

# NiWest Project Update

29 September 2026

*Encouraging Phase 1 vat leach results support Board approval of Phase 2 testwork*

## HIGHLIGHTS

- **Phase 1 vat leach testwork** on NiWest ore has delivered encouraging nickel and cobalt extraction outcomes which will be finalised and determined once the Phase 2 testwork is completed, supporting continued evaluation of vat leaching as an alternative atmospheric leach flowsheet.
- **Based on results to date**, the Board of Alliance Nickel Limited (ASX: AXN) has approved commencement of the next stage of testing (Phase 2).
- **A second suite of NiWest samples** has been dispatched to the overseas test facility to support Phase 2 testwork.
- **Vat leaching continues to be evaluated as a potential pathway to material capital cost savings** relative to the 2024 Definitive Feasibility Study (DFS) heap leach configuration.
- **Phase 2 is designed to more closely represent anticipated commercial vat operating conditions** and, subject to positive confirmatory results, support progression to larger-scale pilot plant testing.

Alliance Nickel Limited (**Alliance** or the **Company**) (**ASX: AXN**) is pleased to provide an update on vat leach testwork being undertaken as part of the capital cost optimisation program for its 100%-owned NiWest Nickel-Cobalt Project (NiWest or the Project) in Western Australia.

## Background

As previously advised to the market (see ASX announcements dated 12 March 2026 and 26 June 2026), Alliance is investigating vat leaching as an alternative to the on/off heap leach configuration outlined in the NiWest DFS (see ASX announcement dated 21 November 2024).

A key driver of this work is the significant reduction in water demand that vat leaching is expected to deliver compared with heap leaching. A substantial portion of the DFS capital cost — circa A\$310 million — was attributable to water infrastructure required to support the heap leach configuration. Preliminary analysis indicates that, under a vat leach flowsheet, sufficient water can potentially be sourced locally from the Mt Kilkenny tenement, offering the potential for material reductions in water-related capital expenditure. This is significant: the original heap leach DFS included more than 200 km of water pipeline infrastructure, which could potentially be removed from an updated capital cost estimate.

In addition, vat leaching also has the potential to deliver metallurgical benefits, including improved solution distribution, enhanced leach kinetics and shorter leach cycle times, while remaining an atmospheric leach process consistent with the design basis of the existing DFS flowsheet.

## Phase 1 results

Following delivery of a bulk sample of approximately two tonnes of NiWest ore to the overseas testing facility in June 2026, Phase 1 testwork has now been completed and subject to evaluation supports the continuation of testwork as part of Phase 2 to determine the final bulk sampling results. The Phase 1 program looked to assess parameters including ore sizing, agglomeration conditions, leach kinetics, and resulting nickel and cobalt recoveries.

Results to date are encouraging. The Phase 1 testwork delivered nickel extraction outcomes that support continued evaluation of vat leaching as a credible alternative flowsheet for NiWest. On the strength of this work, the Board has approved progression to Phase 2.

## Phase 2 approved and second sample dispatched

Phase 2 is designed to better represent expected commercial vat operating conditions including acid usage and importantly, assess ore variability across a greater extent of the Mt Kilkenny orebody.

To complement this work and improve understanding of ore variability across the entire Mt Kilkenny deposit, a second suite of composite samples representative of the life-of-mine ore profile has been dispatched from site to the overseas facility, where this critical testing has now commenced.

## Next steps

Alliance expects to complete Phase 2 testwork by the end of Q4 2026 and will continue to update the market as results become available. Following completion of Phase 2 and validation of the data, Alliance will provide a summary of the full testwork program results, including supporting leach performance data, which will provide a more complete view of the ore variability across the entire Mt Kilkenny deposit. Subject to positive Phase 2 outcomes, the results are intended to inform an update and refinement of the prior feasibility study work, with particular focus on the potential to reduce project capital intensity through a lower water process flowsheet.

Alliance Nickel Managing Director and CEO, Mr Paul Kopejtka, said:

*"The Phase 1 program has given the Board sufficient confidence to move immediately into Phase 2. The results to date are encouraging and reinforce our view that vat leaching has the potential to simplify the NiWest flowsheet and reduce capital intensity, particularly the substantial water infrastructure component of the DFS. Dispatch of the life-of-mine composite samples keeps that momentum going. We will continue to update shareholders as this work progresses."*

## About NiWest

NiWest is one of Australia's highest-grade undeveloped nickel laterite resources and is located adjacent to Glencore's Murrin Murrin operations in Western Australia. Alliance owns 100% of the Project. The November 2024 DFS confirmed a long-life development pathway to battery-grade nickel and cobalt sulphate using atmospheric leaching, direct solvent extraction and crystallisation. In May 2024, NiWest was granted Major Project Status by the Australian Federal Government in recognition of its national economic significance, providing the Project with access to the Major Projects Facilitation Agency to assist in streamlining Federal and State regulatory approvals (see ASX announcement dated 9 May 2024).

**This announcement has been authorised for release by the Board of Alliance Nickel Limited.**

## For further information:

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## About Alliance Nickel Limited

*Alliance Nickel Limited is an ASX-listed critical minerals development company with its principal asset being its flagship 100% owned NiWest nickel cobalt project containing one of the highest-grade undeveloped nickel laterite resources in Australia. The Project has access to existing primary mining infrastructure such as an established network of roads, a railway and gas pipeline and is strategically situated adjacent to Glencore's Murrin Murrin Operations. The Company has completed a Definitive Feasibility Study (see ASX announcement 21 November 2024) which has confirmed the technical and economic viability of a heap leach and direct solvent extraction operation where it aims to produce low-cost, high-quality Class 1 nickel and cobalt sulphate for battery manufacturers and automakers in the Electric Vehicle (EV) sector.*

*The Company confirms that all material assumptions underpinning the production target and forecast financial information in the Definitive Feasibility Study continue to apply and have not materially changed.*

More information is available at [www.alliancenicel.au](http://www.alliancenicel.au)

## Forward-looking statements

*This announcement contains forward-looking statements concerning the NiWest Project, including the potential benefits of vat leaching, possible capital cost savings, metallurgical performance and the timing of further testwork. These statements are not guarantees of future performance and actual results may differ materially. Phase 1 and early Phase 2 results remain subject to evaluation and confirmatory testwork and should not be taken as a statement of commercial recoveries, operating costs or capital savings. Except as required by law or the ASX Listing Rules, the Company assumes no obligation to update these statements.*

## Previously reported information

*This announcement refers to information previously reported in the Company's ASX announcements dated 9 May 2024 (NiWest Nickel Cobalt Project Granted Major Project Status by Australian Government), 21 November 2024 (NiWest DFS), 12 March 2026 (Company Update) and 26 June 2026 (NiWest Project Update – Vat Leach Testwork Commenced). The Company confirms that it is not aware of any new information or data that materially affects the information included in those announcements, and that all material assumptions and technical parameters underpinning the DFS production targets and forecast financial information continue to apply and have not materially changed.*