



\$150m boost for our port

A mining company has visited Port Pirie with plans to spend \$150 million on a port terminal.

In town last week, Carpentaria Exploration said Port Pirie was “invaluable” to its hopes of getting the plans off the ground.

The company would export five million tonnes yearly of iron ore through our harbour from its Hawson Iron Project, southwest of Broken Hill, in a project likely to begin in 2014 or 2015.

Executive chairman Nick Sheard said the starting date and success of the project depended on having its regulatory framework accepted.

“The beautiful thing for us is that when we start mining, we can use existing facilities,” he said.

These existing facilities include the train line which will enable them to transport iron ore from Broken Hill to Port Pirie so that it can be exported. A pre-feasibility study, finished last month, was favourable. The company is now working on a definitive feasibility study.

In what is a new announcement, the company is also looking to process its pellets at a site “30km south of Port Pirie.”

The pellet plant would involve 300 workers and last 80 years.

Mr Sheard said pellets were usually processed in Malaysia or China, but treating the ore on-site would add 25 percent value, from \$150 a tonne to \$180 to \$190 a tonne.

“It is good to process the pellets here,” he said. “It is easier to ship out and let them do it.”

One of the questions the company were hoping to answer while in Port Pirie was: “Is there a way to get another two million tonnes out of Pirie?” They hope the land on the other side of the Bridge to Nowhere, now being investigated by an engineering company, may be the key.

In later years the company would look to expand to 20 million tonnes yearly at a common-use facility near Wallaroo.

Mr Sheard said he would imagine a lot of the workforce for that project would come from Port Pirie.

He said the company was “excited” about the possibilities of the project.

“We have had a dream start,” he said. “We have more money in the bank than when we started and we have never had to go back to the market,” he said.

The company was invited to Port Pirie. Mr Sheard was joined by project director Ray Koenig in a visit that came about from an approach by Terry Reichelt, of Regional Development Australia.

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