

## Project 1.7

### Collaborative planning for post-mine land use in the Latrobe Valley

#### Why the project?

Located on the traditional lands of the Brayakulung people, the Latrobe Valley is less than two hours from Melbourne. It has a rich history, with electricity generated from its vast coal reserves helping to power the state for about 100 years.

By 2035, the Latrobe Valley's three large open cut brown coal-fired mines will cease operation for the purpose of electricity generation as the state transitions to more renewable energy. The pit voids and surrounding lands are required to be rehabilitated to a safe, stable and sustainable state. Post-relinquishment, around 130km<sup>2</sup> of land within the mine lease areas, will become available for repurposing.

Our engagement indicates the Latrobe Valley community is experiencing consultation fatigue from a sequence of events including privatisation of the power industry in the 1990s, the Hazelwood Mine Fire in 2014 and subsequent Inquiries, and abrupt commencement of mine closure from 2017. Consultation during 2022 also identified the importance of an informed, deliberative process and development of a proposed land use vision for the region reflecting stakeholder-preferred net positive, feasible and possible outcomes for these lands.

This project will assist in understanding and proposing future land use options for these lands, supported by key stakeholders and addressing a range of community benefits including First Nations aspirations. Importantly, it will help build a vision of a positive future for the Latrobe Valley.



#### What does this project aim to achieve?

Stage 1 of this project aims to:

- provide a forum for deliberation between key organised stakeholders, including current licensees, government agencies, Traditional Owners, and key community organisations, around future land uses for these mined lands
- deliver, by February 2023, a multi-criteria, benefits-cost analysis of feasible future land uses of the mined lands of the Latrobe Valley, post coal-fired power generation which can then be communicated to the broader community.

A second community-facing phase is also planned.

## What other outcomes are sought?

- Support alignment of licensee's mine closure plans with key economic and non-economic values held by diverse stakeholders.
- Generate increased interest among investor community (private and partner) in utilising Latrobe Valley mine land, human capital, and other regional assets as location for postmining enterprises.
- Improved understanding of how to design and conduct collaborative planning processes in other regions in transition.
- Build shared understanding, with the aim of enhancing public reputation of responsible licensees and government agencies.

## Who will benefit from the project?

The project aims to directly benefit diverse stakeholders within the Latrobe Valley, with the aim of supporting regional economic development.

Additionally, the project findings, tools and resources will be useful for government, industry, regional communities and Indigenous organisations undergoing economic transitions.

All resources will be available on the CRC TiME website.

## Engagement Opportunities

In addition to the deliberation process, the project will hold a publicly facing event in November to share progress and invite feedback.

Interested parties are also welcome to contact the project leader, Dr Jess Reeves, directly.

## Timeline

2023 - 2024

## How does this align with CRC TiME Impact objectives?

Mines are closed in ways that deliver social, economic and environmental value

Closed sites are repurposed to enable a faster transition to diverse and resilient local economies

Mine closure business solutions drive new commercial and/or regional closure opportunities

Continued investment in Australian resources

Policy, decisions and management systems reduce risks

## Project Partners

Federation University, CSIRO Land and Water, University of South Australia, Energy Australia, ENGIE and AGL, government agencies (including the Mine Land Rehabilitation Authority, Latrobe Valley Authority, Department of Jobs, Skills, Industry and Regions (VIC), Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action (VIC), Latrobe City Council), Gunaikurnai Land and Water Aboriginal Corporation, relevant industries, regulators and community groups.



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