



Lincoln – an emerging pivot point for Australian graphite

As Australia jockeys for a lead position in the global race to source, develop and supply the new-age products being derived from graphite and graphene, one developer, Lincoln Minerals Limited (ASX: LML), has carved a pivotal project position in the heart of Australia's main graphite province, South Australia's Eyre Peninsula.

Lincoln, through its wholly owned subsidiary Australian Graphite Limited, is now in the throes of finalising and lodging its first mining lease application to convert its flagship graphite deposits into a mine.

The action centres around the high-grade Kookaburra Gully – a flake graphite project – with Lincoln putting the finishing touches to conceptual mine plans for waste rock and tailings storage facilities, and completing the final round of environmental reports.

With numerous graphite occurrences and historic graphite mines across southern Eyre Peninsula, Kookaburra Gully was originally identified and investigated by Pancontinental Mining during the 1980s.

Drilling by Lincoln early in 2013 showed it to contain a shallow, high-grade flake graphite deposit with a mineral resource extending to at least 125 metres below ground level and open both at depth and along strike.

Metallurgical tests on Kookaburra Gully's mineralisation have shown that the deposit can produce a range of flake graphite products from very fine (<75 microns) to large (>176 microns) flake at grades in excess of 93 per cent total graphitic carbon (TGC) – the right end of the spectrum to be at in terms of the quality of one's graphite.

For Lincoln Managing Director Dr John Parker, Kookaburra Gully is one of Australia's premier graphite deposits with total indicated and inferred mineral

resources of 2.2 million tonnes grading on average 15.1 per cent TGC.

With the mining lease application boxes being ticked, Dr Parker has set his sights firmly on taking Kookaburra Gully to critical development and commercialisation milestones over the next 12 months.

Lincoln's Eyre Peninsula graphite focus is further advantaged by the fact that Australian Graphite Limited owns what is proving to be another graphite add-on opportunity, the historic Koppio Graphite Mine, immediately adjacent Kookaburra Gully.

Here the mineralisation extends to more than 525 metres in strike length and remains open to the north and south – giving Lincoln a unique access to two main ore bodies as a source of base stockfeed for the company's first graphite processing plant.

In tech talk, Koppio in itself is a robust feedstock with assays for its untreated high-grade lenses of coarse flake graphite grading up to 42.8 per cent TGC. That's the sort of number that gets brokers and fund managers excited, as well as potential customers.

Koppio was intermittently mined from the early 1900s to 1944, so has yet to benefit from modern mining, extraction and processing.

A suite of satellite prospects around it – Pernella, Glendara and Yellow Gums – are also known historic occurrences containing coarse flake graphite over a cumulative strike length of airborne

electromagnetic (EM) targets in excess of five kilometres.

Dr Parker points out that both Kookaburra Gully and Koppio are global top 10 graphite deposits, based on grade.

Importantly, they are just 10 kilometres from process water supplies, lie adjacent to high-voltage electricity lines, and are within 35 kilometres of a major export port and skilled labour.

The next two steps, once the mining lease is approved, will be to take the two adjoining projects to pilot test level – bringing the step-up to commercial mine operation within reach.

Lincoln will also be working at the same time to firm up international markets and customers for graphite products from Kookaburra Gully – putting Lincoln and South Australia front and centre in the global graphite space. 

