

Locals bring their questions to Wudinna info evening



Conveyors will greatly reduce dust from the mine by cutting the number of trucks required

Iron Road was invited to take part in a community information session that Wudinna District Council hosted on Wednesday 15 October at the Community Club.

Around 50 locals came along to hear speakers including Eleanor Scholz, the council chairperson; Andrew Buckham, the council's economic development officer and the deputy chair of the Central Eyre Iron Project's Community Consultative Committee; Andrew Stocks, Iron Road's managing director; and Steve Green, Iron Road's environment manager.

The focus of the event was to introduce the new councillors, discuss council planning activities and challenges, provide an update on the CEIP Community Consultative Committee, and explore development opportunities that the Iron Road CEIP could bring to the Wudinna region.

Following the presentations, attendees were invited to join informal group discussions

facilitated by Iron Road staff and independent consultants working on groundwater and air quality studies for the CEIP.

These smaller group forums focused on three areas: economic, environment and social.

The sessions provoked some productive conversations about opportunities the CEIP could bring to the region and allowed people with concerns to raise questions with experts in the field.

The Iron Road team was very pleased with the turnout and the outcomes of the night, so much so that it welcomes the opportunity to work with the council on similar events in future.

Below are some Q&As from the night that are of most interest to the community.

Q – Many locals have concerns about dust from the mine site. What is in the dust and what will Iron Road be doing to manage it?

A – Iron Road has collected much data about the CEIP ore body and

the nature of materials around it. This is a good indicator of what will be contained in dust generated from the mining operation. The dust is likely to contain oxidised iron and silica. Small quantities of other compounds such as aluminium oxide are also likely to be present. Heavy metals including lead, cadmium and uranium are all well below acceptable limits set by the EPA.

Iron Road has acknowledged that managing dust at the proposed CEIP operation is a priority. The operation has been specifically designed to minimise dust generation through initiatives such as in-pit crushing and conveying (IPCC), which greatly reduce the number of trucks required and material transfer points. Water sourced from the borefield or from mine dewatering will be used extensively for dust suppression on roads, stockpiles, material transfer points and other areas that could potentially generate dust.

If the CEIP is approved, dust levels will be monitored in real time from

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several locations on and around the mine. The government will impose strict limits on allowable levels that will need to be met in order for the mine to operate.

Q – Where will water used on the mine site come from?

A – The proposed CEIP operation has been designed to be self-sustaining for water so that no mains water will be required. A supply of brackish groundwater is 60km south of the proposed mine site at Kielpa. This is being proposed as the primary water supply for the processing plant and would replace the need to use seawater. It has no connection to currently used resources and only 1 per cent of it would be used during the total expected life of the mine. All water well construction permits are in place. Iron Road has been working with DEWNR on this supply option and approval to use this water resource would be part of the Development Act approval process.

Q – What will be the impact of salt contained in the integrated landform if it becomes airborne or leaches into the soil?

A – Salt levels in soil and groundwater in the area are already quite high. Salty waste material will be capped with soil and planted out progressively. Water will be used to manage dust. Investigations into potential impacts on the area surrounding the mine site need to be investigated further. Moisture levels in the integrated landform will not be high enough to generate free-flowing water from the bottom

of the structure.

Q – How can local business owners best position themselves to compete for service contracts on the CEIP? When will that process start?

A – The process of engaging service providers for the mining operation is still some time away. Iron Road is working towards the various government approvals required and gaining funding for the project is still a work in progress. We will continue to keep the community updated on these processes and ensure opportunities for local business are



In-pit crushing will also help reduce dust from the mine

communicated.

Due to the size of the CEIP, it is likely that Iron Road will engage a large contract management company who will oversee the management of services required for the operation. However, whether through direct or indirect engagement, Iron Road is committed to providing opportunities for local and regional businesses if they are commercially competitive.

Q – What percentage of the CEIP workforce will be FIFO? What will Iron Road do to encourage employees to live locally and integrate into the community?

A – For the initial construction phase, it is expected that the majority of the required workforce will be FIFO as it is an intense, short-term phase in the project that requires specialist skills (but that's not to say that opportunities will not exist for locals at this time). For the long-term operational workforce, Iron Road anticipates minimal FIFO employees and the accommodation village plans to accommodate around 300 workers. This number will likely reduce further over time as people will see Wudinna and the surrounding district an attractive place to live.

Iron Road has committed to implementing family friendly rosters and will work with the community and council to explore initiatives and partnerships that will encourage employees to be active members of the Wudinna and surrounding communities.

Q – Will Iron Road be offering traineeships and apprenticeships for locals?

A – The CEIP operation will require skilled professionals in many different fields. Iron Road is keen to explore opportunities for those living locally and regionally who may not currently work in mining to be part of our workforce. While it is too early to commit to any such programs, the type of training options that may be looked at could include traineeships, apprenticeships and scholarships. Iron Road has been investigating the use of local education and training providers and is keen to work with them.

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