

Huntly and Willowdale current mining operations

Environmental assessment



Social surroundings (heritage)



Alcoa has been operating in Western Australia since 1963. Our Huntly and Willowdale mines send mined bauxite to our Pinjarra and Wagerup refineries where it's refined into alumina, the material used to make aluminium.

Aluminium plays a key role in decarbonisation. It's found in solar panels, wind turbines, electric vehicles, medical equipment and more. We continue to rely on it every day.

The assessment

The Environmental Protection Authority (EPA) is reviewing some of the current mining activities at the Huntly and Willowdale mines to ensure they meet State environmental standards and minimise impacts to the environment, cultural values and surrounding communities.

While the EPA completes its assessment, Alcoa will continue to operate under an exemption granted by the WA Government - maintaining bauxite supply and supporting thousands of local jobs.

EPA environmental objective aims to

protect the social surroundings related to the proposal, including Aboriginal and historic heritage, from significant harm.

Key terms

Aboriginal heritage – Includes both tangible and intangible cultural elements significant to Aboriginal people and of importance and significance to Western Australia. These places and objects are valued for their social, spiritual, historical, scientific, and/or aesthetic importance.

Historic heritage – Refers to sites, artefacts, and structures from the post-European settlement period, including remnants from the early colonial era and later developments.

Proposed activities

Alcoa's proposed mining activities with potential heritage impacts include:

Clearing native vegetation.

Emissions of dust and water run-off.

Mining, and operational activities.

Constructing infrastructure, altering the cultural landscape.

Rehabilitation activities.

Potential impacts

Alcoa is committed to protecting Aboriginal and historic heritage values through collaboration with Traditional Owners and adherence to heritage legislation. Mining activities may affect heritage places and features in the following ways:

Aboriginal heritage – Direct or indirect disturbance, destruction or alteration to culturally significant places, objects, traditions and their linkages to the bio-physical environment.

Historic heritage – Direct or indirect disturbance of heritage-listed sites, structures, cultural landmarks and their linkages to the bio-physical environment

Managing impacts

Alcoa prioritises the protection of heritage places and features, aiming for avoidance wherever possible and applying mitigation measures to minimise disturbance.



Avoid

- Conduct heritage surveys before any land disturbance, involving Traditional Owners, and relevant stakeholders, supported by appropriately qualified and skilled heritage practitioners.
- Adjust mine plans and pit layouts to avoid impacting heritage sites whenever feasible.
- Aboriginal heritage places identified include:
 - Culturally significant landscape features, including rivers and other waterways.
 - Archaeological sites and artefacts evidencing traditional use of the forest.
- European heritage sites identified include:
 - Serpentine Dam – historic water reservoir.
 - Marrinup Prisoner of War Camp – WWII-era heritage site.
 - Shield trees – trees modified during forestry operations to serve as location markers.



Minimise

- Reduce unavoidable disturbance to conduct the relevant activities through appropriate mine layout or infrastructure design.
- If an Aboriginal heritage site cannot be avoided, proceed only in accordance with regulatory processes.
 - Provide workforce training and inductions that include cultural heritage obligations, management procedures and overall cultural awareness.
 - Obtain legal consent (e.g., Section 18 of the Aboriginal Heritage Act 1972) in consultation with Traditional Owners and through the Gnaala Karla Booja Aboriginal Corporation (GKB AC).
 - Apply appropriate management measures to ensure disturbance is kept to the minimum necessary (guided by co-developed Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Management Plans as required).

Heritage management at Alcoa

Alcoa is committed to protecting cultural heritage across all its operations. At Huntly and Willowdale, this includes close collaboration with Traditional Owners through the GKB AC, to implement appropriate management of Aboriginal heritage places.

Alcoa acknowledges the cultural significance of Noongar heritage and early European history in the South West. Through proactive heritage surveys, stakeholder consultation, and strict compliance with heritage laws, Alcoa ensures that heritage sites are identified and avoided wherever possible.

Where avoidance isn't possible, approvals are obtained and impacts are appropriately managed during development. This includes controlling and monitoring ground disturbing activities to prevent inadvertent impacts. The effectiveness of these controls will be assessed through ongoing auditing.

Alcoa actively manages and monitors its impacts on the biological and physical environment, which also protects any cultural heritage values associated with the environment itself.



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