

...housing
...were essential. He could

and Ardnamurchan in particular.

...as well as the present
small number of landlords."

~~The Chan Times 31/5/84~~

Plans to open Morvern mine

PLANS FOR the development of the derelict 17th century lead mine at Lurga in Gleann Dubh, Morvern, were recently submitted to Lochaber Divisional Planning Department.

Minworth Limited, of Bakewell, Derbyshire, parent company of the locally operating Strontian Minerals, plan to extract 25,000 tonnes per annum of barytes and associated minerals from the site of the old mine.

Ore from Lurga will be transported to the company's plant above Bellsgrrove, Strontian, by trucks returning from delivery of material from the Strontian plant to Corpach.

Rate of Extraction

The proposed rate of extraction is in the region of 180 tonnes per day over at 2½-mile haul road to Achgavel then about one mile on the reconstructed existing track that connects with the A884 near the summit of Liddesdale Hill.

Planned intention is that the ore from Lurga will be used for blending purposes at the Strontian plant prior to treatment.

Although the scale of operations is planned over an area of 40 acres, Minworth Limited already hold mineral rights over a much larger area of Laudale Estate, with access rights near Achgavel.

Open cast methods of extraction will be used initially, employing four operatives and a foreman but the workforce will be increased when deep

mining operations commence later.

The estimated period of extraction from Lurga is 10 years; no permanent buildings will be erected and an old building near the site will be used as an explosive magazine.

Minworth state that when all mining operations are completed the workings will be backfilled with waste rock and revegetated by seeding.

Ten years ago the Highlands and Islands Development Board produced a report which stated: "The board have been advised by mineral consultants Robertson Research International Limited that the areas of Sunart and Morvern contain barytes occurrences offering the best prospects for development. Probably here, if anywhere in the Highlands and Islands, an exploitable body of barytes may be found."

Apart from its ever increasing demand for use in drilling muds for oil exploration barytes is also used in the glass, ceramics, electrical, paint, filler, rubber and paper industries.

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