Mining company eyes huge NT project

Craig Dunlop

ONE of the Territory’s most promising mining projects looks certain to materialise with the promise of more than $17 billion in investment and more than 360 jobs in coming years.

Perth-based mining company TNG released the feasibility study into its Mt Peake vanadium and titanium operation, 253km northwest of Alice Springs, describing it as a “world-class project.”

Managing director Paul Burton said that as part of the project, the company planned to build a $650 million refinery at Middle Arm.

“We had looked at Malaysia ... but the decision was to build it in Darwin,” he said.

“We just think it’s best to keep everything in the same country.”

That decision has drawn praise from Mines and Energy Minister Dave Tolhurst.

“(It) is a big vote of confidence in the Territory economy,” Mr Tolhurst said.

“Investment in this project will top $3.7 billion and create hundreds of jobs in Central Australia and the Top End.”

The mine has an expected 17-year operating life, with the refinery forecast to operate for 40 years.

The company will build a rail line to its mine site, and transport the partially processed product more than 1200km by rail for refining and export.

The end products for the vanadium and titanium oxide include hi-tech batteries, white paint and sunscreen.

Once construction is complete and production starts in 2028, the company expects to employ 170 workers, according to a statement from the Australian Securities Exchange.

Preparations on horizon at Braitling

A NEW $4 million Braitling Preschool is a step closer following the closure of advertising this week for design work.

“Once completed, the preschool will allow teachers to deliver the highest quality teaching and learning experiences for preschoolers,” said Braitling MLA Adam Giles.

“A new Braitling preschool will need a design blueprint to integrate with the Braitling Primary School, so we can broaden the support for young families and the community with increased education services.

“I am pleased to deliver improved education opportunities in the Braitling electorate area by replacing the old Teppa Hill preschool with a state-of-the-art facility, that directly links to the education system at Braitling School.

“The needs of students and teachers continue to change; so it will need to be a modern learning area and provide space for 44 enrolments to cater for future growth and assisting in meeting the needs of little ones.

“By creating a new and inclusive space that is creative and contemporary, we should see greater opportunity for kids to play and enjoy their early years of learning.

“It’s terrific news for students and busy parents in the community of Braitling and is a substantial investment to ensure the area becomes a key early education hub for many years to come.”

The Braitling Preschool is due to open in January 2022.

Under a burning outback sun, players from remote Central Australian communities Laramba and Nyirripi battled for the ball at the huge Yuendumu Sports Carnival on Sunday night. This spectacular scene was one of many captured by Central Advocate photographer Justin Kennedy. More, P42.

"Those who hop off and explore town and grab lunch at a cafe or pick up some souvenirs from shops will be very much missed after July next year.”

The Ghan service travels from Adelaide to Darwin, stopping in Alice and Katherine.

Chief Minister Adam Giles, who is also the Tourism Minister, said the removal of the subsidy would have a major impact on communities and the tourism industry in the NT.

“This will hurt those who can least afford it and I will be raising our concerns at a meeting of tourism ministers next week,” Mr Giles said.

Seniors make up more than half of the patrons on the rail services and the increase in fares is expected to result in a 20 per cent reduction in passenger numbers.

Ghan travellers Ron and Ann Forbes-Smith arrived in town yesterday and said they believed the cuts would have a “big effect” on people wanting to visit Central Australia.

“At my age, it would be impossible to travel to such parts of the country without the Ghan,” Mr Forbes-Smith said.

Vietnam veteran and traveller Ian Hastings said cutting concessions for veterans would eliminate some tourists from the market.

“A lot of my fellow veterans have travelled the Ghan and the Indian Pacific, and I think there would be zero inclination for them to do so if they took this away. Their patronage will go,” Mr Hastings said.

Last year’s Federal Budget included a decision to phase out the concession subsidy for Great Southern services, worth $9 million this year.

A spokesman said the company had begun contacting its stakeholders to advise them of the potential impact of the subsidy reduction on schedules and fares.

“While GSR has committed to providing a 20 per cent discount for federal government customers next year, there will still be an increase for the price of travel and we do expect there to be some reduction in demand, the spokesman said.

Federal Labor transport spokesman Anthony Albanese said the decision would damage the economies of regional towns in the NT, South Australia and Western Australia.

“All of these services make multiple stops in regional centres, pumping $100 million a year into regional Australia, thereby boosting local economies and creating jobs,” Mr Albanese said.

Federal Social Services Minister Scott Morrison said concessions were the responsibility of state and territory governments.

Are you having difficulty caring for someone with Dementia?

The Dementia Behaviour Management Advisory Services (DBMAS) can help

DBMAS provide clinical support, information and advice (face to face and via telephone or email).

Family carers and aged care workers can contact the service on 1800 698 799 at any time of the day or night.

Suitations will not assume any of their rights and appropriate referrals to other support services can be made if necessary.

The DBMAS team are ready to help you, call 1800 698 799 to talk to a DBMAS team member.

PREVENT AND TREAT DEVELOPMENTAL PROBLEMS IN CHILDREN & INJURY IN SPORT & WORK

COMMON COMPLAINTS

HEEL / ARCH / DISCOLOURED NAILS

CORNS & CALLUS

ACHING LEGS

FOOT / LEG DEFORMITIES

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