



# AVONBANK PROJECT NEWSLETTER

## AVONBANK MINERAL SANDS PROJECT

ISSUE 21 – APRIL 2025

### PROJECT UPDATE

We are pleased to announce that the Avonbank Mineral Sands Project has received Australian Government approval under the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (EPBC Act). This approval marks a key milestone for the project.

The approval signifies that the Avonbank Project meets Australia's highest environmental standards, ensuring it can be developed responsibly with an acceptable environmental impact.

We are proud of our team's work to reach this point and remain focused on maintaining our commitment to sustainable development.

This project is not just about mining – it's about creating lasting benefits for the region. We believe Avonbank will bring significant economic opportunities, including long-term employment and business prospects, helping to diversify the local economy.

We also want to assure the community that Avonbank will coexist with farming. We have made significant investments in demonstrating rehabilitation can be successful, and rigorous scientific studies to ensure that land is returned to productive use after mining operations.

As always, we encourage you to reach out with any questions or concerns. We are here to continue the conversation and ensure this project delivers positive, lasting outcomes for the Wimmera Southern Mallee region.



Michael Winternitz,  
Director of Projects

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### CONTACT US

Do you have a question or comment?  
Get in touch and let us know your thoughts on the Avonbank Project.

Visit [www.wimresource.com.au](http://www.wimresource.com.au) or  
email [admin@wimresource.com.au](mailto:admin@wimresource.com.au)

## FEDERAL GOVERNMENT APPROVAL

The Avonbank Mineral Sands Project (Avonbank Project) was approved by the delegate of the Minister for Environment and Water under the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (EPBC Act) (EPBC Referral 2019/8586). The approval authorises WIM Resource Pty Ltd (WIM) to develop and operate the Avonbank Project subject to conditions designed to protect the environment and ensure the project is carried out responsibly. The approved action involves open-cut mining of heavy mineral sands and secondary processing activities within the Wimmera Intermodal Freight Terminal Precinct.

This federal government approval recognises the project's adherence to the principles of ecologically sustainable development and its capacity to avoid and mitigate significant impacts to matters of national environmental significance. This approval follows a comprehensive assessment of the Avonbank Project under the bilateral agreement between the Commonwealth and the State of Victoria, and consideration of the Environment Effects Statement (EES), prepared in accordance with the *Victorian Environment Effects Act 1978*.

A copy of the approval decision and conditions is available on the Australian Government's Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water website <https://epbcpportal.environment.gov.au/all-notices/>

## MINING LICENCE UPDATE

The Earth Resources Regulator (ERR) accepted a mining licence application for the Avonbank Project. This followed the Minister for Planning's favourable assessment of the project's Environment Effects Statement in late 2024. The application was open for public comment until 9 April 2025. WIM thanks all community members for participating. ERR will review submissions before deciding on the licence application.

In the meantime, WIM continues to engage with stakeholders as the project moves into the final stages of development. Our Horsham Community Information Hub is open 9:00 am to 5:00 pm, Monday through Friday, at 83 Firebrace Street, Horsham. We welcome any stakeholders to visit and learn about mineral sands and the Avonbank Project.



## HRCC COUNCILLOR BRIEFING

On Monday, 7 April, WIM introduced the newly elected Councillors of Horsham Rural City Council (HRCC) to the Avonbank Project.

This provided an excellent opportunity for both parties to discuss the potential economic and social benefits the project will bring to the region and our commitment to ensuring its development is responsibly and sustainably conducted.

WIM provided an overview of the Avonbank Project, a summary of the rigorous EES process, and an outline of the significant long-term consultation that WIM has had with HRCC via the EES Technical Reference Group and the Community Reference Group (CRG).

WIM clarified several matters raised by HRCC, including questions relating to dust, radiation, water supply, traffic, jobs, and training opportunities.

Our relationship with the HRCC is an integral part of our ongoing engagement with the community. We have been grateful for the opportunity to meet and regularly engage with HRCC Councillors and keep staff consistently updated on project developments over several years.

We believe that maintaining strong, open communication with local government is essential. We are dedicated to working closely with the council to ensure that the Avonbank Project continues to be a positive force for the Wimmera Southern Mallee region.

We look forward to continuing these conversations and fostering a collaborative partnership as the Avonbank Project progresses.

## MINING COLLABORATION PROGRAM

WIM participated in the Wimmera Mallee Mining Collaboration Program.

This excellent initiative of Wimmera Southern Mallee Development was designed to bring together some of the region's exploration and mining companies, regional development groups, government agencies, and other local stakeholders.

The program aimed to help build and strengthen networks between mining proponents, local communities, and industry stakeholders.

The program's topical presentations, keynote speakers, and relevant discussions were highly valuable and set the platform for a collaborative approach. Key topics of discussion included regional readiness, business procurement, and training and skills development.

WIM looks forward to continuing to work with our mining neighbours, regional development groups, businesses, and the community as we advance the Avonbank Project.



## COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT UPDATE

### 2025 Women in Resources

WIM recently attended the official launch of the Minerals Council of Australia Women in Resources Awards at Parliament House in Melbourne.

WIM proudly continues to support these important awards, which celebrate the achievements of women in the Victorian mining industry.

The awards recognise outstanding career accomplishments, advocacy for women, and contributions to social licence and the community.

The Honourable Lily D'Ambrosio MP, Minister for Climate Action, Energy and Resources, was the guest speaker and officially launched the awards.



James Sorohan MCA, The Hon Lily D'Ambrosio MP, and Women in Resource Awards advocates

Award recipients for each category were announced in April. Victorian winners progressed to the national BHP Women in Resources Awards, which will be announced in September this year.



MCA Women in Resources attendees at Parliament House in Melbourne

### Wimmera Schools Science and Engineering Challenge

The 2025 Wimmera Schools Science and Engineering Challenge was held in March at the Wimmera Events Centre in Longerenong.

WIM has been a major sponsor of this event since 2022, encouraging students to explore future careers in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM), and is proud to partner again for a further three years.

This year, 374 students from 13 Wimmera primary and secondary schools competed in team challenges over two days. Congratulations to St Arnaud Secondary College and St Michael's and St John's Primary schools, the overall challenge winners.

The Challenge is coordinated by the Rotary Club of Horsham East, assisted by other regional service clubs, and in conjunction with the University of Newcastle.



Primary and secondary school students at this year's Wimmera Science and Engineering Challenge event

### WIM Sundowner – Opportunities for the Region

The WIM Sundowner – Opportunities for the Region event, was held in Horsham in early March. It was well attended by local business owners and operators, representatives from development advocacy groups, and HRCC.

These representatives came together to receive the latest updates on the Avonbank Project and learn about the business and employment opportunities that the project will bring to the region. The evening was a great success, with strong interest from various stakeholders.



## University of Melbourne Critical Minerals Course

WIM was invited to present at the University of Melbourne Critical Minerals Course recently. This new course for Honours and Masters students in Victoria and Tasmania concentrates on critical mineral deposits.

Beyond geology, the course also covered the economics of critical mineral deposits, different types of deposits and processing challenges, and some of the uses of critical minerals, particularly in the green energy space.

WIM staff delivered a geological overview of the Murray Basin and our deposits and provided product samples for a practical session focused on identifying key critical minerals.

This session offered students a valuable and immersive experience, giving them a broad understanding of how different sectors contribute to Australia's growing role in the global critical minerals industry.



WIM's Project Manager Dave Jelley (right) talks to University of Melbourne students, looking at mineral sand products under a microscope

## Community Information Hub

WIM's Community Information Hub continues to serve as an effective engagement resource for the community. As we progress the Avonbank Project, we are pleased to welcome an increasing number of diverse people and organisations through our doors. There is plenty of up-to-date information available, together with interactive displays and videos. WIM has recently updated brochures and information material. The hub is open weekdays and group visits are encouraged, including after hours by appointment.



Hub visit: a group of visitors from the western districts during their annual get together, visited Horsham and had a tour of the WIM Hub

## Roundtable: Youth Workforce Strategy – Construction and Energy

WIM recently participated in a School Industry Roundtable held in Horsham. Attendees engaged in collaborative workshops and discussions to create pathways for existing and emerging local industries to secure a workforce. The roundtable featured expert panel discussions, targeted focus sessions, and key presentations from the Victorian Skills Authority and the Lighthouse Club Project, an international charitable organisation that focuses on engaging youth in the construction industry. With the construction and energy industries a major growth sector in the Wimmera, attracting the next generation for these opportunities is vital. WIM is committed to partnering with the education sector, government, and industry to contribute to a workforce strategy that can strengthen both our young people and our region's economic futures.

### Get in Touch

For project related enquiries please contact:  
Email: [admin@wimresource.com.au](mailto:admin@wimresource.com.au)

Community Information Hub and WIM Regional Office:  
83 Firebrace Street, Horsham VIC 3400  
Open Monday to Friday, 9:00 am – 5:00 pm

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[www.wimresource.com.au](http://www.wimresource.com.au)