

## **Bowen Independent**

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### **150 jobs, locals preferred New mine to benefit the region**

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A NEW mine north of Bowen would provide employment for the town and is another potential user for the proposed Abbot Point multicargo facility.

The region's councillors and development agencies were given a tour of the Mt Carlton mine site, which is at Strathbogie Station, between Gumlu and Collinsville, earlier this week.

Perth-based mining company Conquest is hoping to get the green light from financiers by November to push ahead with the mine, which is expected to produce 25,000 tonnes of precious metals concentrate per year, exported to China and other Asian ports.

The Mt Carlton deposit is estimated to have about 850,000 ounces of gold, 21 million ounces of silver and 38,500 ounces of copper, and a life expectancy up to eight years, with further exploration proposed.

Conquest's joint venture project with Gold Fields Australasia aims to bring the mine into production by April next year.

Conquest chief operating officer Jeff Innes conducted the tour.

"Conquest aims to work with the community and will look at every opportunity to engage local businesses," Mr Innes said.

"The mine will employ over 150 people with preference to source workers from the Whitsunday and Townsville regions."

Whitsundays Mayor Mike Bruner said it had been good to get out and have a look at what Conquest had in mind and the time frames involved.

"It's good news for Bowen, obviously as one of the closest town-ships to the mine, with the plans for a bus in bus out shift operation, it is more beneficial to Bowen," Cr Bruner said.

"We also spoke about the need for road infrastructure.

"That had been a concern for us and the landholder."

Cr Bruner said there had also been talk about using the proposed multicargo export facility at Abbot Point which would provide further economic benefits for the Whitsunday region.

"At this stage they would be shipping it out of Townsville, but depending on the time frames, would want to ship it out of Abbot Point because it's closer," Cr Bruner said.

Enterprise Whitsundays, who was also on the tour, said it would be working to maximise local business and was developing a project to take advantage of all opportunities in the region including the Conquest Mining proposal.

“The project aims to assess our region’s business capabilities and maximise opportunities where possible with major projects.” EW CEO Rebecca Andrews said.

“We will be working with Conquest to assess their needs and how our community can capitalise on these opportunities.”

Local businesses who wish to register their interest in this project, which will capture the capacity and capabilities of local business, should contact EW Major Projects officer Jane Benson at investment@enterprisewhitsundays.com.au