



Graphite mine wins lease

CHRISTOPHER RUSSELL

A GRAPHITE mine at Kookaburra Gully, 35km north-west of Port Lincoln, has moved a major step closer with the granting of a mineral lease.

Project owner Lincoln Minerals said the lease clears the way to complete the Program for Environment Protection and Rehabilitation (PEPR) on the mine and begin raising the estimated \$50 million construction cost.

"The grant of ML 6460 is the key pivot point and milestone to ensure delivery of Lincoln's transformation now from project explorer and developer to an emerging graphite producer, in an industry at the forefront of the growing global green energy market," chairman Yubo Jin said.

Managing director John Parker said that it was exciting to clear the hurdle as Lincoln now targets production from 2017 at the high-grade, shallow deposit.

He hopes one of the earliest customers will be the solar thermal project at Port Augusta being proposed by Solastor, the company supported by former federal Liberal leader and South Australian climate change adviser John Hewson.

"Graphite is a critical component of the Solastor proposal," Mr Parker said.

"In the proposed Solastor system, a tower-mounted, 10 tonne graphite solar thermal receiver is heated to 800C and used to convert water to steam, which is then used to generate electricity in a steam turbine generator.

"For the Port Augusta proposal, at least 1700 graphite blocks – or more than 17,000 tonnes of graphite – would be

required."

One of the properties of graphite is that it retains energy because it emits little radiant heat.

Graphite is also used in batteries, electrical components, stationery, steel-making, lubrication and more.

Mr Parker expects the PEPR report to take between six and 12 months to complete.

In regards to funding the report phase, Lincoln will first look to China, where board members have extensive connections.

Lincoln now has more than \$700,000 in cash and a facility to place 100 million shares. Lincoln shares are currently trading at about 5c.

"So we're confident we'll have the funding to complete the PEPR," Mr Parker said.

The Kookaburra Gully mine would create 60 jobs during construction and 30 direct, permanent jobs.

In addition, there would be support jobs created, including in transporting containers for export through Port Adelaide.

Lincoln aims to produce 40,000 tonnes of high-grade concentrate per year for at least seven years.

Mr Parker said the company was pleased to have majority support from the local community.

In April, Lincoln Minerals signed a memorandum with the Tumby Bay District Council to collaborate on the mine's development.



EXCITED: Lincoln Minerals boss Dr John Parker.