

RENEWABLE ENERGY & SUSTAINABILITY

The Grampians Region is already a leader in renewable energy with major wind energy production.

Renewable energy is a forward thinking and trending industry that can help Horsham achieve economic diversification in collaboration with its strong agriculture industry.

On the ground

The Murra Warra Wind Farm

The Murra Warra Wind Farm 25km out of Horsham has created employment for over 100 subcontractors (35 of which were locally based) and 130 full-time workers. The project has already had an extensive impact on the regional economy, with over \$4.4 million being spent within the Horsham region from non-local workers.



Solar and Wind Energy Facilities in Victoria

The Minister for Planning is the responsible authority for new planning permit applications of all wind energy generation facilities that are 1 megawatt or greater. This includes both renewable solar energy facilities and non-renewable solar energy facilities.

The Minister is also responsible for new planning permit applications for utility installations. This includes installations that:

- send or distribute electricity, such as powerlines
- store electricity if the installed capacity is 1 megawatt or greater, such as battery and compressed air storage.

If you are seeking further information on Wind and Solar Facilities in our region you can also visit individual company websites.



Further State Government information on Solar Facilities can be found [here](#) and on Wind Facilities can be found [here](#)

Use the Victoria State Government link to check for licences in your area: [Resources Licences Near Me](#)



MINERAL SANDS MINING PROJECTS

The Wimmera region contain substantial amounts of fine grained heavy sands, providing the opportunity for a potentially long-term supply of zircon and rare earth minerals. The Wimmera region hosts three of the world's six largest heavy mineral sand projects.

How Mineral Sand Mines are Managed in Victoria

Planning approval entails a planning permit or preparation of an Environment Effects Statement (EES) in accordance with the Environment Effects Act 1978. ... Mining licensees must also obtain a planning permit or prepare an Environment Effects Statement.

Go to [Landholder frequently asked questions](#) for further information

The mine licensee may be required to prepare an Environment Effects Statement (EES). ... the Earth Resources Regulation, the lodging a rehabilitation bond and securing landholder agreements.

The role of Earth Resources Regulator is to ensure there is safe, sustainable and efficient minerals exploration, mining and quarrying in Victoria.

For further information on legislation and regulations go to [Resources Victoria](#)

For further information on community and land use go to [Resources Victoria](#)

When is an EES referral submitted

Projects that potentially have significant environmental effects should be referred to the Minister for Planning for a decision on whether an environment effects statement (EES) is required.

When is an EES referral required? The criteria for determining whether a project should be referred are available in the [Ministerial guidelines for assessment of environmental effects](#).

MINERAL SANDS MINES IN OUR MUNICIPALITY

The Iluka Wimmera project is situated just north of Toolondo. The project expects to produce zircon, titanium and rare earth minerals. The project is currently at pre-feasibility stage. If the project proceeds, a workforce of approximately 300-350 people will be required for the two year construction period. Approximately 280-350 people will be required during the 25 year operations phase.

For further information about this mine you can visit the company's [website here](#)

The Avonbank Mineral Sands Project is a 30 year proposed mine. It has Ore Reserves of some 300 Million tonnes. Avonbank will have significant economic and employment benefits for Horsham City and the Wimmera Southern Mallee region. There will be around 650 full time jobs per annum (direct & indirect) that are created and supported as a result of the Avonbank mine. Avonbank is currently at an EES stage, and WIM has completed a Definitive Feasibility Study, a test pit and pilot plant. The test pit site has been successfully rehabilitated. Given that mineral sands mining has been occurring in the Horsham region for some time, the Avonbank mine will be able to employ local and skilled personal, as well as attract and strengthen the current industrial skills base for the region. The Avonbank Project will have a wet gravity

processing plant within the WIFT Precinct, within an area set aside for mineral sands special use. The Bungalally heavy mineral sands (HMS) project is currently at an exploration and evaluation stage. The project site is located approximately 10km south of Horsham. The project area is nearby to existing infrastructure: roads, rail, gas, power, water, and several major ports. There is an estimated 205 million tonnes of resource, 2.7 per cent of which is total heavy mineral (THM).

For further information about this mine you can visit the company's [website here](#)

View Council's Submission to the Avonbank Mineral Sands Project Environment Effects Statement (EES) [here](#) (See Council Meeting 22 May 2023 – Download Agenda pages 20 to 26, also see Appendix 9.4A located at page 351)

Council's key areas of interest in relation to the Avonbank Mineral Sands Project Environment Effects Statement relate to:

- Radiation
- Monitoring
- Heavy Minerals Haulage – Road verses Rail
- Socio –Economic Impacts
- Noise and Vibration
- Land Use Planning



Given the significant economic benefits which will result from the Project, and its view that the issues can be adequately managed, Council supports progression of a carefully regulated mine project in which any potentially adverse environmental impacts are addressed via the relevant regulatory instruments.

Significant local procurement and employment benefits are expected to arise in the Horsham Rural City municipality, with further diversification of the economic base of the region also seen as a positive to support future social and economic wellbeing.

Memorandum of Understanding between Council and Wim Resources

Key points within the MoU

The purpose of this agreement is for parties to develop processes to support working cooperatively and collaboratively, to maximise mutually beneficial community and economic outcomes, and ensure best environmental practice from the development and operation of the Avonbank Mineral Sands Project (Avonbank Project), within the Rural City of Horsham.

Both parties recognise that the MOU will be appended to the documentation WIM is required to provide to the Victorian Government's Environment Effects Statement (EES) process for assessment of the potential environmental, social, and economic impacts of the Avonbank Project.

Statutory obligations: This MoU does not negate or replace any of the statutory obligations that Council has as a local government authority, nor does it replace any of the obligations that the Council has under the Planning and Environment Act 1987 and Road Management Act 2004, or the Local Government Act 1989 or WIM has as a private company. This MoU does not negate WIM's obligation to manage the mine in accordance within any approved work plan. Find further information on the MoU [here](#). (see 28 March 2022 Council Meeting download - Council-Agenda-Website-Appendices-Only-28 March-2022 pdf)