



# **Response to Submissions**

for the

## **Hera Mine Modification 4 PA 10\_0191**

*Prepared by:*



**R.W. CORKERY & CO. PTY. LIMITED**

May 2016





Hera Resources Pty Limited  
ABN: 72 138 992 999

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## for the

# Hera Mine Modification 4 PA 10\_0191

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

This document provides a response to submissions provided to the Department of Planning and Environment (DPE) following the public exhibition of the *Environmental Assessment* (Hera Resources, 2016) prepared to support an application under Section 75W of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979* by Hera Resources Pty Limited (the Proponent) to modify Project Approval (PA) 10\_0191 for the Hera Mine (the Mine).

The following government agencies notified the DPE that they had no further comment in relation to the Proposed Modification.

- Cobar Shire Council.
- Office of Environment and Heritage.
- Department of Primary Industries – Lands.
- Roads and Maritime Services.

Submissions or comments requiring a response were received from the following government agencies and have been reviewed by the Applicant.

- Bogan Shire Council.
- Department of Primary Industries – Water.
- Division of Resources and Energy.
- Environment Protection Authority.

This document addresses comments and requests for additional information from the above agencies. Each submission is addressed individually in the following sections, with paraphrased submissions presented in *italics* and the Applicant's response presented in normal text.

## 2. BOGAN SHIRE COUNCIL

*Bogan Shire Council raises no objection to this modification as proposed, provided that the condition regarding the contributions to road maintenance is retained.*

The proposed modification will not change the existing agreements with respect to contributions provided for road maintenance to Bogan Shire Council.

## 3. DEPARTMENT OF PRIMARY INDUSTRIES – WATER

*The following comments have been summarised from the submission received from the Department of Primary Industries – Water (DPI Water).*

1. *The Water Management Plan must be updated to include detail of the procedures to be implemented should the trigger levels be reached. The trigger level of a*



*4.3m drawdown at monitoring bore WB015 has been included by DPI Water as a condition of use on the water supply work approval 85WA752586, which covers existing groundwater impacts at the Hera Project site.*

- 2. DPI Water recommended the revised groundwater monitoring and mitigation procedures be communicated to the owners of the relevant neighbouring bores.*
- 3. DPI Water note the proposed strategy to backfill mining voids to limit the propagation of any potential failures that may result in subsidence. DPI Water request that the Applicant provide an assessment of potential impacts on groundwater quality due to the proposed backfilling, in accordance with the NSW Aquifer Interference Policy.*

1. The Applicant would update the Water Management Plan following any approval in consultation with DPI Water and consistent with Condition 5 of Schedule 5 of PA10\_0191
2. The modified and approved Water Management Plan would be provided to the owners of the relevant neighbouring bores so they may be aware of the predicted impacts and contingency measures available to them should groundwater availability fall below trigger levels.
3. Backfilling of completed stopes remains an approved activity under PA 10\_0191 for the currently approved Project. Section 2.4.4.3 of the original EIS for the Mine (RWC, 2011) provides a description of the process that is currently applied. In summary, backfilling the stopes reduces the quantity of waste rock transported to the surface, increases the geotechnical stability of the mined stopes and maximises the recovery of ore material, with resulting reduced environmental impacts. While this requires increased production expenditure, the Proponent is committed to managing the material to improve environmental outcomes, where this remains practical.

In relation to backfilling of stopes within the proposed expanded Project Site, the Applicant acknowledges that some of the material to be used may be potentially acid forming. However, the Applicant also notes that the issue of placement of potentially acid forming material into completed stopes was raised in relation to the original application for Project Approval. As a result, the Applicant amended the “Statement of Commitments” to include the following.

“Ensure that material placed within the acid-forming waste rock encapsulation area is preferentially transported back underground as a priority.”

As a result, the Applicant notes that the proposed activities are consistent with those approved under PA10\_0191 and that return of potentially acid forming material underground is consistent with industry best practice.

#### **4. ENVIRONMENT PROTECTION AUTHORITY**

*The Environment Protection Authority (EPA) notes that it is able to support the proposal. No specific comment is provided other than to note the requirement to vary Environmental*



*Protection Licence (EPL 20179) prior to commencing construction activities and operation of the proposed modification.*

The Applicant acknowledges the support of the EPA for the proposed modification. Should approval be received for the Proposed Modification, an application to vary EPL 20179 would be prepared and submitted to the EPA in accordance with the requirements of the *Protection of the Environment Operations Act 1997*.

## **5. DIVISION OF RESOURCES AND ENERGY**

*The Department of Industry (Resources and Energy) supports the Hera Gold Mine – Modification 4 Project as a responsible utilisation of the State’s mineral resources that will, if approved, provide continued employment for around 100 personnel and bring economic benefits to the local region and the State as a whole.*

The Applicant acknowledges the support of the Department of Industry (Resources and Energy) (DRE) for the proposed modification. Should approval be received for the modification application and the pending mining lease application (MLA526), the Applicant would consult with DRE regarding any necessary updates to the existing *Mining Operations Plan* for the Mine.

## **6. REFERENCES**

**R.W. Corkery & Co Pty Limited (RWC) (2011).** *Hera Project, via Nymagee Environmental Assessment Major Project Application No. 10\_0191.*

**Hera Resources Pty Limited (Hera Resources) (2016).** *Environmental Assessment for the Hera Mine Modification 4 PA 10\_0191.*

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