



Goschen Project: Frequently Asked Questions

List of topics

- [General questions](#)
- [Land access](#)
- [Environment and Approvals](#)
- [Land rehabilitation](#)
- [Community benefits](#)

General questions

Q: Who is VHM Limited?

A: VHM Limited is an Australian unlisted public zircon and rare earth company that was established in 2014. Our Board, Management team and employees have delivered some of Australia's largest resource projects.

Q: What is VHM Limited building?

A: VHM Limited is developing the Goschen Project – a zircon and rare earth minerals project. Utilising a conventional low risk, industry-proven method, the project will adopt a progressive mining and rehabilitation approach. VHM is currently undertaking a range of activities including environmental assessments, exploration, drilling and metallurgy assessments to further define the exact type of mineral processing plant facility we will be constructing and operating.

Q: Where will the Goschen Project be located?

A: The Goschen Project is being developed in the Loddon Mallee Region of Victoria within the Rural City of Swan Hill and Gannawarra Shires. While additional assessments are being undertaken to determine the exact location of the mineral processing plant facility, it will be located within one of VHM's tenement holdings (EL 5520). More information can be found at www.vhmltd.com.au/project/project-overview.

Q: When is construction expected to start?

A: VHM Limited is aiming to start construction activities as early as end 2020, subject to obtaining all the necessary environmental and regulatory approvals. In addition to further environmental assessments and project design work, VHM will also need to undertake drilling activities on site prior to the start of construction to get a clearer picture of the Project's mining footprint and the exact nature of the minerals that it contains.

Q: How will we know when the project is going ahead?

A: VHM Limited will continue to provide the community and other stakeholders information updates to keep them informed of the project's progress. We will also list relevant updates on the [Community Information and Notices section](#) of our website. Information about the environmental approvals process will be available by the Victorian Government on the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning website (available at this [link](#)).



Goschen Project: Frequently Asked Questions

Q: How big is the project site?

A: VHM is currently focussed on a target mineralisation zone covering 8,300 hectares, 97% of which has already been cleared for farming. Mining will only occur in some areas within this zone and not across the whole area. Each of these individual areas will be progressively mined and rehabilitated.

Land access

Q: Will landowners be compensated for the use of their land?

A: **Under state law** it is a requirement that private landowners and occupiers are compensated for any loss or deprivation as a result of mining. VHM will work directly with landowners to discuss the project and how it might affect them or their operations.

Q: If VHM is undertaking mining activities on a small section of my paddock, will I only be compensated for that area?

A: The details of an agreement can only be finalised by the parties to the contract agreement. Generally, VHM will compensate a landowner for the value of the potential loss in revenue as a result of mining activities.

Q: Will I be informed if my neighbour has an agreement in place?

A: VHM has committed to respecting and protecting the privacy of all parties to an agreement and the details of individual agreements are confidential. We have committed to not discussing the details of individual agreements with anyone other than the parties involved in the agreement.

Environment and Approvals

Q: What sort of regulatory approvals does VHM have to obtain?

A: For the Victorian state Government, the Minister for Planning has determined that the project requires an Environmental Effects Statement (EES) under the *Environment Effects Act 1978*. Information on this approvals process is available at the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP) website here - <https://www.planning.vic.gov.au/environmentassessment/referrals-and-decisions/> / <https://www.planning.vic.gov.au/environment-assessment/browse-projects/projects/goschen-mineral-sands-and-rare-earths-project>

For the Commonwealth Government, The Minister for the Environment has determined that the project is a Controlled Action under the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999*. Commonwealth Assessment of the project will be based on the EES. Information is available at <http://epbcnotices.environment.gov.au/publicnoticesreferrals/>.

Both of these processes require detailed studies and review, and offer input from the community.



Goschen Project: Frequently Asked Questions

Q: What sort of environmental effects will there be?

A: VHM is committed to minimising its effect on the local environment. We are currently undertaking several environmental and cultural studies to make sure we understand and inform the Environmental Effects Statement.

Q: What sort of noise effects will there be?

A: VHM must meet the noise limits prescribed in the Noise from Industry in Regional Victoria (NIRV) guidelines (EPA Victoria 2011). As part of its environmental assessments, we have commissioned a noise assessment which will monitor background noise and model predicted noise levels at sensitive receptors based on a number of project designs and layouts. This information will then be used to inform project design and management so that measures, such as lower noise machinery and separation distances, can be implemented to adhere to these legislative limits and reduce noise levels as much as possible.

Q: How will VHM limit dust on surrounding farms and residences?

A: VHM has commissioned an air quality assessment to investigate background dust levels, model potential emissions from the Goschen Project under worst case weather conditions, and to recommend appropriate project design and management requirements. The assessment will include consideration of dust deposition. VHM will only be granted environmental approval for the project if we can demonstrate that we can prevent any unacceptable dust impacts to the environment. Victorian Government policies, require us to implement best practice dust emission management, which means we use the best available technology and management approaches. Emissions from the mine must be managed to ensure that the cumulative effects of all sources (including the mine) in the local area do not pose a risk to the health and amenity of local residents.

Q: Must I have a land access agreement with VHM Limited in place in order for my home to be included as part of relevant environmental assessment?

A: No. VHM undertakes environmental assessments so we can determine what sort of effect, if any, the project may have within a boundary surrounding the project regardless of whether a land access agreement is in place or not. This means that as long as the house is within the boundary zone, VHM will identify whether there will be any type of impacts (e.g. noise) to the area, and if so, what steps need to be taken place to meet legislative requirements and minimise or eliminate any effects.

Land rehabilitation

Q: Will the land be rehabilitated once mining is completed?

A: Yes, the land will be rehabilitated once mining is completed. VHM will be utilising a progressive mining and rehabilitation approach which means discrete areas are mined and rehabilitated one after the other, rather than all at once.



Goschen Project: Frequently Asked Questions

Q: How long will it take to rehabilitate the land?

A: Establishing rehabilitated self-sustaining pasture can generally take up to two years following completion of mining although in some cases may take longer. (*Reference - Doral Desktop study on Successful Rehabilitation Procedures, 2014*).

Q: Will the land be rehabilitated even if VHM Limited has purchased it?

A: Yes. Regardless of whether it's been leased or purchased from the landowner, VHM Limited will rehabilitate the land to meet regulatory requirements.

Q: How can VHM be so sure that the land will be successfully rehabilitated?

A: Rehabilitation of mineral sands mines within agricultural areas have been very successful in Victoria and Australia, with key success factors being good information, planning and communication. VHM is undertaking numerous environmental assessments which will inform the planning, design and implementation of a tailored and effective rehabilitation plan. Throughout the process, VHM will engage and communicate with regulatory agencies and expert consultants to ensure these strategies are independently assessed and approved.

Q: Who determines whether the land has been successfully rehabilitated?

A: VHM Limited will develop a rehabilitation completion checklist, in consultation with landholders. We will also consult regulators who will be responsible for approving the final criteria that is set out and verifying that VHM has successfully rehabilitated the land. VHM is also committed to keeping relevant landholders and community members informed of the rehabilitation work progress.

Q: What sort of guarantees is there that VHM will undertake the rehabilitation work?

A: VHM Limited wants to work in partnership with landowners and understands the importance of rehabilitating the land and returning it to pre-mining condition or better. As part of the rehabilitation program, we will develop a rehabilitation checklist, in consultation with landholders and regulators, and conduct ongoing monitoring to ensure the rehabilitation works produces the desired outcome. From a monetary perspective, VHM is required to pay a bond to the government for its mining activities, which it can only recover once the land is successfully rehabilitated. If the land is leased from the landholder, VHM will also be required to pay compensation to the landholder in accordance with a Land Access Agreement.

Any breach of the rehabilitation terms will mean that VHM will forfeit the bond and that money will be used for land rehabilitation. The amount of the rehabilitation bond is determined by the government based on the cost of fully rehabilitating the area of land disturbed. The government periodically reviews the bond amount to ensure it continues to meet the full rehabilitation obligation



Goschen Project: Frequently Asked Questions

Q: How will the land be rehabilitated?

A: VHM Limited will undertake assessments to determine the best methodology to successfully rehabilitate the land. Agricultural land will be rehabilitated back to agricultural land use, and any cleared native vegetation will be rehabilitated back to previous standards. Generally, the rehabilitation process involves removal and stockpiling of topsoil prior to mining, selective backfill of mining by-products to create a soil profile suitable for future agricultural activities, or native vegetation, followed by return of topsoil. Soil treatments, erosion management, mulching and seeding will then be undertaken as necessary.

Community benefits

Q: What sort of benefits will the community receive as a result of the Goschen Project?

A: VHM Limited believes working in partnership with the community is critical to the project's success. We are committed to developing opportunities and community investments that are unique and tailored to the needs of the community. VHM is keen to help strengthen and diversify the local economy through direct and indirect employment and supplier opportunities.

Q: What sort of supplier opportunities will the company offer?

A: VHM Limited's preference is to obtain goods and services from local suppliers.

Q: Will there be any job opportunities for the community?

A: The Goschen Project is expected to result in the creation of hundreds of direct and indirect jobs across Australia with preference given to locally based people. Mining projects have different staffing requirements at different project phases, and we'll provide more information on these opportunities throughout the project life. VHM Limited is an equal opportunity employer that encourages the engagement of women and Aboriginal employees.

Q: How will VHM support local employment?

A: To support local employment, we will work with educational services, such as local high schools, TAFEs, and training organisations to provide training and apprenticeship opportunities. Our aim is to develop a pathway through education to employment and career development in mining and industries where these skills and knowledge are transferrable.