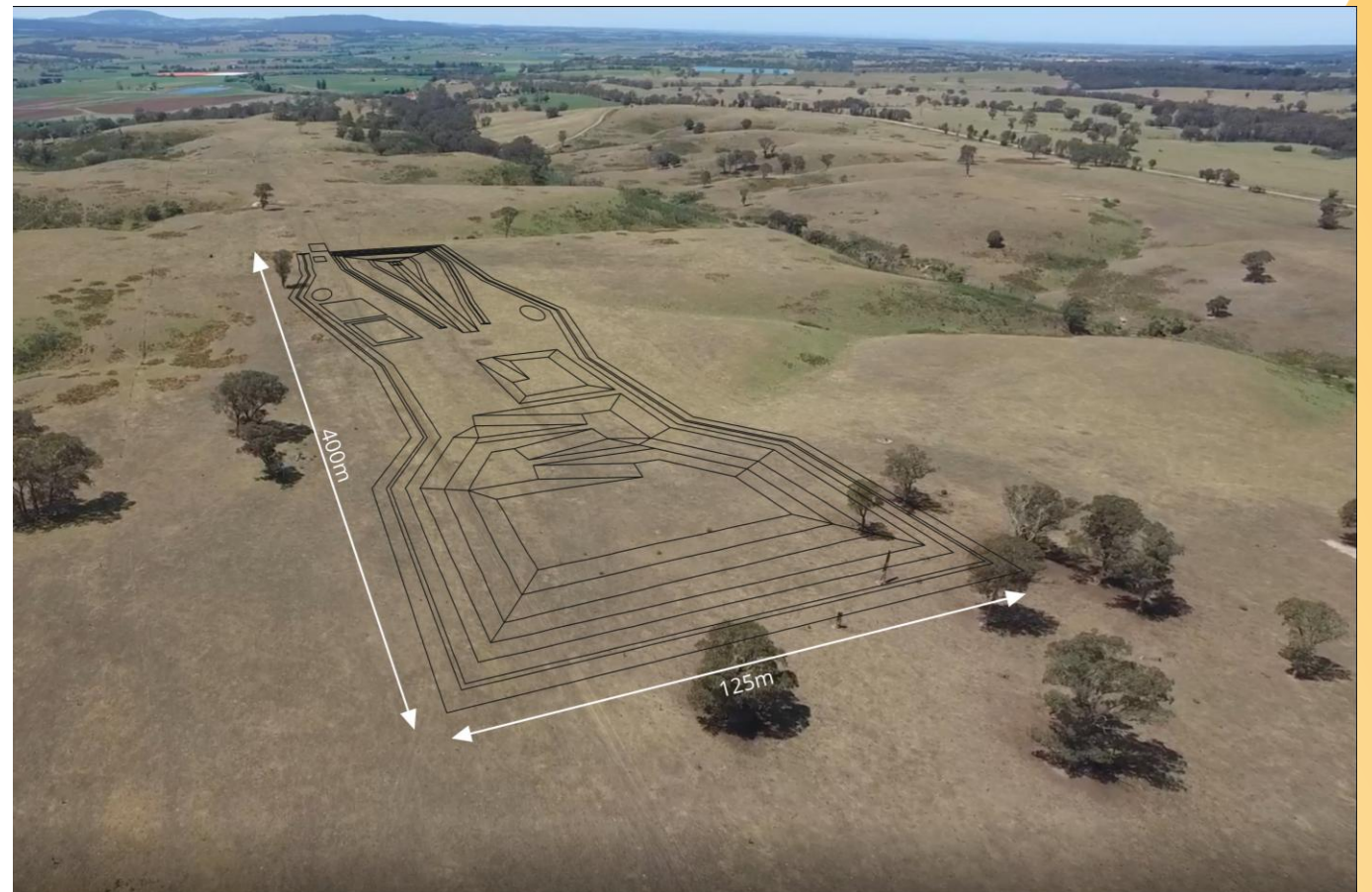
Existing Environment, siting of the project and why we chose to site the MRDP where we did.

Consideration given to:

- Groundwater
- Vegetation Loss minimisation
- Ore depth / strip ratio
- Location of near by dwellings and sensitive receptors
- Surface water and catchment area
- Cultural Heritage Sensitivity avoidance

Risk Management Plan

A risk assessment is used to identify, quantify and mitigate the risks associated with the MRDP.



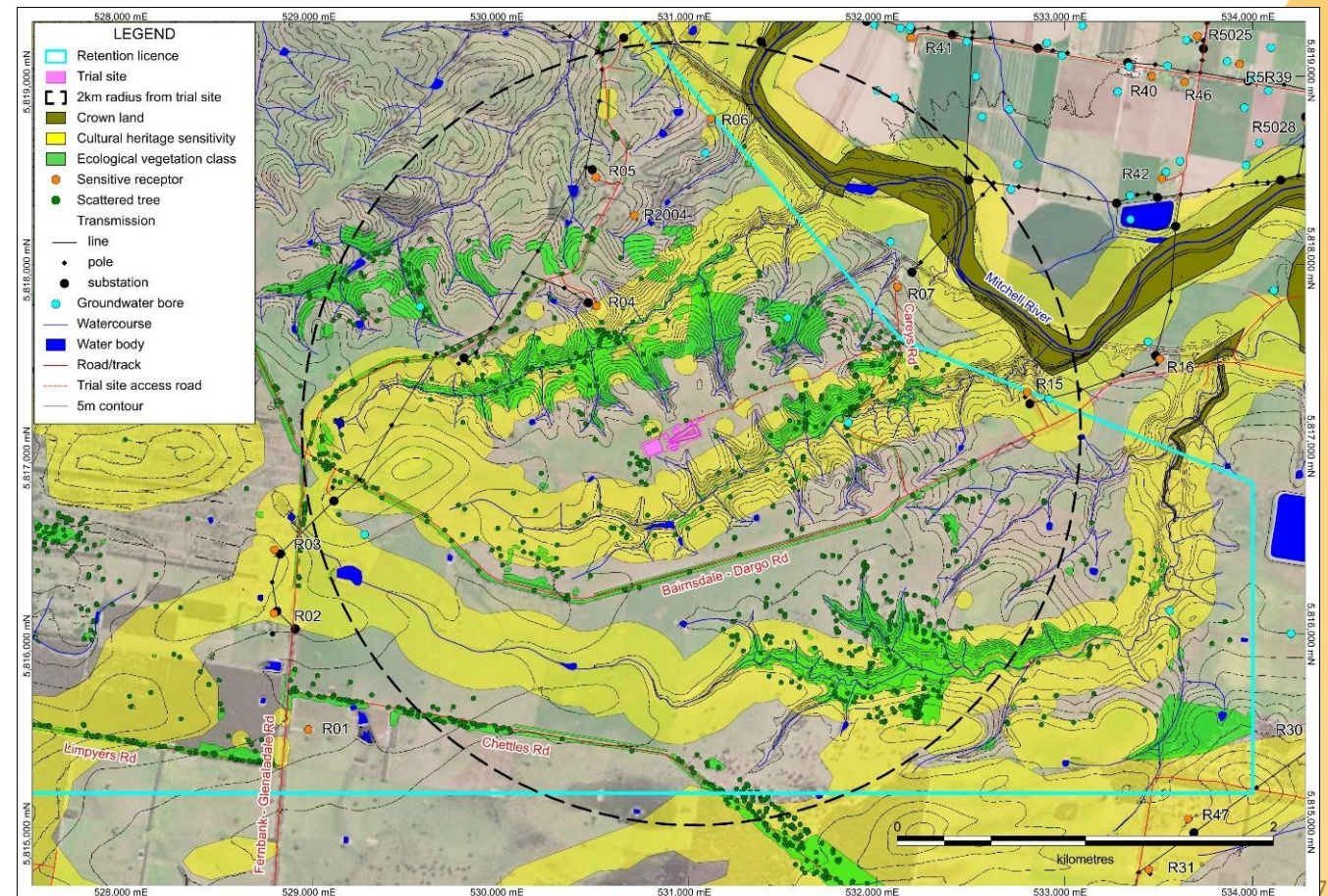
Sensitive Receptors

Sensitive receptors are locations or entities that may be adversely affected by project activities.

Under the ***Mineral Resources (Sustainable Development) Act*** (MRSD), these typically include:

- Residences and community facilities
- Schools and healthcare centres
- Waterways, wetlands, and ecological assets
- Agricultural land and heritage sites

Receptor mapping has been undertaken by GCM to identify sensitive receptors within and around the project area, assess potential exposure to project impacts, and inform targeted mitigation and monitoring strategies.



Scalable and Similar to Accepted Demonstration Pits

Industry Practice:

- ~0.6 hectare pit replicates full-scale mining and rehabilitation
- Uses modular gravity-based plant and wet backfill trials
- Consistent with demonstration pit practices across Victoria
- Generates representative ore and tailings for technical validation
- Soil profile reinstatement and landform reconstruction support post-mining land use
- Demonstrates compatibility with local farming practices, Rehabilitation trials include pasture species and cropping evaluation
- Enables monitoring of vegetation establishment and land stability

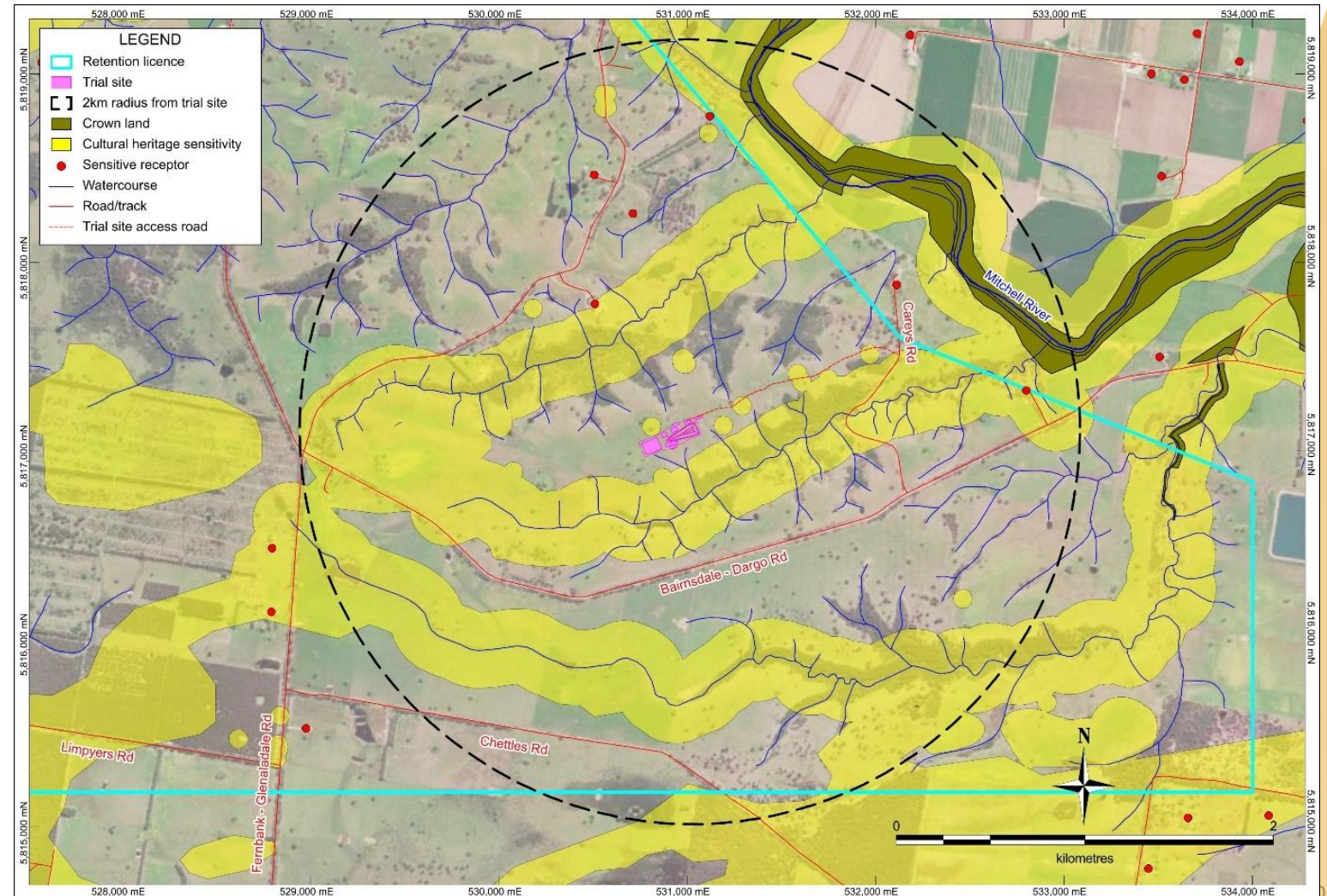
MRDP Timeline

- **Earthworks phase:**
approx. 3 months
aiming to commence
early 2026
- Rehabilitation trials
commence into **2026**
and will be ongoing
- Enables community
and stakeholder
observation of
mining, processing,
and rehabilitation in
real time

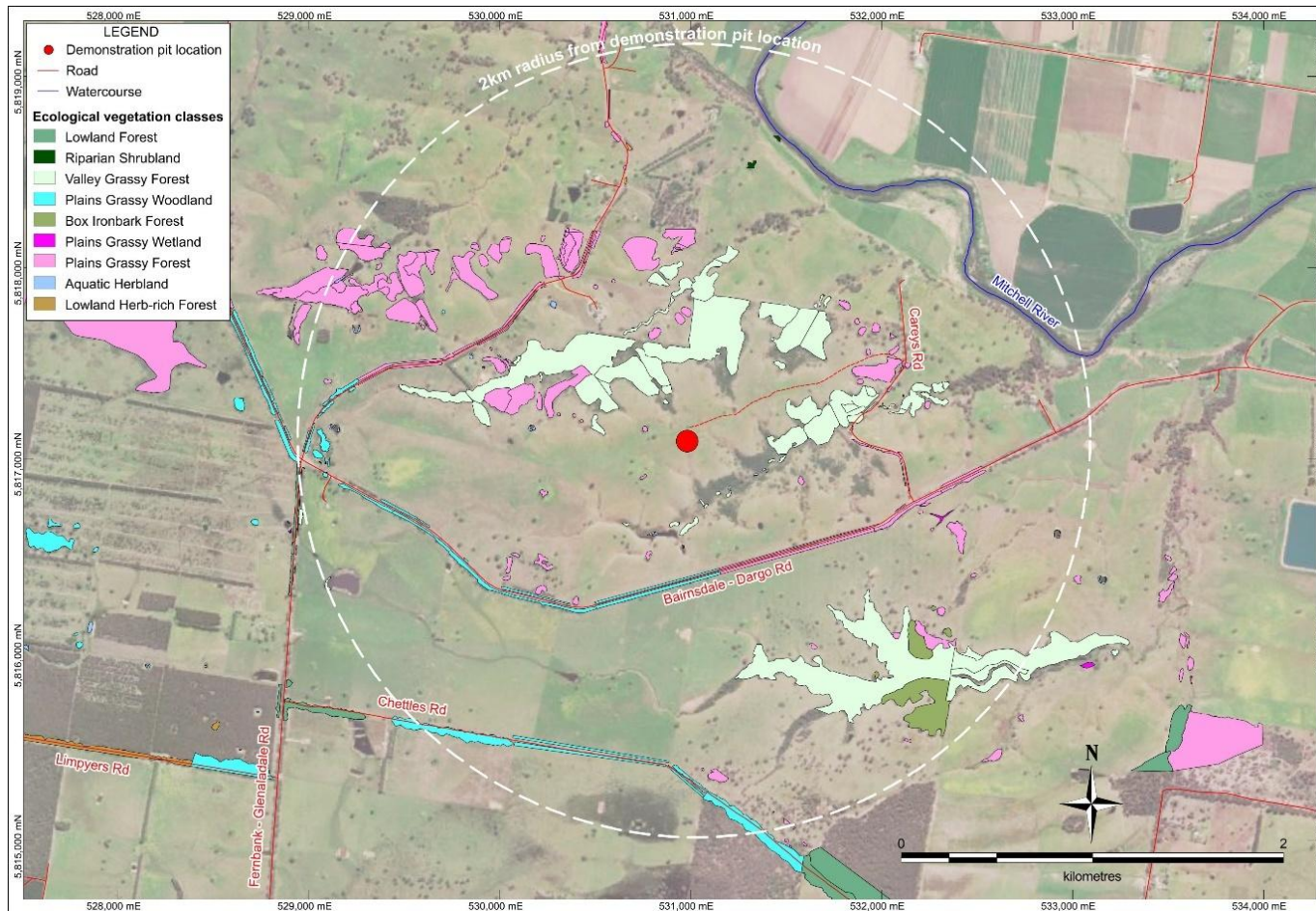
Activity	Duration	Month 1	Month 2	Month 3	Month 4	Month 5	Month 6	Month 7
Trial Test Pit								
Mobilisation, construction of pit and ore extraction	1 month	▶	⊙					
Establishing process facilities	1 month	▶	⊙					
Processing on site and Tailings Trials	5 weeks		▶					
Backfilling of pit	2 weeks				▶⊙			
Subsoil manufacturing and placement	2 weeks				▶⊙			
Topsoil placement	1 week					▶⊙		
Rehabilitation Trials								
Revegetation planting	2 weeks							▶⊙
Monitoring	12 months							▶ ongoing

Cultural Heritage – CHMP

- Avoids areas of known Indigenous cultural sensitivity
- Incorporates buffer zones and mitigation measures
- Aligns with commitments to Gunaikurnai People and heritage protection
- Site surveys were undertaken and field assessments completed



Vegetation



- MRDP site selected to avoid remnant vegetation and EPBC-listed communities.
- Rehabilitation trials include pasture species selection and revegetation performance monitoring.
- Vegetation mapping (EHP, 2020) guides impact minimisation and restoration planning.

Groundwater

- Hydrogeological assessments (EMM, Coffey, 2020) inform water balance and seepage controls.
- Extensive drilling around the test pit area to understand groundwater depths
- Groundwater monitoring is embedded in the rehabilitation sequence.
- Risks to nearby bores and GDEs are assessed and mitigated through sediment traps and drainage controls.



Dispersive Soils

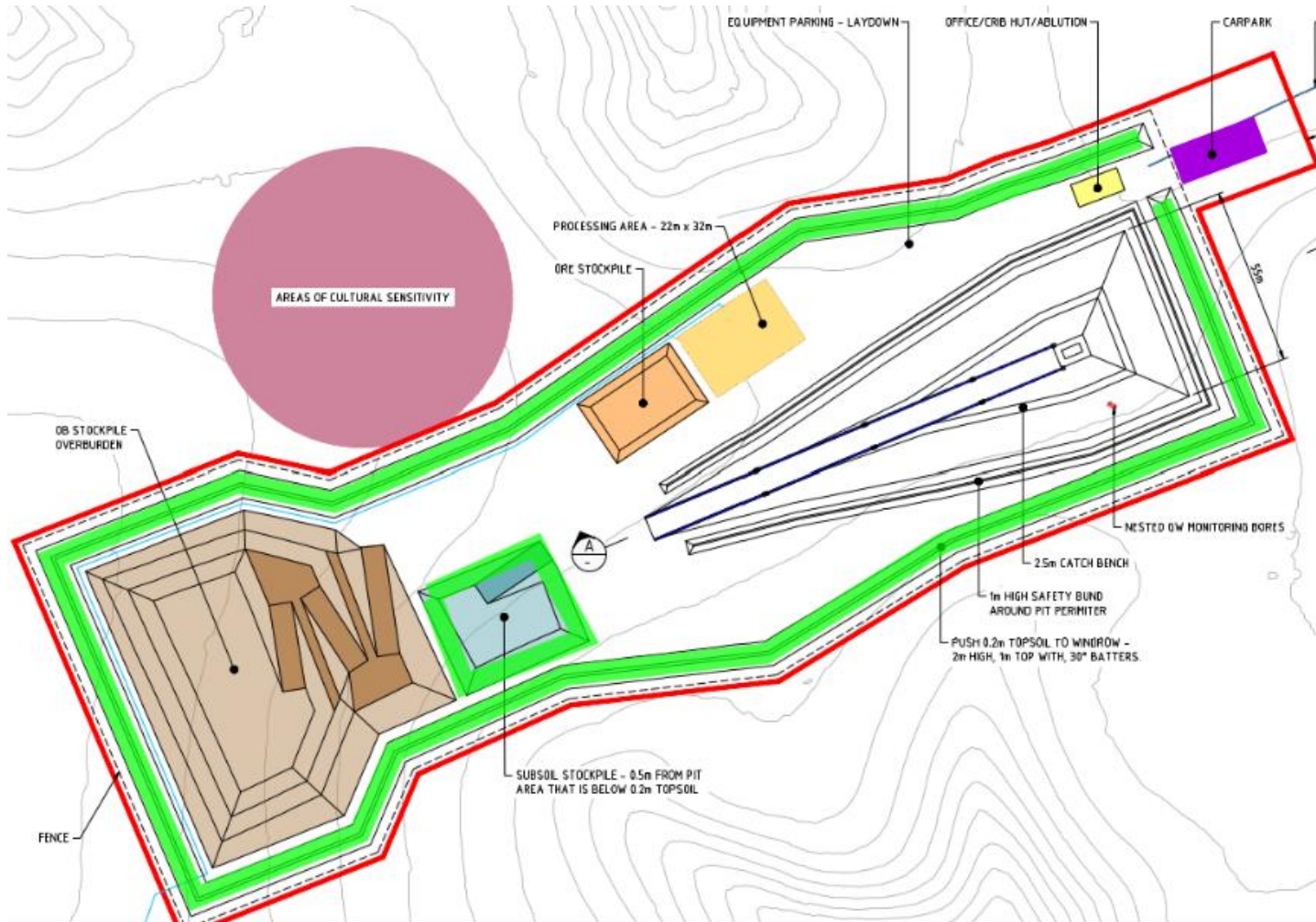
- Soil mapping and geotechnical assessments (Landloch, 2020) for baseline information on the soil profile
- Rehabilitation trials will test subsoil treatment methods, including gypsum application and vegetation cover
- Monitoring of surface stability and settlement



Earthworks & Processing

Marcus Binks
Metallurgy Consultant

Earthworks & Processing



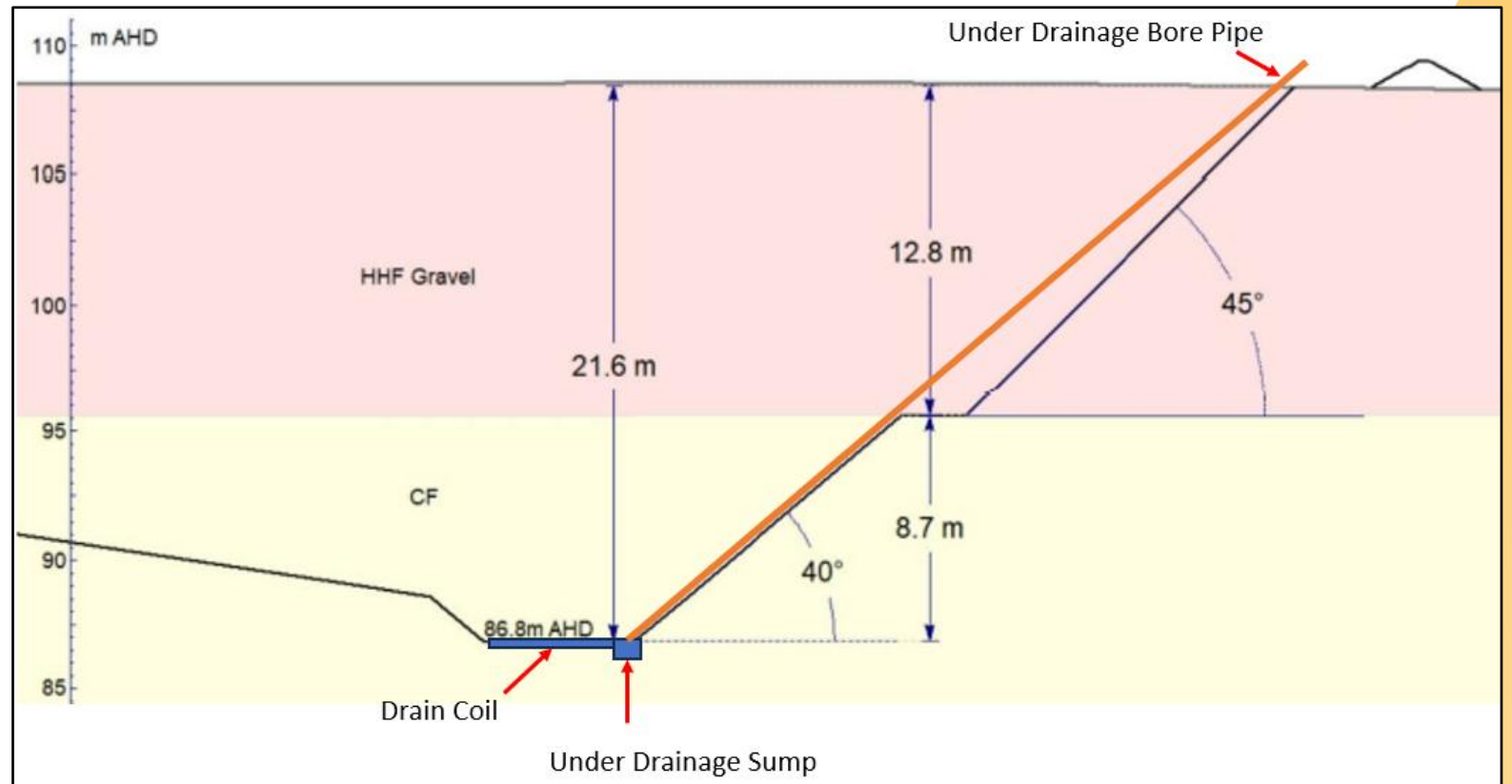
Earthworks and Processing is a staged process that encompasses:

- Topsoil Removal
- Subsoil Removal
- Overburden removal
- Ore recovery
- Backfilling; and
- Contouring

Earthworks & Processing

Following excavation, several activities are planned and include but not limited to:

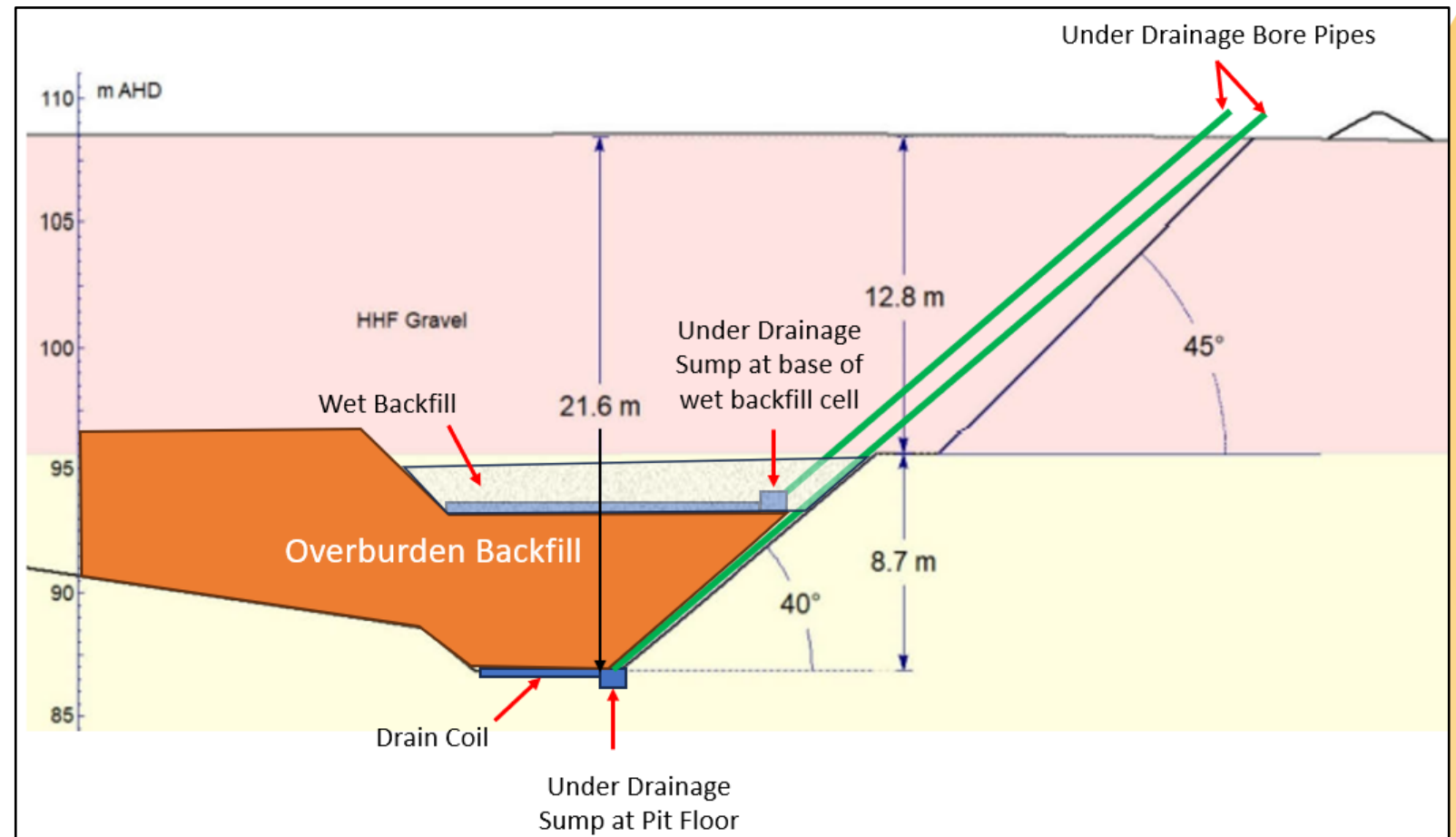
- Geotechnical assessment and testing
- Surveying of the void and stockpiles
- Installation of underdrainage system



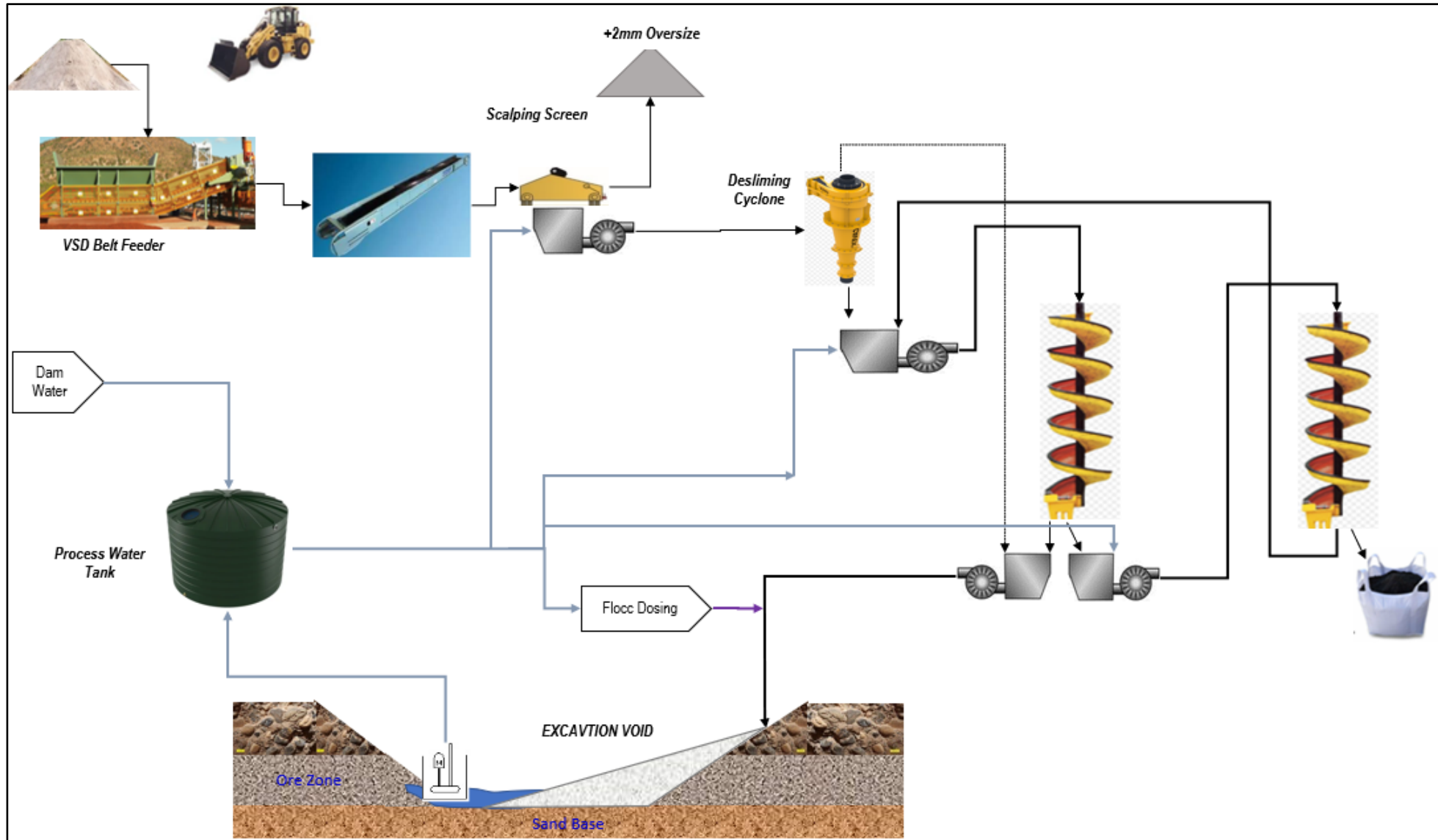
Backfilling

The void backfill will be completed in several phases:

- Backfill using HHF overburden to form a wet backfill cell;
- Placement of wet sand tails;
- Remaining overburden
- Subsoil and Topsoil placement and contouring



Process Plant



Data Collection

Monitoring throughout all phases of the project:

- Environmental – noise, air
- Geotechnical
- Water - Raw, Process, Surface Water, Underdrainage water, decant
- Surveying
- Radiation

Rehabilitation Strategy



Pat Harton
Rehabilitation Specialist

Rehabilitation Strategy & Goals of the MRDP

Rehabilitation Strategy

The rehabilitation strategy is designed to evaluate and refine best-practice approaches for restoring disturbed land to a stable and productive agricultural land use. The strategy will focus on assessing the quality and suitability of various subsoil treatments, and ensuring effective topsoil management; whilst also focusing on promoting successful vegetation establishment.

Rehabilitation Goals

- Safe to humans and the environment;
- Non-polluting;
- Geotechnically and erosionally stable; and
- Able to sustain post-mining land uses agreed with stakeholders

Landform Reconstruction Prior to Rehab Commencement

Prior to revegetation activities occurring, the following key landform reinstatement activities will occur to enable seamless pasture re-establishment:

- 1 **Landform reinstatement** will have occurred including the reconstruction of the soil profile (both subsoil and topsoil), to restore the site's physical foundation.
Project design
- 2 The entire demonstration pit area (hardstand areas, processing area, stockpile locations, and the pit itself) will be shaped into a **single contoured landform**.
- 3 The final contour will **reintegrate** the site into the broader catchment area, aiming to replicate pre-disturbance drainage lines and natural contours wherever feasible.
- 4 The completed landform will be left with a relatively flat or gently sloping topography, ensuring it remains **accessible** for all broadacre agricultural sowing equipment.
- 5 The most suitable sowing equipment will be selected to match the **scale and requirements** of the seed mix for the project.

Subsoil trial

The trial is located within the a section of the project areas described as a plateau, which forms the upper planar surface of the project area and exhibits a low gradient, is predominantly characterised by Sodosols, with acidic texture contrast soils with sandy surface horizons overlying sodic clay subsoils.

All topsoil is proposed to be stripped and stockpiled for replacement following the completion of the trial. These topsoil's will be sampled and amended where required to maximise the success of the rehabilitation trial.

Two different subsoils are proposed to be trialled within the pit footprint:

- **Conditioned Haunted Hills Formation**, which will the subsoils that have been removed from the pit area. These soils will be amended in line with recommendations from the projects agronomist to aid in rehabilitation success
- **Coongulmerang Sands**, which are widely available geological formation, it is a suitable subsoil replacement as it has consistent geotechnical behaviour and similar constraints to the HFF formation which will enable similar amelioration

Subsoil Geological Formations

The characteristics of the two subsoil formations are described below

Subsoil	Description
Conditioned Haunted Hills Formation	• The upper sandy and clayey units of the Haunted Hills Formation (HHF) overburden are the existing subsoil of the landscape, and will be preferentially replaced as the subsoils within the trial. They will be appropriately ameliorated. These finer-textured materials, while dispersive in their natural state due to elevated exchangeable sodium and magnesium levels, can be stabilised through gypsum application and an appropriate Ca/Mg ratio . • This chemical amendment improves soil structure, reduces dispersion risk, and enhances permeability. When overlain with a topsoil layer the resulting profile provides an effective rooting depth, supporting vegetation establishment.
Coongulmerang Sands	• The Coongulmerang Sands are characterised by their predominantly fine-grained, silty sand composition. These sands exhibit consistent geotechnical behaviour throughout the five grade-based subdivisions established by Gippsland Critical Minerals, ensuring reliability in their use for landform reconstruction and rehabilitation • The Coongulmerang Formation, which contains the Coongulmerang Sands, is situated beneath the Haunted Hills Formation in the Glenaladale region of East Gippsland. • Coongulmerang Sands present a stable, low-risk medium for subsoil substitution during rehabilitation. Their predictable geotechnical properties and favourable geochemical profile make them particularly suitable for inclusion in reconstructed soil profiles, especially within post-mining landscapes intended to support pasture or native vegetation.

Subsoil Trial – Proposed Layout

The proposed trial layout across the pit footprint are displayed below.

Key

- HFF
- Coongulmerang Sands

Figure 1: Cross section with subsoil formations

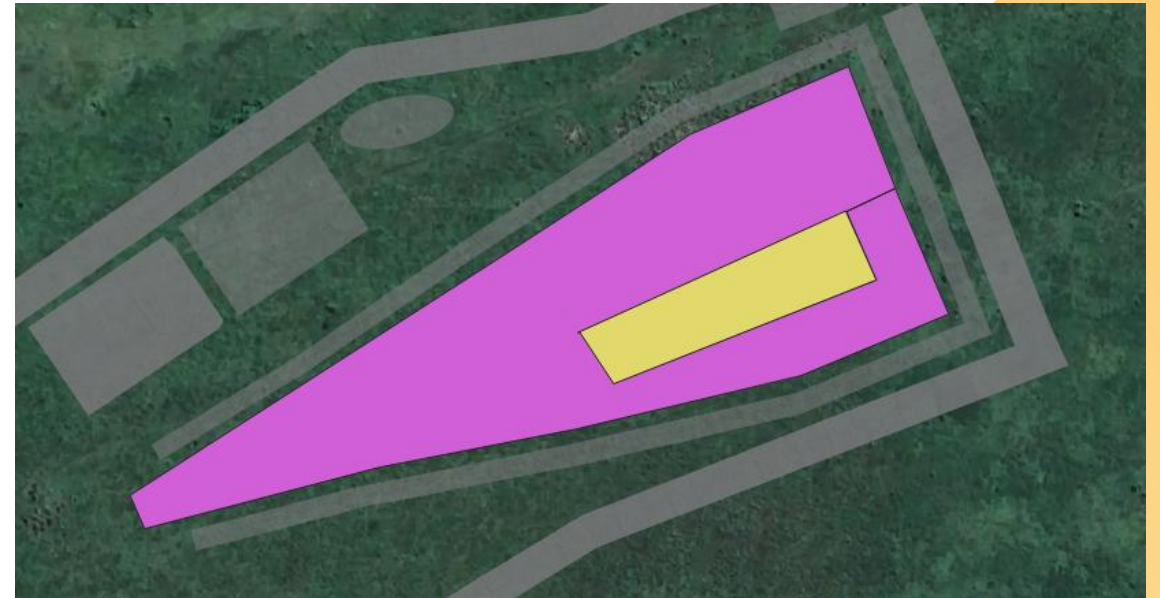
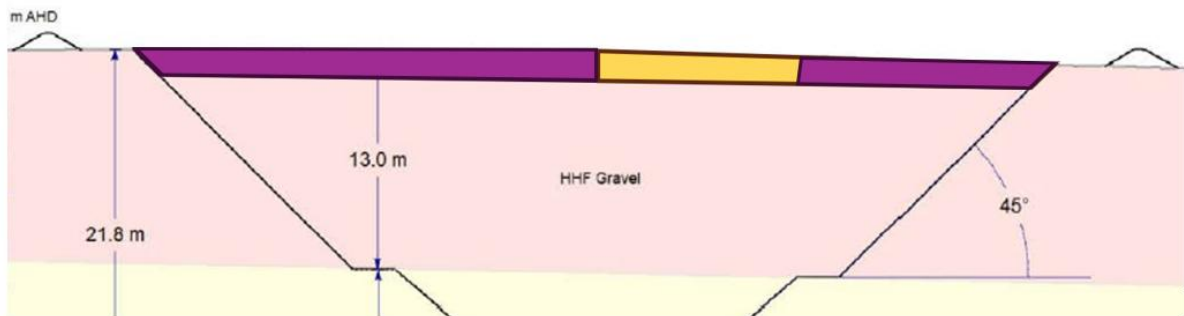


Figure 2: Pit footprint with subsoil formations

Amelioration Trials Intended During Operations

Topsoils and subsoils are proposed to be ameliorated to aid in soil structure and vegetation growth to aid overall rehabilitation success. Site specific soil sampling will be completed of both top and subsoils. Ameliorants will be applied in line with expert advice from the project's agronomist, to address any of the identified agronomic soil constraints.

Ameliorants that may be required include:

- **Lime**, to address acidity
- **Gypsum**, to address sodic soils and the calcium/magnesium ratio imbalance
- **Compost or organic amendments**, can be added to aid in increasing organic carbon in the soil profile and aid in soil moisture retention
- **Fertiliser**, sandy soils typical of the trial location are commonly deficient in the key agronomic growth (nitrogen, phosphorus, potassium). These elements can be readily amended to meet plant demands.

Rehabilitation Monitoring

Soils

- Pre-disturbance and post replacement soil testing to inform spoil amelioration
- Ongoing soil monitoring through out the trial period, to monitoring nutrient uptake by plant and inform ongoing plant requirements to ensure sufficient plant health

Landform

- Survey prisms will be established prior to disturbance and monitored through out the project and post rehabilitation.
- Ongoing survey monitoring will assess differential settlement within the pit footprint, and assist in monitoring erosion

Vegetation

- Vegetation cover and species variety will be monitored
- Yield and plant foliar test will be completed to understand and benchmark agronomic productivity

Visual Inspections

- Inspection post rainfall events to ensure erosion has not occurred and sedimentation is occurring.
- Agronomic inspections will be completed on a regular basis to inform weed and pest management

Q&A

Meeting Wrap Up & Next Steps



John Mitchell
CRG Chairperson