Gippsland Critical Minerals

Mining & Rehabilitation Demonstration Pit

In early 2026, Gippsland Critical Minerals (GCM) is proposing to construct a Mining and Rehabilitation Demonstration Pit (Demonstration Pit). This trial will put our mining methods into practice - from dust and water management through to backfilling and rehabilitation.

The Demonstration Pit will test technical and environmental approaches enabling us to measure and share on-site results before full-scale mining begins. We're undertaking this Demonstration Pit as part of our commitment to best practice design and transparency of our operations.

Excavation and backfilling will take around three months. Revegetation of the backfilled pit will then begin, with monitoring ongoing. This will track vegetation growth, soil health and land stability to test and demonstrate that the land can be productive and returned to productive agricultural use.

The Demonstration Pit program is not a pass or fail test. It is a scientific study with detailed data collected across many areas.

We are collaborating with experts who have experience in Latrobe Valley mine rehabilitation, as well as local soils and conditions. Their expertise, together with our technical and environmental team, will ensure the results are robust and guide rehabilitation and mining practices for the life of the project.

Construction works on the Demonstration Pit are pending approval from the Victorian Government and are expected to commence in January 2026.

About the Demonstration Pit

The Demonstration Pit will be built at a site selected on the eastern side of the proposed mining area (see map overleaf). It is a 'reduced-scale trial' to show how ore is recovered, how mined areas are backfilled, and how the land can be successfully rehabilitated. The results will guide the project's final design and rehabilitation plans.

- Construction works are temporary and will run during daylight hours only (7am–6pm, Monday to Saturday).
- Excavation and backfilling will take about three months, with rehabilitation to follow and monitoring to continue for years.
- Small-scale earthmoving equipment will be used, including excavators, trucks and dozers.
- Strict dust, noise, vibration and water quality controls will be in place.
- Traffic movements will be planned to minimise local disruption.
- Biosecurity protections will be in place to safeguard local farms and the environment.
- Topsoil will be managed with the highest care – it contains the organic material needed for successful plant growth.
- Land will be rehabilitated and monitored to confirm stability, productivity and return to agriculture.
- The community will be engaged and informed of all activities and findings discussed and shared.

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Why do a Demonstration Pit?

The Demonstration Pit is about proving that our mining and rehabilitation methods work in practice.

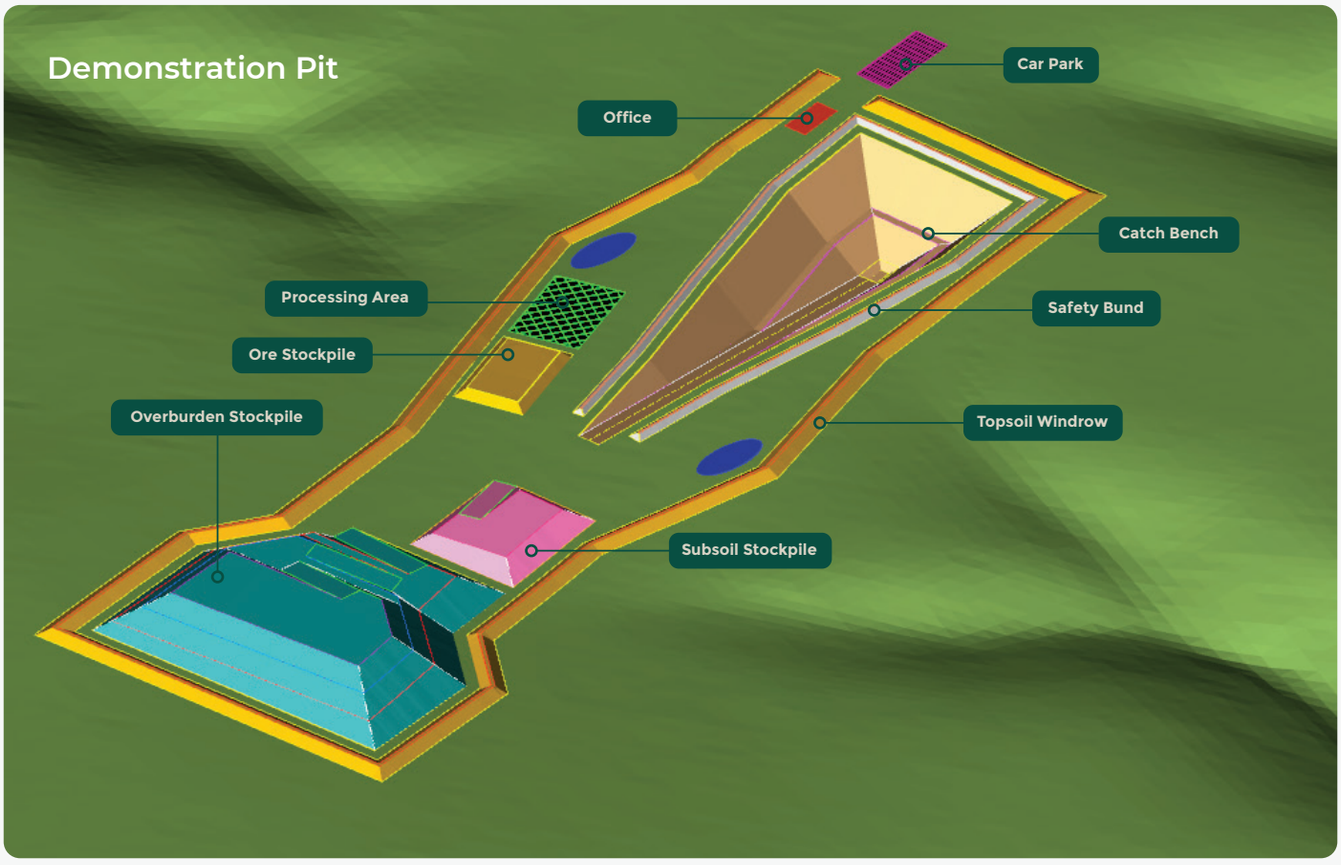
It gives the community, regulators and independent experts clear evidence, not just studies, about how land can be mined, backfilled and returned to use.

It will also allow us to test how we manage impacts like dust and noise in real conditions. Monitoring during and after the works will show that controls are effective and provide the community with transparent data on performance.

The results will directly shape the final mine design and rehabilitation program. They will also be openly reported to the community and regulators, with findings published and explained in plain language.

Technical and environmental outcomes:

- Gather and measure geological information such as soil permeability, water retention, density and moisture content.
- Confirm the in-situ tailings design parameters that were developed in laboratory test work, including consolidation, permeability, strength and water recovery.
- Install monitoring equipment for long-term seepage and groundwater quality monitoring.
- Test earthworks properties such as soil strength and bearing capacity.
- Trial soil improvement methods to support strong revegetation outcomes.
- Monitor vegetation growth to optimise species selection and rehabilitation practices.
- Collect water quality, dust and noise data during and after the works.



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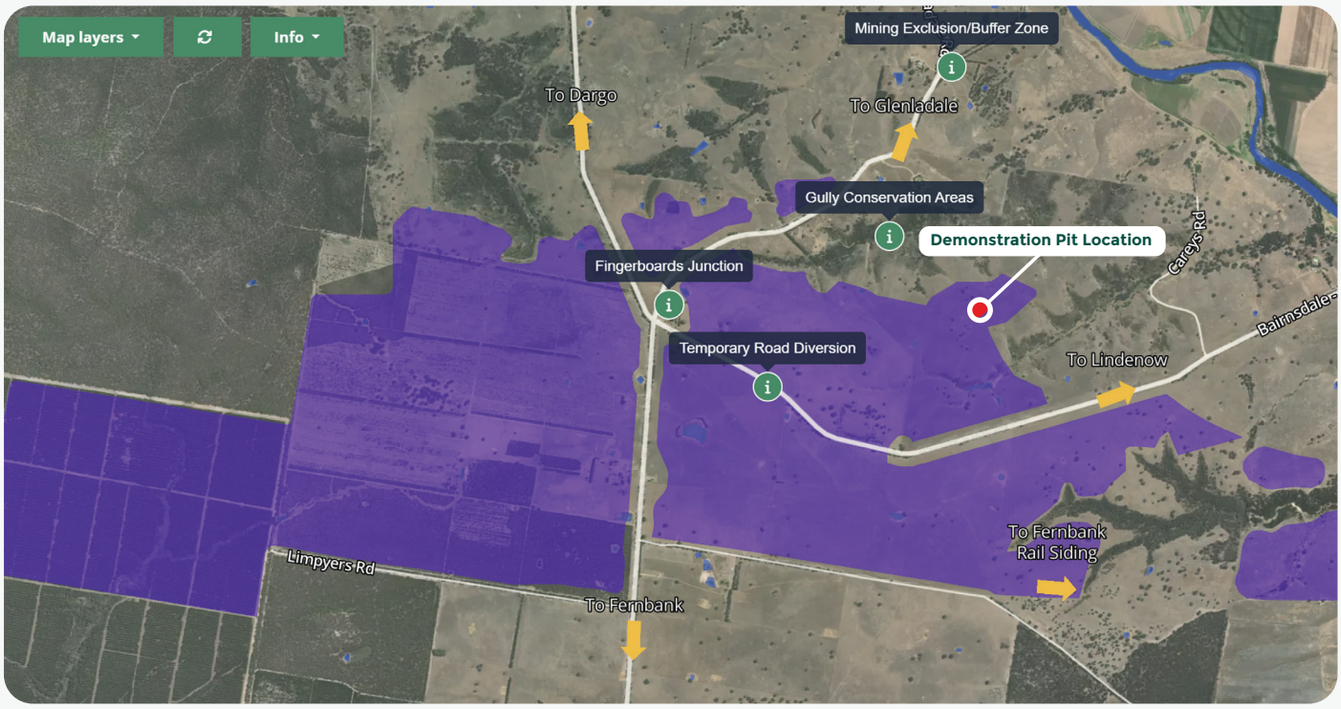

What size will it be?

The Demonstration Pit will be approximately 170 metres long, 55 metres wide and 22 metres deep. The depth of the pit at the selected site is the actual depth of mining at that location and the size of the trial has been determined to be of sufficient size and scale to enable us to gather, test and validate the data needed to inform the full scale design.

The depth also represents close to the average depth of ore across the whole mining area.

We will then We will compare test results gathered during the Demonstration Pit with information from our drill hole database, which covers the wider project area. This will help refine the final mine design and give the community clear evidence that land can be safely rehabilitated and returned to productive use.

Jobs and Procurement

By using East Gippsland suppliers wherever possible, we can support local jobs now while building the systems that will guide procurement for the full project. This ensures the community benefits from the very first stage of work.

- The Demonstration Pit will create short-term jobs for local contractors and suppliers during excavation, backfilling and rehabilitation.
- Work will include earthmoving, fencing, equipment hire, steel fabrication, electrical and mechanical installation, water management, transport and site services.
- GCM will source services and supplies from East Gippsland businesses with local contractors involved in rehabilitation activities such as soil handling, planting and monitoring, wherever possible.
- The Demonstration Pit will help us test procurement systems ahead of the full project, ensuring local businesses are well placed to take part in future opportunities.
- Findings from the trial will feed into GCM's broader Jobs and Procurement Plan, setting out how the full project can deliver more than 300 long-term jobs and broader benefits across the region.

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