The Country Liberals have given conditional support to plans to expand McArthur River Mine.

Shadow Resources Minister, Kezia Purick, said providing the proposed expansion fulfilled environmental and other regulatory criteria, the Opposition would support the project going ahead.

“I welcome Xstrata’s proposal to extend the life of the McArthur River Mine until at least 2033,” Ms Purick said.

“McArthur River Mine is a key economic driver through direct employment and the jobs it generates indirectly for businesses across the Northern Territory.

“The proposed $270million expansion would help create almost 1000 jobs during the construction phase and in excess of 100 permanent jobs and provide a much needed boost to private sector investment in the Territory economy.

“It would also continue to provide employment opportunities for Indigenous people and boost economic opportunities around Borroloola.

“The decision by mine owner Xstrata to expand comes despite ambivalence towards the mine by the Territory Labor Government.

“Labor was torn over plans by Xstrata to convert the mine from underground to open cut, in the process delaying development at the mine by up to 12 months and costing the company tens-of-millions of dollars.

“As one of the largest zinc mines in the world, it’s important the Labor Party doesn’t stand in the way of this Territory building project.

“The Chief Minister should make a very clear commitment of support for the proposal pending the approvals process, and ensure there are no unnecessary delays as a result of divisions in his Government.”

Further comment: Kezia Purick 0407 035 976