

Fosterville Gold Mine Sustained Operations Project

ENVIRONMENT EFFECTS STATEMENT – PUBLIC COMMENT INVITED

The Minister for Planning determined under the *Environment Effects Act 1978* that Fosterville Gold Mine Pty Ltd (FGM) is to prepare an environment effects statement (EES) for the proposed Fosterville Gold Mine Sustained Operations Project (the project).

This notice is provided pursuant to the Environment Effects Act 1978 (Vic) (EE Act) and the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (Cth) (EPBC Act). The EES process is accredited to assess potential impacts on matters of national environmental significance (MNES) under the EPBC Act through the Bilateral Assessment Agreement between the Commonwealth and the State of Victoria.

The EES is now available for public comment for a period of **30 business days**.

Written submissions can be made between **Monday 22 July and 11:59pm on Friday 30 August 2024**.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The Project is located in the Greater Bendigo region of Victoria and proposes activities that are required to support the continuation of existing gold mining operations at Fosterville Gold Mine for at least the next ten years.

Mining operations would continue as per the current operation, with ore mined using the same underground mining methods and processed through the same treatment plant.

The key components of the project include:

- › an extension of current underground mining operations within MIN5404;
- › cutbacks (extension) to existing open pits;
- › construction and operation of new tailings storage facilities within existing tailings compound or within existing open pits;
- › construction and operation of a new brine evaporation pond;

- › management of waste paste and construction of a new waste rock dump;
- › transfer/sale of carbon in leach (CIL) tailings; and
- › aquifer recharge (AR) program to inject treated mine water to the fractured rock aquifer.

EES PROCESS

The project was referred to the Minister for Planning under section 8(3) of the Environment Effects Act 1978 (Vic) in September 2021. On 10 November 2021, the Minister for Planning issued a decision that an EES is required for the Project.

On 3 November 2021, under delegated authority from the Commonwealth Minister for the Environment, the Department of Agriculture and the Environment (DAWE), now the Department of Climate Change, Energy, Environment and Water, made a decision that the Project is a controlled action and will require assessment and approval under the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999 (Cth) (EPBC Act) before it can proceed.

On 10 November 2021, DAWE confirmed that in accordance with the Bilateral Assessment Agreement with Victoria, the Commonwealth Minister would rely on the EES prepared for the Project under the Environment Effects Act 1978 (Vic) to assess potential impacts on matters of national environmental significance (MNES) 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. The EES has considered matters of national environmental significance (MNES) 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.

HOW TO MAKE A SUBMISSION

Anyone can make a submission on the EES. Submissions must be made in writing and be **received by 11:59pm on Friday 30 August 2024**.

Submissions can be lodged via the Victorian Government's Engage Victoria website at: <https://engage.vic.gov.au/Fosterville-Gold-Mine-SOP-Inquiry>

- › If you do not have internet access and are unable to lodge a submission online contact Planning Panels Victoria (PPV) through the Customer Call Centre on 136 186 (select Option 6).
- › Submissions will be treated as public documents and will be published on the Engage Victoria website.
- › The submission process is independently managed by PPV and any enquiries regarding the submissions and the Inquiry and Hearing process should be directed to PPV.

HOW TO ACCESS THE EES AND EXHIBITED DOCUMENTS

You can access the EES information via the following options:

Electronically

- › The EES will be accessible through the FGM Community Website: <https://fgmcommunity.com.au>
- › A USB with the full EES information pack will be provided free of charge for collection or via post by contacting FGM.

Hard copy

Hard copies of the EES will be made available at the following locations during the exhibition period:

- › Fosterville Gold Mine Reception/Agnico Eagle Australia office – McCormicks Road, Fosterville, VIC, 3557
- › Bendigo Library – 251-259 Hargreaves Street, Bendigo VIC, 3550
- › State Library Victoria – 328 Swanston St, Melbourne, VIC, 3000

Printed copies can be arranged at the requesters own expense by contacting FGM.

Please note! The EES is a large document and we encourage the use of electronic versions to minimise impacts from printing. Free hardcopies will only be available for review at selected locations.

INQUIRY PROCESS

The Minister for Planning will appoint an independent Inquiry to conduct a public hearing commencing in the week beginning Monday 28 October 2024 and expected to run for 4-6 weeks.

The Inquiry will hold a Directions Hearing by video conference on Wednesday 18 September, to consider the arrangements and timetable for the public hearing.

If you want to present to the Inquiry you will need to make a written submission, and mark on the online submission form that you would like to be heard.

The Inquiry will review all the submissions and the EES before providing advice to the Minister for Planning. The Inquiry will be guided by a Terms of Reference issued by the Minister for Planning.

Information on the hearing process and timetable will be published as it becomes available at <https://engage.vic.gov.au/Fosterville-Gold-Mine-SOP-Inquiry>

CONTACTS

Fosterville Gold Mine Sustained Operations Project

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Email: fgm.community@agnicoeagle.com

Website: <https://fgmcommunity.com.au>

EES Process

Impact Assessment Unit

Department of Transport and Planning

Email: environment.assessment@transport.vic.gov.au

Phone: 03 8622 7633

Making a submission or the inquiry process

Planning Panels Victoria

Phone: 136 186 (select option 6)

Email: planning.panels@transport.vic.gov.au