




Speech By
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MATTERS OF PUBLIC INTEREST

Mount Morgan Goldmine

 **Ms LAUGA** (Keppel—ALP) (2.31 pm): In the early 1900s Mount Morgan goldmine was the world's largest goldmine. However, since 1990 it has been unused and is contaminated with acid water. It has been under state government management to remediate the legacy environmental safety risks. During the mine's life about 250 tonnes of gold and 360,000 tonnes of copper were extracted from the mine with about 134 million tonnes of waste rock and tailings generated.

There was positivity but also scepticism amongst the Mount Morgan and Central Queensland community when Heritage Minerals bought the leases to the site last year with plans to rework thousands of tonnes of tailings to extract an estimated 7½ tonnes of gold and 5,600 tonnes of copper. Last week was truly a eureka moment when I was onsite with the Treasurer and resources minister to announce that new technology will breathe new life into the mine and will create more than 130 direct jobs with the support of the Palaszczuk government's Invested in Queensland program. The Heritage Minerals-led project to reinvigorate the Mount Morgan goldmine will provide immense financial and environmental benefits to the local community. The tailings-processing plant onsite is an absolute game changer with the potential to process nearly 10 million tonnes of existing gold or tailings, recovering an estimated 260,000 ounces of gold and 5,600 tonnes of copper with potential to continue operation for decades to come.

The project will create up to 133 full-time jobs by commercialising the remaining resources and it is expected to generate almost \$40 million in new mining royalties to the state over its first seven years of operation. This is an example of the resources industry continuing to support good jobs in the regions, but it will also have huge environmental benefits and will significantly reduce the state government's environmental site management and remediation costs.

The Heritage Minerals plan includes the construction of a new water treatment plant to lower the level of contamination in the open-cut pit, treat all water captured by the site's seepage interception system and help meet regulatory requirements for the release of treated water into the Dee River. New technology will allow the process to reduce cyanide consumption by 50 per cent, detoxifying the mine's tailings stream and improving clean water discharge. An article states—

Heritage Managing Director, Malcolm Paterson, said the Queensland Government funding would allow preliminary work of the environmental rehabilitation of the old mine site to recover gold and copper from the mine tailings to now get underway to deliver a project with the potential to support jobs for another 100 years.

"The Mount Morgan mine created so much wealth and prosperity and had wide-ranging impacts, including providing the impetus for the establishment of BP ... as well as the Walter and Eliza Hall Institute, Australia's oldest medical research institute," he said.

... Our project will respect and protect that proud history, and create new jobs and opportunities for the future of Mount Morgan and the broader region."

Given the mine's storied Queensland history, metals mined from Mount Morgan would also be ideal for production for the 2032 Olympic and Paralympic Games gold, silver and bronze medals. Once Heritage Minerals finalises funding and finance approvals with the Australian government, which they expect within coming weeks, the preliminary works including an access road, admin buildings and drainage works can be commissioned. Heritage Minerals is also working on recruitment and rostering new staff at the mine.

Attracting new investment in Queensland is a major priority for the government with a range of investment programs available to support significant projects and create new jobs for Queenslanders. There is a whole lot of new enthusiasm in the entire Mount Morgan and Central Queensland communities as a result of this announcement—a really strong partnership between the Palaszczuk government, Heritage Minerals and also in collaboration with the federal government and the Rockhampton Regional Council, which has been working together with Heritage Minerals for a number of years.

I commend Heritage Minerals, Malcolm Paterson and their team for the work they have put into this project, the skills and expertise that have been required to get this project to this stage. It is not a typical mining project. It requires a lot of really technically advanced mining and tailings technology and resources and it is only Heritage Minerals that has been able to do that.

There has been a number of proponents over the years, but Heritage Minerals has come in and put their mind to it. They have now been able to guarantee that next year they are going to start work on construction of the mine and also start rehabilitation of the site, which is incredibly important for the entire Mount Morgan community. The Dee River is contaminated and for many years governments have grappled with how to rehabilitate that river. Now we have a pathway forward and it has only been as a result of collaboration and partnership between the Palaszczuk Labor government and the private sector in Heritage Minerals.