

5 February 2026

## **Decision Date Confirmed for Fast-track Consenting of Bendigo-Ophir Gold Project**

A key milestone has been reached in the Fast-Track Approvals Act (FTA) process for the Bendigo-Ophir Gold Project, with the Panel Convener issuing a formal Minute on 4<sup>th</sup> February that confirms both the composition of the Expert Panel and the Statutory timeframe for determination of the application, providing clarity on the Project's Consent date.

### **Decision Timeframe**

The Panel Convener has used her discretion under the FTA and confirmed a 140 working-day statutory timeframe for determination of the Bendigo-Ophir Gold Project, with a decision due by 29 October 2026.

In setting this timeframe, the Convener emphasised a process designed to be efficient, proportionate and outcome-focused, enabling the Expert Panel to regulate its own procedures in a practical manner that supports a fair, well-tested and timely decision and avoid unnecessary procedural formality. The approach allows the participants to use expert conferencing to efficiently resolve issues, and narrow points of contention.

Key procedural milestones confirmed in the Minute include:

- Panel commencement date: 25 February 2026
- Participant comments due: 10 April 2026
- Applicant response due: 17 April 2026

The Convener noted that this structured, front-loaded process is intended to support an orderly and transparent assessment of the application, providing certainty for all parties and facilitating a robust determination within the statutory timeframe.

The Convener has appointed an expanded seven-member Expert Panel with wide expertise across economic, environmental and extractive industry disciplines.

CEO Damian Spring said:

*"This FTA determination date gives us a firm timeline for what we believe will mark the commencement of development for a project of national and regional significance. While the timeframe is longer than we had hoped, we appreciate the additional diligence to support the consenting of this nationally significant project. The appointment of an experienced Panel and confirmation of a clear statutory timetable provides important process certainty".*

This announcement has been authorised for release by the Chief Executive Officer.

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