



# Rocklands Project Initial Advice Statement

**Cudeco Limited**

Submission to:  
**Queensland Environmental Protection Agency**

Prepared by:  
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## **LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS**

AARC	AustralAsian Resource Consultants Pty Ltd
EPBC Act	<i>Environmental Protection &amp; Biodiversity Conservation Act, 1999</i>
EP Act	<i>Environmental Protection Act 1994</i>
ERA	Environmentally Relevant Activity
ha	hectares
IAS	Initial Advice Statement
km	kilometres
MW	Megawatt
ML	Mining Lease
MLA	Mining Lease Application
NC Act	<i>Nature Conservation Act 1992</i>
QEPA	Queensland Environmental Protection Agency



## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

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Australasian Resource Consultants Pty Ltd (AARC) was commissioned by Cudoco Limited (Cudoco) to prepare this Initial Advice Statement (IAS) for the development of the Rocklands Project (hereafter referred to as the Project).

A pre-lodgement meeting was conducted with representatives from the Queensland Environmental Protection Agency (QEPA) on 3<sup>rd</sup> October, 2006 to discuss the proposed Project and assessment pathway. QEPA indicated that an EIS would be appropriate for the Project.

Cudoco is applying to the Chief Executive under Chapter 3, Part 2, Sections 69 to 72 of the *Environmental Protection Act 1994* (EP Act) for approval to prepare a voluntary EIS. This IAS is provided as supporting information for this application.

### 1.1 PROJECT OVERVIEW

The Rocklands Project is located in north-west Queensland. Exploration of the copper, cobalt and gold mineralized zones is now at an advanced stage, with further work required to define mineable reserves and mine plan details.

It is envisaged that exploration and mine planning will be complete in approximately 18 months. During this period, concentrated diamond and reverse circulation drilling will continue, together with the metallurgical, mining, processing and environmental studies and in-depth evaluation of development options.



## 2.0 DESCRIPTION OF THE EXISTING ENVIRONMENT

### 2.1 PROJECT LOCATION

The Project is located in north-west Queensland, approximately 90 kilometres (km) east of Mt Isa as shown in Figure 1.



**Figure 1: Project Location**

The Project MLA is situated 15 km to the west of Cloncurry and covers an area of 1,600 hectares (ha). The regional location of the Project is shown in Figure 2.



**Figure 2: Regional Location**

## 2.2 REGIONAL CLIMATE

Information from the Australian Bureau of Meteorology indicates that the average annual rainfall for Cloncurry is approximately 473 millimetres (mm). Rainfall is typically highly seasonal, with the dry season peaking around August (average 3.9 mm) and the wet season peaking in January and February (average 114 mm and 115mm in each of these months respectively).

The coldest average temperatures occur in July (10.3°C) and the hottest average temperatures occur in December (38°C).

The predominant wind direction in Cloncurry in summer has a northerly or easterly component, mostly north, north-east or east. For the rest of the year the wind has a southerly or easterly component, mainly south-east, south, or east. The average wind speed in Cloncurry seems fairly consistent throughout the year averaging between 12 and 19 km/hour. Months that experience a higher percentage of wind speeds between 21 -30 km/hour include September, October and November, specifically during the morning.

## 2.3 TOPOGRAPHY

The topography of the Project site is described as gently undulating land with occasional low hills, intersected by ephemeral creeklines.

The land is generally flat in the southern portion of the MLA area. The areas adjacent to Morris Creek and along one of the major tributaries are particularly flat. To the south-west and north-east the land is rugged, with sharp ridges and prominent rocky outcrops typical of the Cloncurry / Mt Isa region.

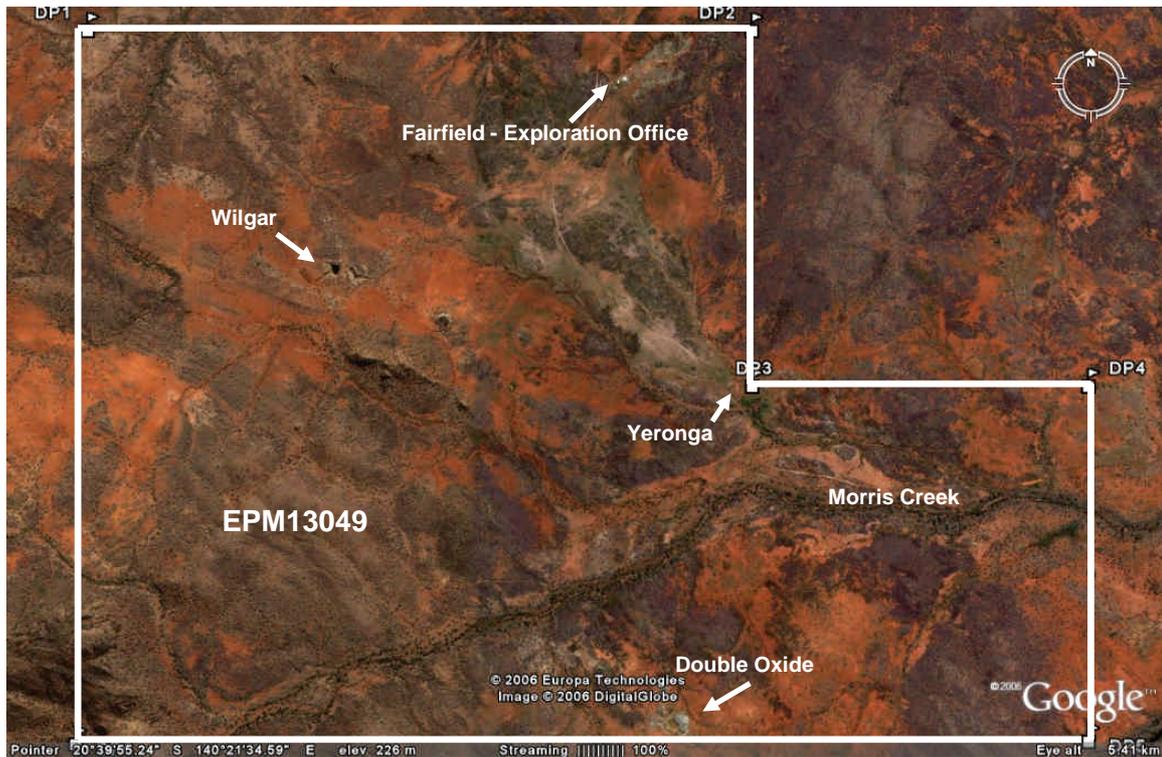
## 2.4 LAND USE

The current land use of the Project site is low intensity cattle grazing and mineral exploration. The Project is located within the pastoral lease referred to locally as Chumvale Station. Chumvale is operated by the Jersey Plains Pastoral Company.

Remnants of historical mining operations are evident on the Project site, namely:

- Wilgar Mine – limestone
- Fairfield Mine – copper
- Yeronga Workings – copper
- Double Oxide Mine – copper

The locations of these features in relation to the Project site is illustrated in Figure 3.



**Figure 3: Historical Mining Sites**

## 2.5 SURFACE WATER AND DRAINAGE

There are two drainage basins on the Project site, with a small ridgeline running from south-west to south-east and separating the two. Morris Creek runs across the southern end of the lease from west to east and eventually flows into the Cloncurry River. The majority of the lease drains into Morris Creek. However, the northern end of the lease drains in a northerly direction into Tommy Creek and eventually into the Corella River.

As drilling is still being undertaken to clarify the full extent of the resource, exact pit boundaries are not yet known. Details of potential impacts to surface waters will be provided in the EIS.

## 2.6 GROUNDWATER

Approximately 60 % of exploration holes drilled to date have encountered groundwater at an average depth below ground level of 25 metres. Further groundwater studies will be undertaken to determine potential impacts of the Project, and its suitability for use as process water.

## 2.7 SOILS AND LAND SUITABILITY

Soil sampling will be undertaken as part of a soil and land suitability assessment of the Project site in accordance with the Department of Minerals and Energy's *Land Suitability Assessment Techniques* (1995). In following the procedures outlined in this guideline, the objectives of the study will be to:

- Compile a land resource inventory through classification, testing and mapping of soils, and description of the terrain; and
- Determine and report on the pre-mining land suitability through the process of land resource evaluation.

Full details of the study will be presented, including proposed topsoil management strategies.

## 2.8 NATURE CONSERVATION

The Project site is lightly wooded with Snappy Gum (*Eucalyptus leucophloia*), Bloodwood (*Corymbia* sp), Ghost Gum, Turpentine (*Acacia chisholmii*), Buffel Grass (*Cenchrus ciliaris*) and Spinifex (*Triodia pungens*). Narrow fringes of River Redgum (*Eucalyptus camaldulensis*) riparian woodland occur along the creeklines. Heavier timbers tend to dominate along the creeklines and Turpentine bush dominates the more rugged terrain.

Several fauna species listed under the *Nature Conservation (Wildlife) Regulation 2006* and *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* potentially occur on the Project site.

It is proposed to undertake a Terrestrial Flora and Fauna Study for the Project site, including the following scope of works:

- Literature and database searches to identify species of State and National conservation significance known from the region;
- One dry season and one wet season field survey, employing standard methodologies to determine the composition of flora and fauna species inhabiting the Project Sites, particularly species and communities of conservation significance;
- Mapping of vegetation communities and habitat types in relation to the Project boundary, disturbance areas and natural features of the landscape;
- Reporting of survey results, potential impacts from the proposed project and suggested mitigation and management strategies to minimise impacts.



## **2.9 NOISE AND AIR QUALITY**

The closest sensitive receiver in the vicinity of the Project site is the Chumvale Homestead, located approximately 1.5 km east of the eastern MLA boundary.

Noise studies will include the deployment of background noise loggers to obtain noise levels representative of the region under typical circumstances. Noise, vibration and airblast overpressure levels from the Project, and the potential impact on sensitive receivers, will be predicted based on the proposed mine plan.

Dust is expected to be the primary air quality issue for the Project. Dust deposition gauges will be installed on the Project site to collect background levels representative of the region under typical circumstances. Air quality modelling will be undertaken to predict the impact of dust levels on sensitive receivers during Project operations.

## **2.10 INDIGENOUS CULTURAL HERITAGE**

The Native Title Claimants for the land on which the Project is located are the Kalkadoon and Mitakoodi. Cudeco currently employs up to 15 Kalkadoon and Mitakoodi people and is in continuous discussion with the groups regarding the proposed Project.

## **2.11 ENVIRONMENTALLY SENSITIVE AREAS**

The land affected by the Project is not likely to become part of a protected area estate or subject to any treaty. In making this statement, consideration has been given to national parks, conservation parks, fish habitat areas, wilderness areas, aquatic reserves, national estates, world heritage listings and sites covered by international treaties or agreements (e.g. Ramsar, Japan Australian Migratory Bird Agreement (JAMBA) and China/Australia Migratory Bird Agreement (CAMBA), areas of cultural significance and scientific reserves).

A search of the EPA Ecomaps website (<http://www.epa.qld.gov.au/ecoaccess/ecomaps>) shows that small areas of the Project site along the Morris River are mapped as Endangered Regional Ecosystems. This classification will be confirmed during flora and fauna studies, and potential impacts discussed. There are no other environmentally sensitive areas present on the Project site.

The Project is not likely to have a significant impact on Matters of National Environmental Significance and has not been referred to the Department of Environment and Heritage.



### 3.0 PROPOSED PROJECT ACTIVITIES

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#### 3.1 PROJECT TENEMENTS AND ACCESS RIGHTS

The land to be affected by the Project is described as Lot 521 on CP905413, known as Chumvale Holding. Ownership and contact details are shown in Table 1 below.

**Table 1: Real Property Description**

Real Property Description	Owner	Contact Details
Lot 521 on CP905413	Jersey Plains Pastoral Company Pty Ltd	PO Box 39 Cloncurry QLD 4824

Cudeco holds an Exploration Permit – Minerals (EPM 13049) for the Project site. An application for a Mining Lease (ML90177) was submitted in October 2006 covering this EPM.

Cudeco also holds a small mining lease (ML90117) situated in the north-east corner of the Project site. This lease has been conditionally surrendered to take effect on the granting of ML 90177.

On 11th April 2006, Cudeco lodged a Notice of Intention to Initial Entry of Occupied Land (Chumvale Pastoral Lease) with the Queensland Department of Natural Resources and Mines.

#### 3.2 EXPLORATION

The Project will involve ongoing exploration activities on and surrounding the proposed MLA.

#### 3.3 MINERALISED ZONES

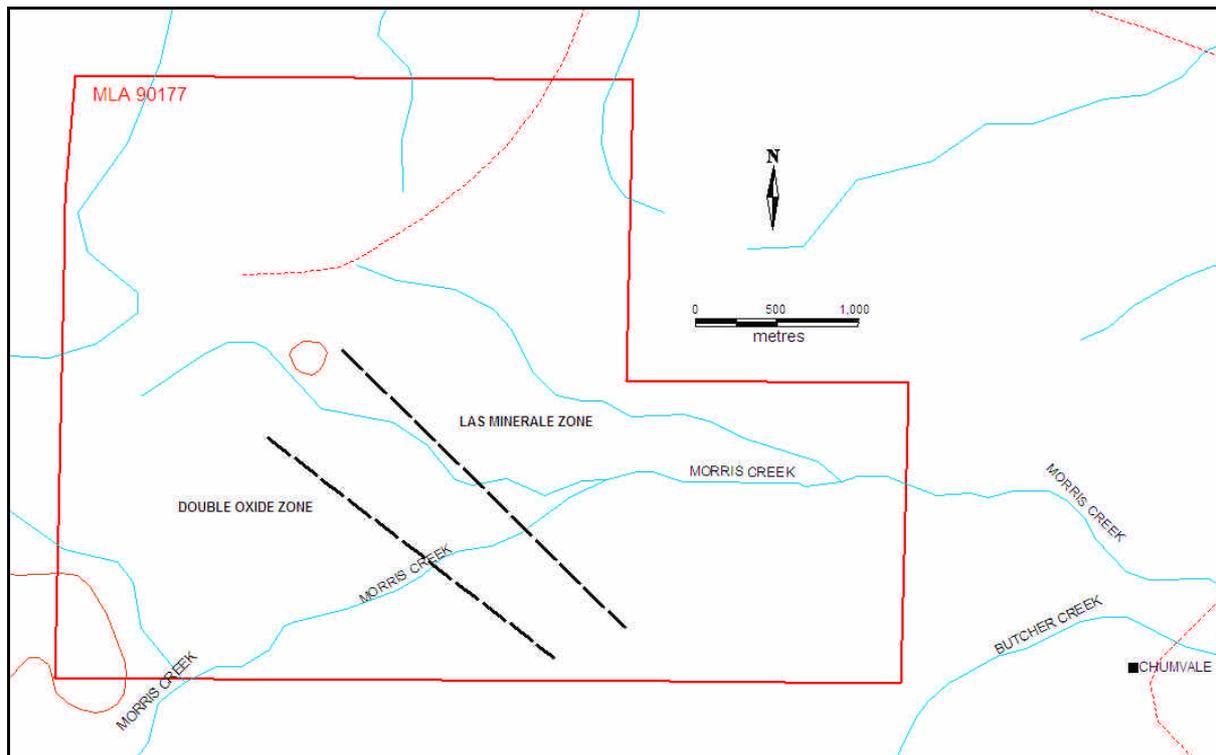
The project comprises copper, gold and cobalt mineralisation in a number of zones identified at this stage as being concentrated in two main sub-parallel zones, referred to as Las Minerale and Double Oxide. These are illustrated in Figure 4.

Exploration is at an advanced stage and mine planning will commence on completion of the final resource estimate. The final configuration of the mineralised zones is yet to be concluded through exploration which will involve the final definition of resources and reserves, grade, metallurgical characteristics, scale of the operation and the selection of the optimal development, support infrastructure, plant design, layout and location for waste dumps and tailings; together with environmental and community management plans.



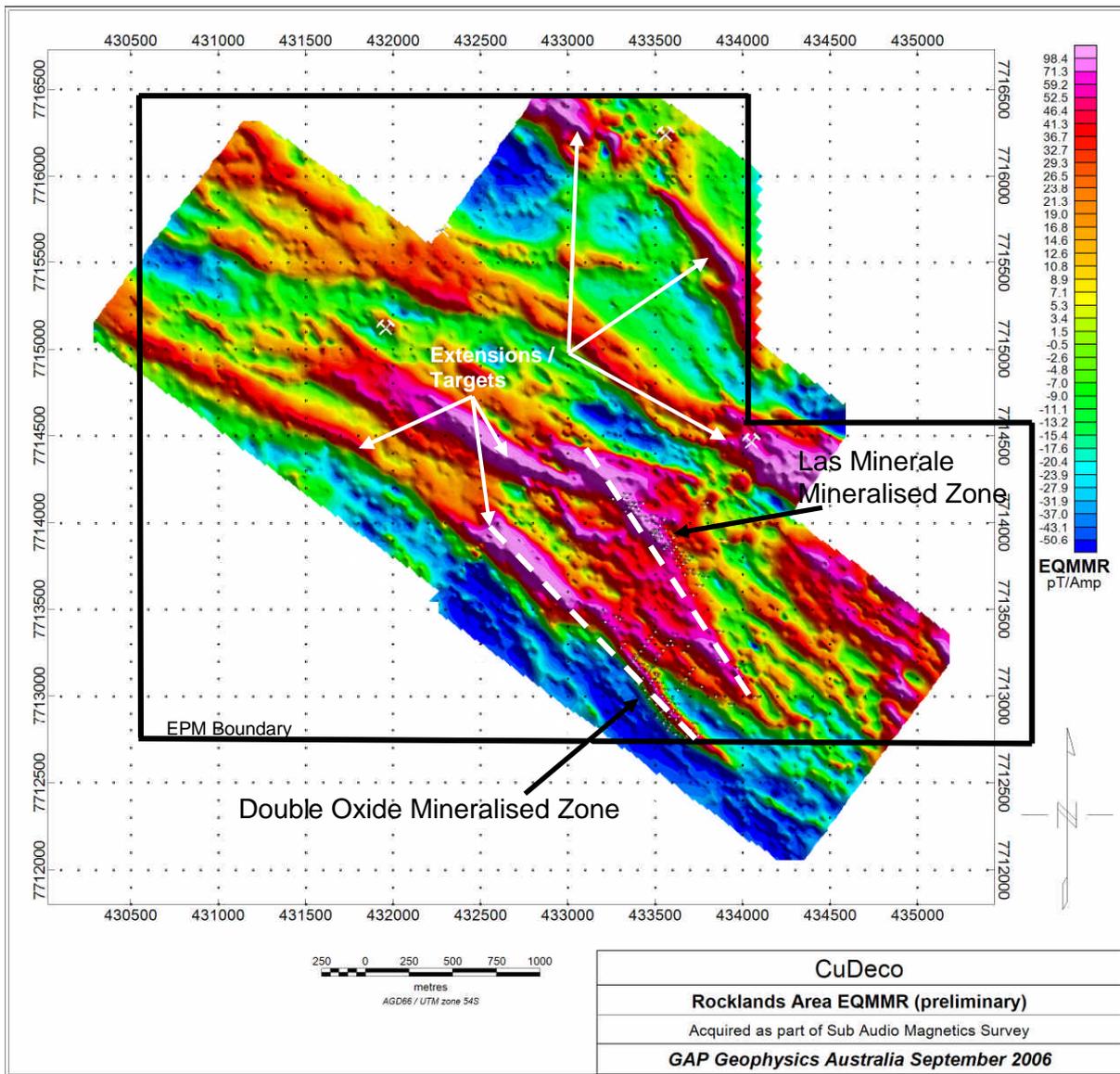
The host rocks are generally represented by a sheared dolerite several hundred metres wide striking 3100m and up to 3600m long. The primary mineralisation is represented by copper sulphides and is generally associated with calcite and potassium feldspar alteration. Secondary mineralisation is also present in the form of oxides of copper and native copper.

Continuous mineralisation has been identified in drilling over a strike of 1200m in Las Minerale strike and Double Oxide, 800m.



**Figure 4: Approximate Locations of Mineralised Zones**

The tenement also covers several geophysical anomalies which spatially correlate with known zones of mineralisation and which also correlate with evidence of copper mineralisation. These anomalies represent possible extensions to the known mineralised zones of Las Minerale and Double Oxide and additional targets on the tenement which will be investigated by the Company. These are shown in Figure 5.



**Figure 5: Mineralised Zones (Las Minerale and Double Oxide) and Geophysics**

### 3.4 MINING METHODS

The Project is expected to mine and process approximately 3 million tonnes of ore per annum for a mine life of 10 to 20 years, from as many as four open pits.

Mining is anticipated to be by conventional open cut methods using excavators and trucks.

Metal production will comprise copper, gold and cobalt with copper being the dominant commodity exceeding 100,000 tonnes per annum.



### 3.5 DEVELOPMENT AND PROCESSING OPTIONS

There are several processing options, namely:

- To mine and process the ore on site and transport the concentrate to Mt Isa for smelting or alternatively for export;
- To mine and transport the run of mine ore by conveyor, truck or rail to a third party for processing;
- To mine, crush and screen ore on site and transport by conveyor, truck or rail the beneficiated product to a third party for processing; or
- To mine, crush and grind ore and the beneficiated ore slurred to a third party for processing.

Possible locations for beneficiation, processing sites, site support infrastructure, waste dumps and tailings disposal dams is illustrated in Figure 6.

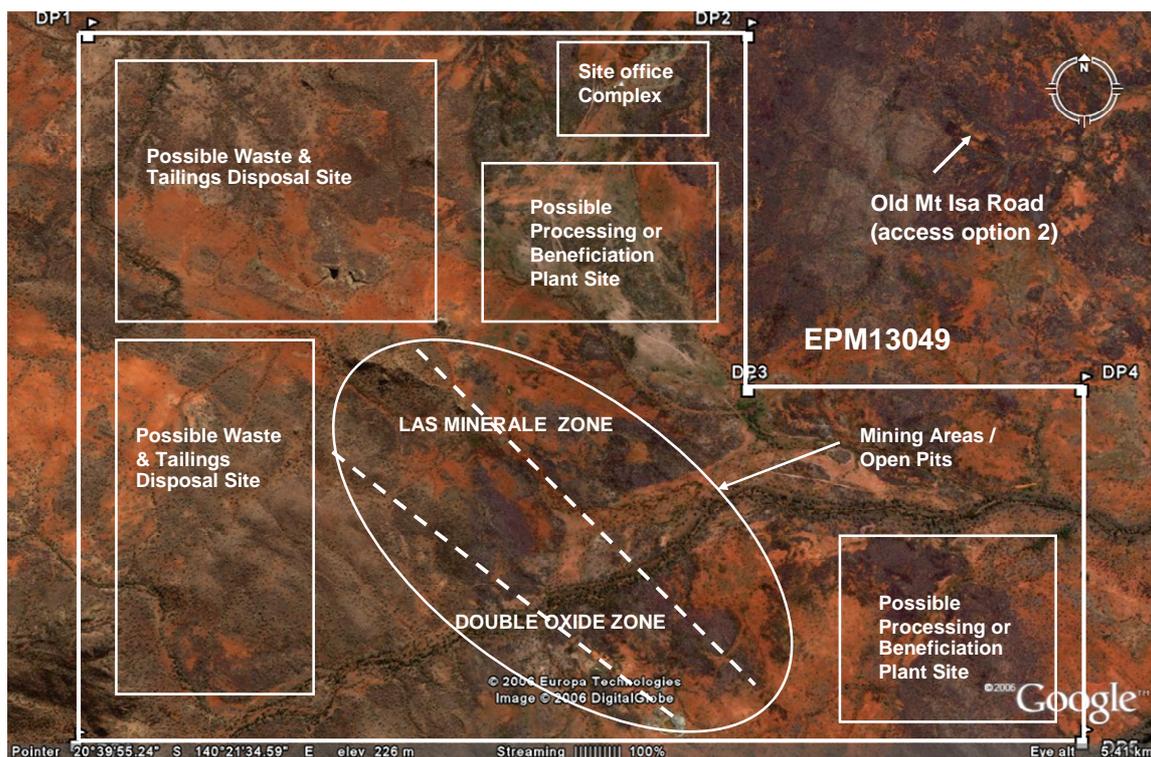


Figure 6: Conceptual Site Layout

### **3.6 WASTE DISPOSAL**

Waste rock will be deposited in surface waste rock dumps adjacent to the open cut pits. Waste rock may also be used for the construction of a Tailings Storage Facility (TSF).

Waste rock and tailings characterisation will be conducted to determine any potentially acid-forming (PAF) waste material. Strategies to encapsulate any PAF waste material will be developed as part of the EIS.

### **3.7 WATER SUPPLY**

Significant quantities of water have been encountered during drilling. The volumes, quality characteristics of this water and its suitability for process or potable water will be assessed during feasibility and environmental studies.

Subject to the scale of the operation and the decision to site the processing plant on EMP13049, it is anticipated water requirements will range from 5 to 12M cubic metres per annum.

Water supply options include:

- Lake Julius via the Ernest Henry pipeline, supplemented with ground water; or
- Groundwater identified on EMP13049 or in viable proximity.

### **3.8 POWER SUPPLY**

The quantity of power required to site will depend on the elected processing option. It is anticipated that the requirement will not be less than 2 MW per annum.

Regional high voltage power line infrastructure is located 5km from the site. This infrastructure services the Century Zinc Mine and the Ernest Henry Copper Mine, together with local regional communities including Cloncurry.

There are two options namely:

- Connect to the power line in a direct route south of the EPM13049 over a distance of 3.5 to 4km; or
- Connect to the power line transformer junction point near the Mt Isa / Townsville Highway and the Selwyn intersection over a distance of approximately 5km.

The options for powerline routes are shown in Figure 7.



### 3.9 PROJECT ACCESS

There are several access alternatives for the Project site, including tracks originating from the Old Cloncurry – Mt Isa Road or from the Barkly Highway between Cloncurry and Mt Isa. These alternatives are shown in Figure 7.

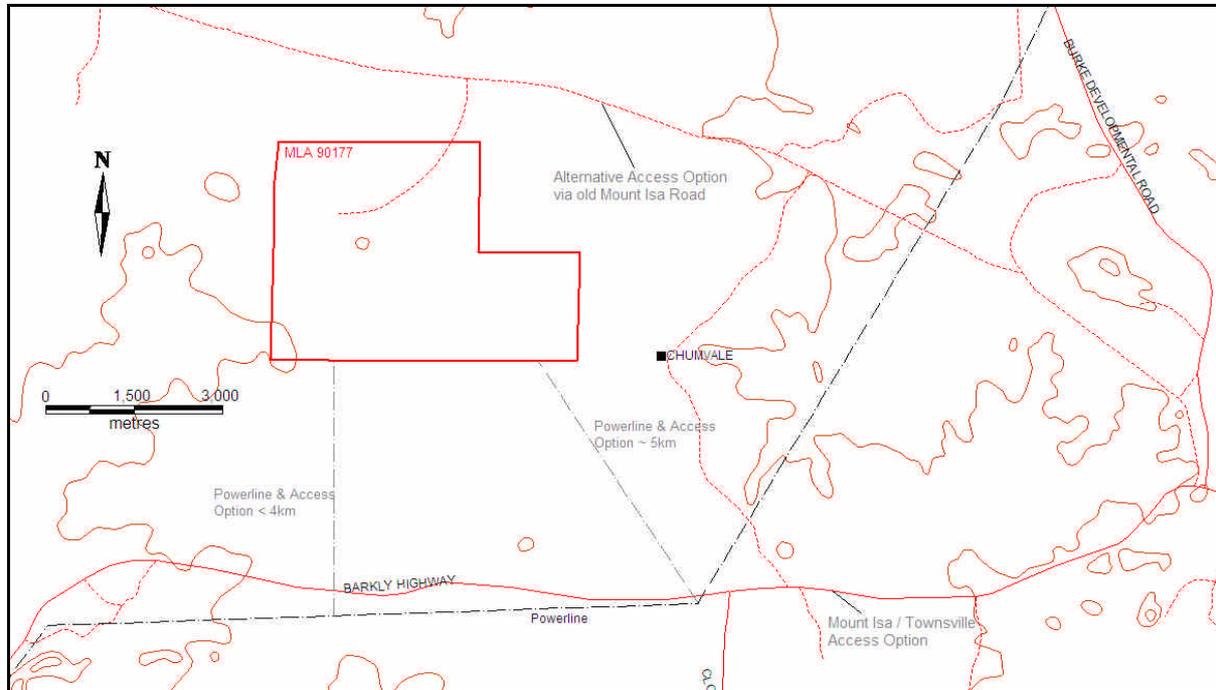


Figure 7: Project Access and Powerline Alternatives

### 3.10 WORKFORCE AND ACCOMMODATION

Cudoco currently employs members of the Mitakoodi and Kalkadoon People, and aims to train a local permanent workforce which will include a significant number of Indigenous representatives.

Options for accommodation of the Project workforce would include a purpose built camp. However, due to the proximity of the Project to the townships of Cloncurry and Mt Isa, it is likely that a significant number of workers would reside in private accommodation.

### 3.11 POST MINING LAND USE

Land disturbance on the Project will be a temporary impact only, during the construction and operational phases of the Project. All land disturbances on the Project will be rehabilitated either

progressively, where possible, or on decommissioning to reduce and eliminate any potential environmental impacts.

There will be up to 4 final voids. These will be used for water storage for pastoral activities if water quality permits, otherwise they will be bunded and/or fenced.

The area to be covered by final voids may be reduced if backfilling of these voids with waste rock or tailings proves feasible. Should the water quality of these final voids not be suitable for stock drinking water then the voids will be bunded as per the *Technical Guidelines for the Environmental Management of Exploration and Mining in Queensland* and fenced to prevent stock or native fauna access.

Consultation with the landholder will be conducted regarding retention of final voids as water storages for use as stock drinking water and the retention of access roads and tracks.

### 3.12 ENVIRONMENTALLY RELEVANT ACTIVITIES

Table 2 describes the potential Environmentally Relevant Activities (ERAs) proposed to be conducted on the Project, which would otherwise be ERAs as per Schedule 1 of the *Environmental Protection Regulation 1998*, if the Project was not a mining project.

The process of mining mineral ore (Mining Activities) is not covered by an ERA in Schedule 1 of the Regulation; it is covered separately by Schedule 6, Part 2 of the *Environmental Protection Regulation 1998*.

**Table 2: ERAs Associated with the Project**

ITEM (ERA Schedule No.)	Estimated Level/Usage	Trigger Criteria	Level	License Fee
ERA 7(b) Chemical Storage	Storage of process reagents	>1,000 m <sup>3</sup>	1	\$1,740
ERA 11(b) Crude Oil or Petroleum Product Storing	Storage of diesel for earthmoving equipment	≥500,000 litres	1	\$1,740
ERA 15(a) Sewage Treatment Operation	100-150	>100 persons <1500 persons	1	\$1,500

ITEM (ERA Schedule No.)	Estimated Level/Usage	Trigger Criteria	Level	License Fee
ERA 17 Electricity and fuel burning	Earthmoving equipment and potential power station	>500 kg/hour	1	\$3,000
ERA 18 Power Station (b)	10MW or more	>10MW	1	\$14,940
ERA 42 (a) Mineral Processing	360,000 t concentrate 100,000 ounces gold 10-20,000 t cobalt	>100,000 t	1	\$16,340
ERA 75(a)(i) Waste Disposal	<2,000 t domestic waste disposal	>50 t < 2,000 t per year	1	\$500
ERA 75(b)(iv) Regulated Waste Disposal Facility	Waste rock and tailings disposal	≥200,000 t per year	1	\$10,000
ERA 84(b) Regulated Waste Storage	Waste oil and tyre storage	-	1	\$2,000

## 4.0 COMMUNITY CONSULTATION

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### 4.1 INTERESTED PERSONS

The following definition of interested persons has been taken from the QEPA *Guideline 12 – The EIS Process for Non-standard Mining Projects*.

*“Interested persons are defined as persons nominated by the proponent that have an interest in the Project. Interested persons may include a local community progress association, a local/state/national environmental action group, and affected land users other than land holders, any person who might have a substantial interest in the project or its impact.”*



## 4.2 AFFECTED PERSONS

A definition of an affected person is provided in QEPA Guideline 12 – The EIS Process for Non-standard Mining Projects and is shown below:

A person is an “affected person” for a project (s38) if the person is:

*(1) any of the following under the Native Title Act 1993 (Commonwealth) for the operational land or for an area that includes any of the land:*

- a) a registered native title body corporate;*
- b) a registered native title claimant;*
- c) a representative Aboriginal/Torres Strait Islander body; or*

*(2) a relevant local government for the operational land; or*

*(3) a person mentioned below for the operational land or any land joining it:*

- a) a registered proprietor - for freehold land;*
- b) a person recorded in the register as the registered holder of the interest - for land that is held from the State for an estate or interest less than fee simple and for which the interest is recorded in a register mentioned in the Land Act 1994 (Land Act), section 276;*
- c) a holder of, or an applicant for, the tenement - for land subject to a mining claim, mineral development licence or mining lease;*
- d) a holder of the authority; or a lessee under the lease; or a licensee under the licence - for land subject to an authority to prospect or a lease or licence under the Petroleum Act 1923;*
- e) a trustee of the land - for land under the Land Act or the Nature Conservation Act 1992 (NCA) for which there are trustees;*
- f) a grantee of the land - for Aboriginal land under the Aboriginal Land Act 1991 (ALA) that is taken to be a reserve because of section 87(2) or 87(4)(b) of that Act;*
- g) a trustee for the land - for DOGIT land under the ALA or the Torres Strait Islander Land Act 1991;*
- h) a relevant local government - for land held under a lease under the Local Government (Aboriginal Lands) Act 1978, section 6;*
- i) a grantee of the land - for Torres Strait Islander land under the Torres Strait Islander Land Act 1991 that is taken to be a reserve because of section 84(2) or 84(4)(b) of that Act;*
- j) a trustee of the land - for land under a lease from the State under the Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders (Land Holding) Act 1985 that has been excised from land granted in trust for Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander purposes under the Land Act;*
- k) the State - for land that is any of the following:*
  - unallocated State land;*
  - a reserve under the Land Act for which there is no trustee;*

- *a national park, national park (Aboriginal land), national park (scientific), national park (Torres Strait Islander land), national park (recovery) or forest reserve under the NCA;*
- *a conservation park under the NCA for which there are no trustees;*
- *a State forest or timber reserve under the Forestry Act 1959;*
- *a State-controlled road under the Transport Infrastructure Act 1994;*
- *a fish habitat area under the Fisheries Act 1994.*
- *another person prescribed under a regulation to the EP Act.*

### **4.3 CONSULTATION PROCESS**

Affected and interested persons will be included in the community consultation program for the Project and will be provided with a copy of the TOR Notice and EIS for public comment. The community consultation program will include meetings with affected and interested persons as required. All correspondence with interested and affected persons will be recorded in the Consultation Report as a part of the EIS.

The draft TOR will be released for public comment, and to interested and affected persons, and advisory bodies for at least 30 business days. Anyone can make comments on the draft TOR to the Queensland Environmental Protection Agency (QEPA). At the end of the comment period, copies of all comments received by the QEPA will be given to the proponent. Cudeco will then prepare the following:



- A written summary of the comments;
- A response to the comments; and
- Proposed amendments to the TOR as a result of the comments received.

The above information must be provided by Cudeco to the QEPA within 20 business days of receiving copies of the documents. However, a longer period of time can be agreed between Cudeco and the QEPA. The QEPA will then prepare and publish the final TOR based on the responses from Cudeco within 20 business days.

Cudeco will then undertake the necessary assessments, research and consultations to prepare the EIS, in accordance with the TOR. The EIS will support an application for Project approvals, in particular an Environmental Authority (EA).

Cudeco will submit the completed EIS to the QEPA. The QEPA will then assess the EIS and decide whether or not it adequately addresses the published TOR. If it does, Cudeco must then publish an EIS Notice and give a copy of the EIS Notice to each affected and interested person. The submission period for public comment will be set by the QEPA and must be at least 20 business days. Copies of the EIS will be made available to all interested and affected persons and Advisory Bodies. The QEPA will accept all properly-made submissions received during the submission period. The QEPA will provide Cudeco with a copy of all the submissions received on the EIS. Cudeco must then prepare a response to the submissions and make any necessary amendments to the submitted EIS.

The QEPA will prepare and give an EIS Assessment Report to Cudeco. This Assessment Report will consider the final TOR, the submitted EIS, all properly made submissions, Cudeco responses to submissions and the standard criteria in preparing the EIS Assessment Report. The Assessment Report will, among other things, recommend any relevant conditions that will be necessary for the Project to proceed.



## 5.0 ASSESSMENT OF EIS TRIGGER CRITERIA

Table 5 below contains an assessment of the Project against the QEPA's EIS Trigger Criteria as set out in Guideline 4 – Deciding the Level of Impact Assessment for the Mining Industry. It can be seen from this assessment that the Project potentially triggers several of the criteria; therefore an EIS process is proposed to account for all potential environmental impacts.

**Table 5: EIS Trigger Criteria**

EIS TRIGGER CRITERIA	TRIGGERED	COMMENTS
1. Significant Impact on Category A or B environmentally sensitive areas	No	Small area of Endangered Regional Ecosystem along creekline but no significant impact expected. No other environmentally sensitive areas present.
2. Involve any mining in a marine area	No	-
3. Involve any mining less than 500 m landward from the highest astronomical tide	No	-
4. Require the construction of more than 150 new dwelling units	No	No new dwellings to be constructed.
5. Include any activity that would otherwise be a Level 1 ERA with an annual fee greater than \$4000	Possible	Depends on processing option
6. Involve the mining of more than 2 million tonnes of mineral or run of mine ore per annum	Yes	Mining rate 3 million tonnes of ROM ore per annum.
7. Involve the abstraction of more than 2 million m <sup>3</sup> of water per annum from natural surfaces and/or groundwater sources	Yes	Annual water requirements may be up to 5-10 million m <sup>3</sup> (depending on processing), sourced from Lake Julius pipeline and possibly groundwater.
8. Result in more than 25 ha remaining post mining in a non-beneficial land capability where an acceptable alternative may be feasible.	Possible	Voids could be used as water storages, return other disturbances to low intensity grazing.
9. Involve any non-standard mining activity less than 2 km from a town	No	Cloncurry is approximately 15 km away. Nearest sensitive receiver at a distance of 1.5 km.
10. Contain a dam that requires a dam failure assessment under the <i>Water Act 2000</i>	No	Hazardous dams only.
11. Include mining for uranium or asbestos	No	-

## 6.0 REFERENCES

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DME (1995). *Technical Guidelines for the Environmental Management of Exploration and Mining in Queensland – Part A, Land Suitability Assessment Techniques*. Department of Minerals and Energy, 1995.

QEPA (2000). *Guideline 4 – Deciding the Level of Impact Assessment for the Mining Industry*, Version 1, December 2000.

QEPA (2003) *Guideline 12 – The EIS Process for Non-Standard Mining Projects*. Version 1.1, December 2003.

