



# Planning Panels Victoria

Department of Transport and Planning

1 Spring Street  
Melbourne Victoria 3000  
GPO Box 2392  
Melbourne, Victoria 3001  
Telephone (03) 5381 9457

5 September 2024

Dear Submitter

## **Fosterville Gold Mine Sustained Operations Project Inquiry**

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We are writing to you because you made a submission about the Fosterville Gold Mine Sustained Operations Project (the Project).

The Proponent (Fosterville Gold Mine Pty Ltd) has prepared an Environmental Effect Statement (EES) for assessment.

### **The Inquiry**

The Minister for Planning has appointed the Fosterville Gold Mine Sustained Operations Project Inquiry (the Inquiry) to advise on the impacts of the Project on the environment. The Inquiry comprises Sarah Raso (Chair), Gabby McMillan (Deputy Chair), Paul Tierney and Catherine Wilson.

The Minister for Planning has approved [Terms of Reference](#) that guide the scope of the Inquiry's work. The Inquiry will consider the ESS and assess the environmental impacts of the Project. It will not assess the specific effects of the existing approved mining operations. That said, the Inquiry needs to consider the combined effects of the existing operations and the Project, where there is potential for cumulative effects.

The Inquiry will give fair, unbiased independent advice to the Minister for Planning about the Sustained Operations Project environmental effects, to inform her assessment of the Project under the *Environment Effects Act 1978*.

Information about the Inquiry, including its Terms of Reference, can be found on the Engage Victoria website at: <https://engage.vic.gov.au/Fosterville-Gold-Mine-SOP-Inquiry>

### **The Inquiry process**

The Inquiry will conduct a public hearing, to allow the Proponent and submitters who want to be heard in relation to impact on the environment, to have their say. The process includes a Directions Hearing and a Hearing.

#### **Directions Hearing**

The Directions Hearing will be held in person at:

**10.00am, Wednesday, 18 September 2024**  
**Planning Panels Victoria, Hearing Room 1**  
**Ground floor, 1 Spring Street, Melbourne**

#### **Privacy Statement**

*Any personal information about you or a third party in your correspondence will be protected under the provisions of the Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014. It will only be used or disclosed to appropriate Ministerial, Statutory Authority, or departmental staff in regard to the purpose for which it was provided, unless required or authorised by law. Enquiries about access to information about you held by the Department should be directed to the Privacy Coordinator, Department of Transport and Planning, PO Box 500, East Melbourne, Victoria 8002*



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Alternatively, you can join online by video using MS Teams at the following link:

### [Join the meeting now](#)

**Meeting ID:** 478 782 048 052

**Passcode:** kPspES

Further details on how to join the Directions Hearing, use MS Team and available technical support are provided in **Attachment 1**.

#### **What will happen at the Directions Hearing?**

At the Directions Hearing, the Inquiry will:

- give directions about the conduct of the Hearing and the exchange of information in the leadup to the Hearing, including expert witness reports
- make arrangements for site inspections
- make arrangements for the Hearing
- consider any procedural issues
- answer any questions people have about the Inquiry process including the Hearing.

#### **Who should attend the Directions Hearing?**

You should attend the Directions Hearing if you wish to participate in the Hearing and you:

- are new to the Inquiry process
- have questions about the Inquiry process
- wish to raise procedural issues.

#### **If you wish to raise a procedural issue**

If you wish to raise a procedural issue at the Directions Hearing, please provide the Inquiry with a brief explanation of the issue in writing to [Planning.Panels@transport.vic.gov.au](mailto:Planning.Panels@transport.vic.gov.au) by **12 noon on Friday 13 September 2024**.

#### **Hearing**

At the main Hearing, the Inquiry will hear from submitters, the Proponent, any Traditional Owners who wish to participate, and government agencies. All submitters who have requested to be heard will be parties to the Hearing and will be allocated a time to present to the Inquiry.

The Hearing will be informal and not like a court. You don't need to be legally represented to participate in the Hearing.

The Hearing will start on **Monday 28 October 2024** and is expected to run for 7 weeks. The Inquiry will generally sit Monday to Thursday each week. The Inquiry notes the following public holidays (Bendigo Cup on 30 October and Melbourne Cup 4 November) fall within the Hearing period. The Hearing is likely to be partly in Melbourne, and partly in Bendigo. Hearing dates and arrangements will be finalised at the Directions Hearing.

#### **Site Inspection**

The Inquiry is intending to undertake an accompanied site inspection on **Thursday 17 October 2024**. Arrangements will be discussed at the Directions Hearing.

#### **Key information**

**Attachment 2** sets out:

- a summary of proposed dates and directions
- a proposed order of appearances at the Hearing.

These will be discussed at the Directions Hearing and will inform the Inquiry's Directions and Timetable that will be circulated after the Directions Hearing.

## If you are unable to attend the Directions Hearing

If you wish to comment on the proposed dates or any other procedural matters but are unable to attend the Directions Hearing, you can provide comments in writing to [Planning.Panels@transport.vic.gov.au](mailto:Planning.Panels@transport.vic.gov.au) by **12 noon on Friday 13 September 2024**. The Inquiry will consider your comments when preparing the Directions and Timetable.

## More information

### The Inquiry process is public

The Inquiry Hearing (including the Directions Hearing) are public. Anyone who wants to observe the proceedings will be able to do so. Links to the Directions Hearing and Hearing will be published on the Engage Victoria website.

Submissions and other information presented throughout the process, including at the Hearing, will be treated as public documents. Please note the [Privacy Collection Notice](#) in **Attachment 3**, which explains how your submission will be used by the Inquiry. (You will have already acknowledged the Privacy Collection Notice when you lodged your submission).

### Can I view other submissions?

Submissions are being published on the [Engage Victoria website](#). The submissions are being progressively uploaded, and uploading will be complete before the Directions Hearing. Parts of some submissions have been redacted for privacy reasons, but the Inquiry has been provided full copies of all submissions.

### The Inquiry Hearings will be recorded

The Inquiry will record the Directions Hearing and Hearing (audio only). Participants must not record the hearings without permission from the Inquiry.

More information including the *What is a Panel?* guide, *Guide to the Public Hearing* and *Frequently Asked Questions* are available at: [www.planningpanels.vic.gov.au/guides-and-resources](http://www.planningpanels.vic.gov.au/guides-and-resources).

If you have any questions please contact [REDACTED] at Planning Panels Victoria on [Planning.Panels@transport.vic.gov.au](mailto:Planning.Panels@transport.vic.gov.au) [REDACTED].

Yours sincerely



**Sarah Raso**  
Inquiry Chair

# Attachment 1 – Joining the Directions Hearing

Fosterville Gold Mine Sustained Operations Project Inquiry

## Attending the Directions Hearing in person

Planning Panels Victoria (corner Spring and Flinders Streets) is on the 75 and City Circle tram lines and a short walk from the Collins Street trams 109, 11, 12 and 48. It is also a short walk from Parliament Train Station. We suggest you arrive by 9.30am.

## Joining the Directions Hearing by MS Teams

Parties and interested observers can access the Directions Hearing using the following link and details below:

[Join the meeting now](#)

**Meeting ID:** 478 782 048 052

**Passcode:** kPspES

## Information for online participants

### Identifying yourself

If you want to participate in the Directions Hearing, please provide your first name and last name when you log in, so the Inquiry can easily identify you. If you are representing an organisation, include the organisation name after your name – for example, “Sarah Raso, Chair of the Inquiry”.

### If you wish to speak

To minimise background noise, please keep your microphone on mute and your camera off unless you need to speak.

If you wish to speak or ask questions, please use the ‘raise your hand’ button. The Chair will call your name when it is your time to speak. Please take yourself off ‘mute’ and turn on your camera when it is your turn to speak.

### Chat function

The chat function has been disabled for the Directions Hearing. If you wish to speak, use the raise your hand function.

## Information for online observers

The Hearing will be open to members of the public to observe the Hearing either in person or online. Observers should keep their camera and microphone off throughout the Directions Hearing.

## Technical assistance for online participants

The Proponent (Fosterville Gold Mine Pty Ltd) has arranged technical support for the Directions Hearing. If you experience technical issues or need support connecting, please call Power AV on 03 5441 4592 and select option #1. The phone line is open 8.30am to 5.00pm on the day of the Directions Hearing.

[Your guide to using Microsoft Teams at Planning Panels Victoria](#) contains more detailed information on how to join, and what to do during the Directions Hearing.

## Joining the Directions Hearing by telephone (audio only)

If you do not have access to a computer or mobile device or you cannot connect to a network suitable for video conferencing, you can join and participate in the Directions Hearing by telephone.

To dial into the Directions Hearing by phone, call +61 2 9053 9757 and enter phone conference ID 139 102 629#.

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# Attachment 2 - Key information

Fosterville Gold Mine Sustained Operations Project Inquiry

The following information is provided for discussion at the Directions Hearing. Parties may also provide comments in writing to [Planning.Panels@transport.vic.gov.au](mailto:Planning.Panels@transport.vic.gov.au) by **12 noon on Friday 13 September 2024**.

## Key dates and draft Directions

The following dates and Directions are proposed:

Time	Date	Action
10.00 am	<b>Wednesday, 18 September 2024</b>	Directions Hearing
12 noon	<b>Tuesday, 24 September 2024</b>	All parties who have not already done so must confirm the details of their expert witnesses
12 noon	<b>Friday, 27 September 2024</b>	Parties to nominate locations to be viewed on the accompanied site visit, including the number of proposed attendees
12 noon	<b>Friday, 4 October 2024</b>	Proponent to provide draft site inspection itinerary to the Inquiry, including inspection arrangements, locations proposed to be visited and maps
12 noon	<b>Tuesday, 8 October 2024</b>	Proponent to circulate its Part A submission
12 noon	<b>Wednesday, 9 October 2024</b>	Proponent to circulate its Expert Witness Reports
12 noon	<b>Wednesday, 16 October 2024</b>	Other parties calling evidence must circulate their Expert Witness Reports
10.00am	<b>Thursday, 17 October 2024</b>	Accompanied site inspection
	<b>Week commencing 21 October 2024</b>	Meetings of like Expert Witnesses (if required). Statements will be due prior to the Hearing commencing
12 noon	<b>Thursday, 24 October 2024</b>	Proponent to provide 'Day 1' version of the Project documentation
10.00 am	<b>Monday, 28 October 2024</b>	Hearing commences

## Proposed order of presentations at the Hearing

Party	Session
Fosterville Gold Mine Pty Ltd (Proponent)	Project overview presentation
Department of Transport and Planning Impact Assessment Unit	Overview of EES process leading up to appointment of the Inquiry
Fosterville Gold Mine Pty Ltd	Main submissions and evidence
Registered Aboriginal Parties and Traditional Owners wishing to participate	Main submissions and evidence
Government departments and agencies	Main submissions
City of Greater Bendigo	Main submissions
Parties calling evidence	Main submissions and evidence
Corporates and community groups	Main submissions
Individuals	Main submissions
Fosterville Gold Mine Pty Ltd	Closing submissions

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### Fosterville Gold Mine Sustained Operations Project Inquiry

Your personal information will be collected during the Fosterville Gold Mine Sustained Operations Project Inquiry process for the purposes of:

- documenting your views about the proposal
- advising the Minister for Planning (the Minister) about the proposal and the Environment Effects Statement (EES)
- communications with you throughout the Inquiry process
- allowing you to fully participate in the Inquiry hearings should you choose to participate.

Planning Panels Victoria (PPV) is providing administrative services to the Inquiry.

#### Distributing and publishing your submission

Natural justice for all participants and transparency are important parts of the Inquiry process. The Inquiry's Terms of Reference require the Inquiry to conduct any Hearing it holds in public, and to keep a public record of the material provided to the Inquiry. PPV may:

- provide a copy of your submission or any other material you provide (with any personal information you include in your written submission) to the Proponent (Fosterville Gold Mine Pty Ltd), government agencies (Department of Transport and Planning, Impact Assessment Unit and Regional Planning Services), City of Greater Bendigo, Dja Dja Wurrung Clans Aboriginal Corporation and other parties to the Hearing
- provide a copy of your submission or any other material you provide to any other person who requests it (your personal information will be removed first)
- publish your name and a copy of your submission or any other material you provide on a website (your personal information other than your name will be removed first)
- provide a copy of your submission or any other material you provide to the Department of Transport and Planning (DTP) if needed for preparing Ministerial briefings
- publicly display a copy of your submission or any other material you provide in the PPV Office or Hearing room, if held in person (your personal information other than your name will be removed first)
- direct that a copy of your submission or any other material you provide be publicly displayed in the relevant Local Council Office or DTP Regional Office (your personal information other than your name will be removed first).

Please do not include any personal information that could identify you in your submission or any other material you provide unless you are happy for it to be used as described above. Please do not include any personal information that could identify other people (such as photographs of children or others) unless you have their consent.

If you request to be heard at the Hearing, you will be a 'party' to the Hearing. Your name and email address will be added to the Distribution List for the circulation of information (such as reports and submissions for the Hearing) between participants in the Hearing, unless you tell us otherwise.

You can choose not to provide an email address. However, you may miss out on important information from others in the process, and PPV will not be able to keep you informed of the Hearing. You can remain informed by regularly checking the Engage Victoria website for information on the Inquiry process.

Any information you provide to the Inquiry will be held indefinitely by DTP, pursuant to DTP's public record keeping obligations.

#### Privacy Statement

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## Hearings (Directions Hearing and Hearing)

The Inquiry may conduct a Hearing, either in person or using video conferencing. Hearings by video conference have special privacy requirements. If you choose to participate in the Hearing, you should be aware:

- a link to the Hearing will be published on the internet, and third parties will be able to join the Hearing and observe
- the Inquiry may broadcast the Hearing live on the internet.

The Inquiry may record the Hearing and may provide a copy of any recording to parties to the Hearing and third parties who request it, or may publish the recordings online. Where Hearings are recorded, generally audio only is recorded (not video). No person may record the Hearing or any part of it without the express permission of the Inquiry.

## Can I request to make a submission confidentially?

As outlined in the Terms of Reference all submissions must state the name and address of the person making the submission. Anonymous submissions will not be considered by the Inquiry.

The Inquiry can hear submissions or accept material on a confidential basis, provided this would be fair to the other parties to the Hearing. If you want to make your submissions or provide material to the Inquiry confidentially, you will need to ask permission from the Inquiry Chair in writing through PPV and provide reasons why the Inquiry should treat your submissions or material confidentially. Please contact PPV at [Planning.Panels@transport.vic.gov.au](mailto:Planning.Panels@transport.vic.gov.au) with these requests.

## The Inquiry Report

The Minister may release the Inquiry's report publicly. The report will include a list of the names of submitters, and a list of the names of the parties to the Hearing. It may also include direct quotes from submitters or parties. If released, the report will be published on the internet. Other than your name, no personal information about you will be included in the report.

## After the Inquiry has reported

After the Inquiry has reported to the Minister, your material and any audio recordings will be removed from public display. PPV cannot guarantee that your submission will be removed from external web pages outside of its control while it remains on public display.

## Requesting copies

If during the process you would like a copy of any submissions or material collected by the Inquiry, or a copy of any recording the Inquiry may make of the Hearing, make a request to PPV by email at [planning.panels@transport.vic.gov.au](mailto:planning.panels@transport.vic.gov.au) before the Inquiry submits its report. If the Inquiry has reported, you should submit your request to the DTP Freedom of Information Unit at [FOI@transport.vic.gov.au](mailto:FOI@transport.vic.gov.au).

If you have any concerns in respect to the way your personal information or submission or other material will be used please contact PPV on (03) 8572 7999 or [planning.panels@transport.vic.gov.au](mailto:planning.panels@transport.vic.gov.au).

For more information about how we handle the information we collect about you and relevant legislations that enables collection of your personal information, please visit <https://dtp.vic.gov.au/privacy/privacy-policy>.