

## Blackstone's Piloting Success

Blackstone Minerals Limited ("Blackstone" or the "Company") is pleased to provide an update on its metallurgical test work programme that has validated the process for the Ta Khoa Refinery Project ("TKR") through production of battery grade nickel and cobalt sulphates, and successful processing of third-party cobalt supply.



**Figure 1: Ta Khoa Refinery Project integrated pilot flowsheet**

### Ta Khoa Refinery Project

In August 2022, Blackstone announced the completion of batch test work and commissioning of piloting equipment as part of the Definitive Feasibility Study ("DFS") test work program being conducted by ALS metallurgical laboratories ("ALS") (refer ASX announcement 24 August 2022). Since this announcement, Blackstone is pleased to share the following update:

- **Validation of TKR process:** Continuous operation of the pressure oxidation ("POX") process consisting of Ban Phuc Nickel Mine ("BPNM") and third-party concentrate (known as "TKR feed blend"). Over 7,200 kg of feed has been processed over a piloting run time of 730 hours during the campaign.

In addition, the mixed hydroxide precipitate ("MHP") re-leach process has been piloted with third-party MHP (with a piloting run time of 635 hours) to produce battery grade nickel and cobalt sulphates suitable for battery precursor cathode active material ("pCAM") as verified by ALS.

- **Production of MHP:** Production of MHP has been completed using the TKR feed blend with over 2,200 kg produced. Production has met specifications required to achieve battery grade nickel and cobalt sulphates. In the coming month, the MHP produced from the TKR feed blend will be processed to complete the pilot campaign.
- **Distribution of battery grade sulphates:** Battery grade nickel and cobalt sulphates have been committed to potential partners for pCAM processing and performance testing. This marks an important partnership development milestone.

- **Third party cobalt supply processed:** Successfully processed over 70kg of third-party hydroxides within feed blend demonstrating suitability of low emission and low-cost cobalt sources to the TKR process.

The TKR pilot program, inclusive of process variability test work, is due to be completed by the end of 2022.

Scott Williamson, Blackstone's Managing Director, said:

*"The latest achievements with the pilot program validate the Ta Khoa Refinery Project process for production of battery precursor material. Blackstone Minerals is excited to be sharing samples with our technology and strategic partners. The completion of the piloting program by end of 2022 is an important milestone as we strive to be a world leader in Green Nickel™ production."*

Authorised by the Managing Director on behalf of the Board.

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### About Blackstone

Blackstone Minerals Ltd (ASX: BSX / OTCQX: BLSTF / FRA: B9S) is focused on building an integrated upstream (Ta Khoa Nickel Project) and downstream (Ta Khoa Refinery Project) battery metals processing business in Vietnam that produces NCM Precursor products for Asia's growing Lithium-ion battery industry (refer Figure 2 for project locations).

The business includes an existing modern nickel mine built to Australian standards, which successfully operated as a mechanised underground nickel mine from 2013 to 2016. At both the mine and refinery level, the Company is focused on a partnership model and is collaborating with groups who are committed to sustainable mining, minimising carbon footprint and implementing a fully vertically integrated supply chain.

The Company's development strategy is underpinned by the ability to secure nickel concentrate and Ta Khoa is emerging as a nickel sulphide district of enviable scale with several exploration targets yet to be tested.

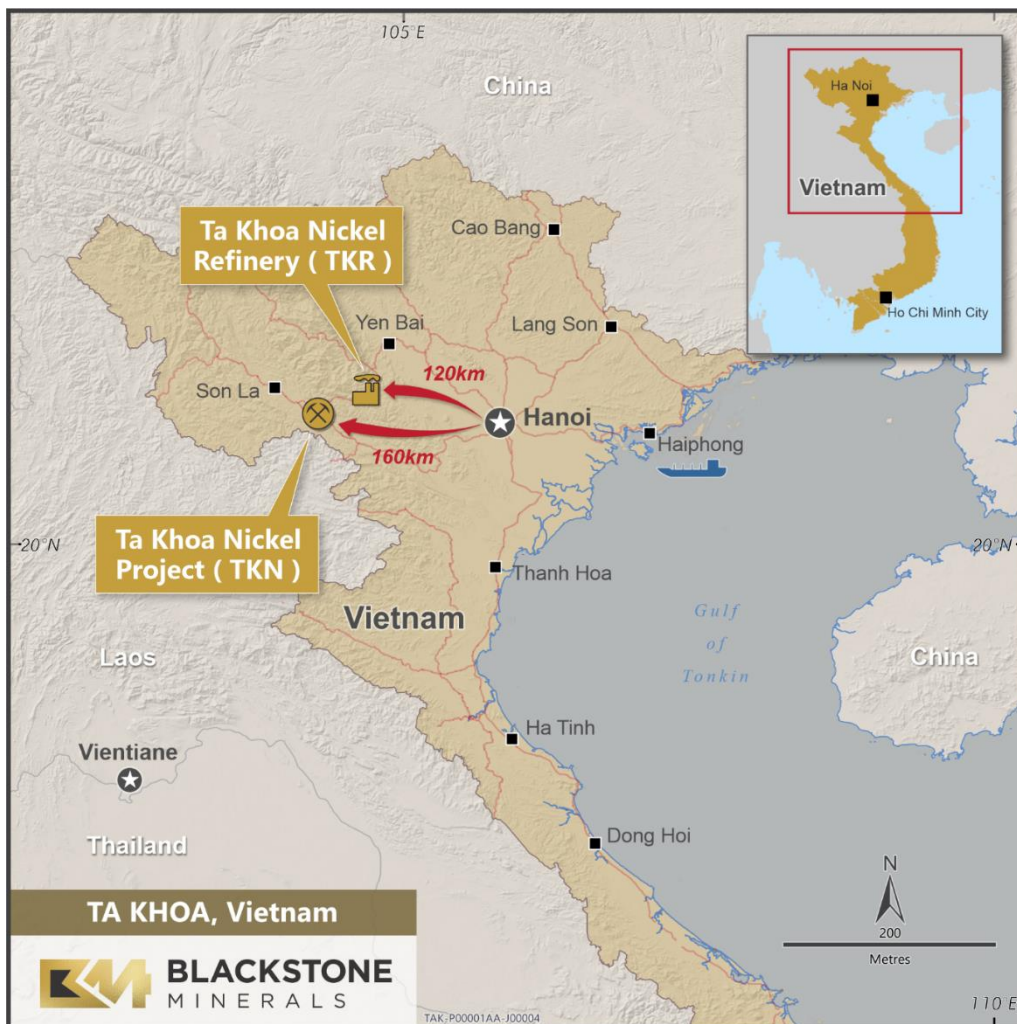


Figure 2. Ta Khoa Nickel Project and Ta Khoa Refinery Project Location

**Forward Looking Statements**

This report contains certain forward-looking statements. The words "expect", "forecast", "should", "projected", "could", "may", "predict", "plan", "will" and other similar expressions are intended to identify forward looking statements. Indications of, and guidance on, future earnings, cash flow costs and financial position and performance are also forward-looking statements. Forward looking statements, opinions and estimates included in this announcement are based on assumptions and contingencies which are subject to change without notice, as are statements about market and industry trends, which are based on interpretations of current market conditions. Forward looking statements are provided as a general guide only and should not be relied on as a guarantee of future performance. Forward looking statements may be affected by a range of variables that could cause actual results or trends to differ materially. These variations, if materially adverse, may affect the timing or the feasibility of the development of the Ta Khoa Project