

Northparkes Mines
A century of mining together

2022/23 Annual Compliance Report

EPBC Approval 2013/6788

Freshwater turtle native wildlife at
Northparkes Mines 2022.

CMOC



Declaration of accuracy

In making this declaration, I am aware that sections 490 and 491 of the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (Cth) (EPBC Act) make it an offence in certain circumstances to knowingly provide false or misleading information or documents. The offence is punishable on conviction by imprisonment or a fine, or both. I declare that all the information and documentation supporting this compliance report is true and correct in every particular. I am authorised to bind the approval holder to this declaration and that I have no knowledge of that authorisation being revoked at the time of making this declaration.

Signed



Full name (please print)

Jianjun Tian

Position (please print)

Managing Director

Organisation (please print including ABN/ACN if applicable)

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Date

12/06/2023

Table of Contents

1. Introduction	4
1.1 Project background	4
1.2 Purpose of this report	5
2. Conditions attached to the Project Approval under the EPBC Act (EPBC 2013/6788)	8

Tables

Table 1 Avoidance and mitigation of impacts on site	9
Table 2 Offsetting of residual impacts	13
Table 3 Reporting and auditing	15
Table 4 Revisions	16
Table 5 Publication of plans	17

Figures

Figure 1 Indicative Location of Northparkes Mines Step Change Project Features	6
Figure 2 Indicative Disturbance Areas for Northparkes Mines Rosedale Project	7

Appendices

Appendix A – Preclearance Survey – E31 and Infill Extension
Appendix B – Clearing Supervision – E31 and Infill Extension
Appendix C – Nest Box Inspection Report
Appendix D – 2021 Kokoda Biodiversity Offset Ecological Monitoring Report
Appendix E – Kokoda Revegetation Survivorship Report
Appendix F - 2022 Pine Donkey Orchid Survey Report
Appendix G - 2022 Bird Surveys (Winter and Spring)
Appendix H - Biodiversity Offset Management Plan
Appendix I - Vegetation Community Mapping – Kokoda
Appendix J - OEH Kokoda Conservation Agreement Acceptance
Appendix K - Registration of Kokoda Biodiversity Offset Conservation Agreement

1. INTRODUCTION

CMOC Northparkes (Northparkes) is a copper and gold mine, majority owned and operated by CMOC with Sumitomo Metal Mining and Sumitomo Corporation as minority owners.

Located 27 kilometers North West of Parkes, Northparkes has been operating since 1993. Northparkes was the first mine in Australia to use the highly efficient block cave mining method, beginning in 1997.

In July 2014, Project Approval was granted for PA11_0600 under section 75J of the EP&A Act for the Northparkes Extension Project (the Project). Operations include open cut, block cave and sub-level cave mining, ore processing plant, tailings storage facilities, transport and logistics, and asset management services. Northparkes products are transported by road train and rail to port where they are shipped principally to overseas customers.

Northparkes is also a proud agricultural producer of canola and wheat, with 8,684 ha of its 10,314 ha holdings in Central West operating for commercial cropping.

1.1 Project background

The Northparkes Mine Step Change Project (the Project) was approved with conditions under section 130 (1) and 133 of the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (EPBC Act 1999) on 13th February 2014 (EPBC 2013/6788). Key elements of the Project included:

- continued underground block cave mining in two existing ore bodies;
- the development of an additional underground block cave mine, under one of the existing open cut pits;
- additional campaign open cut mining in existing mine leases;
- augmenting approved Tailings Storage facilities (TSFs);
- moving the existing access road;
- construction of the new TSF (Rosedale) in Figure 1; and
- extending the life of the mine by seven years to 2032.

In early 2015, construction commenced on the Rosedale Tailing Storage Facility Project (the Rosedale Project) (Figure 2), which included:

- extending the approved TSF 2;
- construction of the new Rosedale TSF;
- construction of a new main access road (known as Northparkes Way) as well as upgrades to existing roads;
- construction of a new access control for site; and
- stockpiles associated with construction of the TSF.

On 25 February 2016, Northparkes received a variation to Project Approval EPBC 2013/6788 (the approval) following correspondence between Northparkes and the Department of the Environment. This variation included the deletion of conditions 4, 6 and 7 attached to the approval dated 13 February 2014 and substituted with updated conditions 4 and 6 as specified in the variation to conditions document dated 25 February 2016. These variations have been outlined in Table 2.

1.2 Purpose of this report

This report has been produced to address compliance with Condition 12, EPBC 2013/6788 stating that:

Within 3 months of every 12 month anniversary of the commencement of the action, the person taking the action must publish a report on their website addressing compliance with each of the conditions of this approval (Table 1), including implementation of any plans as specified in the conditions.

As the commencement of the action occurred on 13 March 2015, this report has been prepared for the period 13 March 2022 to 13 March 2023, and will be published on Northparkes web page by 12 June annually.

Refer to the sections below and the associated appendices for information on the compliance activities undertaken to satisfy the conditions outlined in EPBC 2013/6788.



Figure 1 Indicative Location of Northparkes Mines Step Change Project Features



Figure 2 Indicative Disturbance Areas for Northparkes Mines Rosedale Project

2. CONDITIONS ATTACHED TO THE PROJECT APPROVAL UNDER THE EPBC ACT (EPBC 2013/6788)

The tables below outline the approval conditions in EPBC 2013/6788 and the associated compliance activities undertaken to fulfil these conditions.

Table 1 Avoidance and mitigation of impacts on site

	Condition	Description of Actions Undertaken	Supporting documentation	Compliance
1.	The person taking the action must not clear more than 46 hectares of Grey Box (<i>Eucalyptus macrocarpa</i>) grassy woodlands and derived native grasslands of south eastern Australia (GBGW) as part of the action.	No vegetation characterised as being a part of the mapped GBGW was cleared during the reporting period. The total amount of GBGW cleared as part of the project remains under 46 hectares total.	Not applicable	Compliant
2.	The person taking the action must avoid clearing native vegetation in the Project area, so as to maintain the vegetation specified in Section 2.2 (a) of the Preliminary Documentation and ensure that these areas of native vegetation persist on site.	<p>Development of the E31 open pit commenced in June of the reporting period, removing approximately 7.0 hectares of vegetation. This comprised of approximately 1.5 hectares of Bimble Box - White Cypress Pine woodland – exotic understorey, and 5.5 hectares of exotic grassland. All clearing undertaken as part of the E31 development has been contained to the area approved within EPBC 2013/6788.</p> <p>Also at this time, works associated with the Infill Extension haul road commenced, removing approximately 5.3 hectares of Western Grey Box tall grassy woodland. This vegetation was assessed prior to the approval of EPBC 2013/6788 and was not identified as part of the vegetation specified in Section 2.2 (a) of the Preliminary Documentation.</p> <p>Northparkes continues to avoid direct and indirect impacts to the identified Matters of Environmental Significance (MNES), whilst maintaining the economic viability of the action.</p>	Appendix A – Preclearance Survey of E31 and Infill Extension	Compliant
3.	To reduce direct and indirect impacts to matters of national environmental significance, the person taking the action must implement the mitigation measures set out in and as specified in Section 2.2 (b) of the Preliminary Documentation .			
	From Section 2.2 (b) of the Preliminary Documentation Table 2.1 – Pre-clearing Surveys	Preclearance surveys were undertaken for both E31 development and Infill Extension haul road activities, to identify critical habitat of threatened species known, or that are potentially occurring, within the clearing area. All potential habitat features were clearly marked and recorded prior to disturbance activities. Notably, one Australian Wood duck nest was observed in a stag tree, containing 8 eggs.	Appendix A Preclearance Survey Report of E31 and Infill Extension	Compliant

	Condition	Description of Actions Undertaken	Supporting documentation	Compliance
	<p>From Section 2.2 (b) of the Preliminary Documentation</p> <p>Table 2.2 – Habitat Augmentation Works</p>	<p>Habitat features from the E31 and Infill Extension activities have been recovered for future use in onsite rehabilitation. Suitable hollows for the superb parrot were recorded during clearing and are to be offset with nest boxes in upcoming installation projects.</p> <p>Nest box inspections have been carried out annually since installation in 2017 to assess use by target species, structural integrity and general condition of the box.</p> <p>During the reporting period, the nest box assessment found the majority of boxes to be in good condition. Nest boxes that were assessed as not providing effective habitat for the target species are repaired or replaced. Nest box occupancy has been assessed on a 2 yearly schedule and will be undertaken again in the next reporting period to develop an understanding of nesting frequency of targeted native species.</p> <p>Northparkes will continue to provide threatened species compensatory habitat, relative to that disturbed by the Project.</p>	<p>Appendix B Clearing Supervision Report – E31 and Infill Extension</p> <p>Appendix C – Nest Box Inspection Report</p>	Compliant
	<p>From Section 2.2 (b) of the Preliminary Documentation</p> <p>Table 2.3 – Clearing Supervision</p>	<p>Clearing supervision was undertaken for the E31 open pit development and Infill Extension haul road projects, following preclearance surveys. No fauna was captured, injured or found deceased during or after site clearing. The Australian Wood Duck nest was unable to remain in-situ due to the location of the tree. However, no ducks were present on the nest and the eggs were not being incubated, therefore the nest was not salvaged prior to the removal of the stag.</p>	<p>Appendix B Clearing Supervision Report – E31 and Infill Extension</p>	Compliant
	<p>From Section 2.2 (b) of the Preliminary Documentation</p> <p>Table 2.4 – Vegetation and Habitat Enhancement Monitoring and Maintenance</p>	<p>Vegetation and habitat enhancement monitoring and maintenance activities, as outlined in the Preliminary documentation and Northparkes Flora and Fauna Management Plan, was undertaken at Kokoda biodiversity offset Site during the reporting period.</p> <p>Following the revegetation activities undertaken in 2020 and 2021 at the Kokoda offset, Northparkes completed a survivorship assessment to determine the success of the planting program and compliance to the target density objectives. A recorded 81.7 percent of all tubestock installed were found to be in good healthy condition, meeting the targeted 400 stem per hectare across the active revegetation area.</p>	<p>Appendix D 2022 Kokoda Biodiversity Offset Area Ecological Monitoring Report</p> <p>Appendix E Kokoda Revegetation Survivorship Report</p>	Compliant

	Condition	Description of Actions Undertaken	Supporting documentation	Compliance
	From Section 2.2 (b) of the Preliminary Documentation Table 2.5 – Weed Management	<p>Weed management is undertaken on an as needed basis across Northparkes holdings in accordance with the Flora and Fauna Management Plan and Voluntary Conservation Agreements.</p> <p>Blackberry populations at the Kokoda Offset have been subdued as a result of programmed spraying during the previous reporting periods. Weed monitoring is undertaken during biannual inspections to identify the presence of any invasive weeds or those listed as local weeds of concern. The known Tree of Heaven population was targeted under a control program and has subsequently been eradicated. As a result of above average rainfall conditions during the period, biannual inspections were not able to be undertake across the majority of the offset area.</p> <p>Follow up inspections are undertaken with additional control measures implemented, where required.</p>	Not applicable	Compliant
	From Section 2.2 (b) of the Preliminary Documentation Table 2.6 – Feral Animal Management	<p>Feral animal control is undertaken on an as needs basis across Northparkes holdings in accordance with the Flora and Fauna Management Plan. Northparkes also implements feral animal management in conjunction with our near neighbours (e.g. fox baiting programs).</p> <p>Evidence of feral pigs was recorded along the creek line at the Kokoda offset. Due to their highly mobile nature and irregular observations, it does not suggest that a population is likely to reside within the offset boundary. Upgrades to the perimeter fencing has been investigated and are to be implemented during the next period.</p>	Not applicable	Compliant
	From Section 2.2 (b) of the Preliminary Documentation Table 2.7 – Rehabilitation Management	<p>Rehabilitation works are to be undertaken as soon as practical following disturbance in accordance with Northparkes site disturbance procedures. Rehabilitation works are also outlined in the Northparkes Rehabilitation Management Plan (RMP).</p>	Not applicable	Compliant

	Condition	Description of Actions Undertaken	Supporting documentation	Compliance
	From Section 2.2 (b) of the Preliminary Documentation Table 2.8 – Biodiversity Monitoring and Reporting	<p>A range of ongoing ecological monitoring activities were undertaken within Northparkes holdings, both within the mining leases and at the offset sites. Landscape Function Analysis (LFA) surveys and flora quadrats were undertaken successfully during the period across all programs. Additionally, annual Pine Donkey Orchid monitoring was undertaken onsite, observing a record number of individuals as a result of ongoing above average rainfall conditions. A total of 2,271 individuals were observed during the survey effort.</p> <p>Bird surveys during the reporting period at Kokoda Offset observed five threatened species listed under the <i>Biodiversity Conservation (BC) Act 2016</i> and one under the <i>EPBC Act 1999</i>. Two threatened species, the Superb Parrot and Grey-crowned Babbler, have been observed every year since baseline studies in 2014.</p>	<p>Appendix D 2022 Kokoda Biodiversity Offset Area Ecological Monitoring Report</p> <p>Appendix F Pine Donkey Orchid Survey Report</p> <p>Appendix G 2022 Bird Surveys (Winter and Spring)</p>	Compliant
	From Section 2.2 (b) of the Preliminary Documentation Table 2.9 – Threatened Species Adaptive Management	<p>Acknowledged, if an unexpected occurrence of a threatened species was recorded within the Northparkes Site, adaptive management to mitigate impacts to the species would be implemented in accordance with the Northparkes Flora and Fauna Management Plan.</p> <p>However, no new threatened species other than those assessed through the impact assessment process were recorded during pre-clearance and clearing supervision surveys.</p>	Not applicable	Compliant

Table 2 Offsetting of residual impacts

	Condition	Description of Actions Undertaken	Supporting documentation	Compliance
4.	CONDITION VARIATION AS OF 25 FEBRUARY 2016 To compensate for the loss of 46 hectares of GBGW and the related and additional loss of habitat for other matters of national environmental significance (<i>Polytelis swainsonii</i> ; <i>Lathmus discolor</i> ; <i>Anthochaera phrygia</i>) the person taking the action must secure the offset lands as identified as the 'Kokoda Offset Site' in Section 2.3 of the Preliminary Documentation. These offset lands must be protected by a legal instrument under relevant legislation on the title within 12 months of the date of this variation [25 February 2016].	Northparkes purchased the Kokoda Offset Site in early 2014. Northparkes had commenced the process to obtain the Voluntary Conservation Agreement (VCA) for Kokoda. The VCA was not executed by 30 June 2015 as per the approval due to additional biometric monitoring being requested by the Office of Environment and Heritage (OEH). A variation was granted to extend this time out till 25 September 2017. Kokoda Offset VCA was submitted in 2017 and signed by the OEH Chief Executive in February of 2018. Registration of the agreement by the Biodiversity Conservation Trust (BCT) has been executed, with the return of documents to Northparkes.	Appendix J OEH Kokoda Conservation Agreement Acceptance Appendix K Registration of Kokoda Biodiversity Offset Conservation Agreement	Not Applicable
5.	The instrument referred to in Condition 4 must: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) Provide for the legal protection of the land for the duration of the impact; (b) Prevent any conflicting future development activities, including mining and mineral extraction; (c) Ensure the active management of the land (in accordance with Condition 9). 	As per condition 4	Appendix J OEH Kokoda Conservation Agreement Acceptance Appendix K Registration of Kokoda Biodiversity Offset Conservation Agreement	Not applicable
6.	CONDITION VARIATION AS OF 25 FEBRUARY 2016 The person taking the action must provide evidence to the Department of their compliance with Condition 4, along with offset attributes, shapefiles and textual description and maps to clearly define the location and boundaries of the offset sites, within 1 month of the offset lands being protected under condition 4.	As per condition 4. In 2018, Northparkes submitted offset attributes, textual descriptions and maps that clearly define the location and boundaries of the offset site following receipt of confirmed registration of the VCA from BCT. In May 2019, Northparkes sent a copy of the Shapefiles to DoEE.	Appendix J OEH Kokoda Conservation Agreement Acceptance Appendix K Registration of Kokoda Biodiversity Offset Conservation Agreement	Not Applicable
7.	THIS CONDITION HAS BEEN DELETED AS OF 25 FEBRUARY 2016	No action required	No documentation required	
8.	The area of land contained within the offset lands that are secured must include appropriate areas of the offset lands (consistent with the Department's EPBC Act offsets policy) for each of the matters of national environmental significance that are impacted by the action, as per Section 2.4.2 and Appendix 6 of the Preliminary Documentation .	The Kokoda Offset Site was purchased as an offset site as it contains areas of threatened ecological communities and suitable habitat for the threatened species that were potentially impacted by the Project.	Appendix I Vegetation Community Mapping – Kokoda Offset Site	Compliant

	Condition	Description of Actions Undertaken	Supporting documentation	Compliance
9.	The offset lands ('Kokoda Offset Site') identified in Condition 4 must be managed to improve and maintain the condition of the offset lands to the satisfaction of the Department and achieve the conservation objectives of the affected lands, including:	The Kokoda Biodiversity Offset Management Plan was approved by the Department of Environment on 5 December 2016. Subsequent revisions of the plan have been undertaken followed by review and approval by the Department on 9 September 2020.	Appendix D 2022 Kokoda Biodiversity Offset Area Ecological Monitoring Report Appendix H Biodiversity Offset Management Plan	Compliant
(a)	Development of a suitable management plan for the offset land which specifies conservation objectives and how they are to be achieved. The conservation objectives must be clearly set out, measurable and consistent with the conservation management intent described in Section 2.3 of the Preliminary Documentation;	Biannual inspections are conducted to assess fence integrity, track access, weed infestations and a qualitative assessment on regeneration. Due to above average rainfall conditions during the reporting period, the Kokoda offset was not able to be traversed to complete the inspections. Biannual inspections will resume during the next reporting period.		
(b)	Implementation of all management actions and conservation measures			
(c)	Active management of derived native grassland areas (GBGW) to allow regeneration and full recovery of these areas of GBGW ecological community over time;	Following the execution of the VCA in 2018, Northparkes commenced the conservation objectives in accordance with the conditions of the agreement. In 2019, the conservation area was fenced, erecting a 1600mm exclusion fence to prevent feral and pest species from traversing through the offset and inhibiting the success of the active revegetation activity. Northparkes initiated the active revegetation work in consultation with the BCT, delaying the activity for a period of 12 months as a result of drought conditions providing unsuitable planting conditions. The site was prepared in Autumn 2020 with planting commencing in Spring. Tubestock planting was required to be undertaken in 2 phases, 9,000 in 2020 followed by an additional 9,000 in 2021, as the number of desired species were unable to be sourced. The second phase of revegetation was carried out successfully in 2021 with the remaining 9,000 tubestock installed, completing the required management action.		
(d)	Allocation of appropriate funding to achieve the conservation objectives;			
(e)	Regular monitoring against conservation objectives and adaptive management as appropriate to achieve the conservation objectives	Following the revegetation activities, Northparkes completed a survivorship assessment to determine the success of the planting program and compliance to the target density objectives. A recorded 81.7 percent of all tubestock installed were found to be in good healthy condition, meeting the targeted 400 stem per hectare across the active revegetation area. The tubestock will continue to be monitored to ensure the long-term sustainability of the activity.		

Table 3 Reporting and auditing

	Condition	Action	Supporting documentation	Compliance
10.	All survey data collected for the project, which relates to the identification and/ or conservation of matters of national environment significance, must be collected and recorded so as to conform to a reasonable standard such that it can be readily used by a third party or to data standards notified from time to time by the Department. When requested by the Department, the proponent must provide to the Department all species and ecological survey data and related survey information from ecological surveys undertaken for matters of national environmental significance. The survey data must be provided within 30 business days of the request, or in a timeframe agreed to by the Department in writing. The Department may use the survey data for various purposes, which relate to the promotion of environmental protection and biodiversity conservation.	Acknowledged, strict data management protocols have been used for the project. All ecological data collected as part of the project has been recorded using standard templates in the field, which have been scanned and then have been entered into excel spreadsheets. Additionally, all ecological data entry for the project has been undertaken by trained members of the Environment Team, to manage the consistency of data being entered and reduce the possibility of human error. Data will be provided to the Department on request. All documents produced for the project have been managed in accordance with the Northparkes Procedure for Document Control.	Not applicable	Compliant
11.	Within 14 days after the commencement of the action, the person taking the action must advise the Department in writing of the actual date of commencement of the action.	Completed in 2015.	Not applicable	Compliant
12.	Within three months of every 12 month anniversary of the commencement of the action, the person taking the action must publish a report on their website addressing compliance with each of the conditions of this approval, including implementation of any plans as specified in the conditions. Documentary evidence providing proof of the date of publication and non-compliance with any of the conditions of this approval must be provided to the Department at the same time as the compliance report is published. The person taking the action must also notify any non-compliance with this approval to the Department in writing within two business days of becoming aware of the non-compliance.	The current report has been prepared to comply with condition 12 by addressing compliance with each condition in EPBC 2013/6788 individually. A copy of the report will be made accessible on the Northparkes website. http://www.northparkes.com/	Not applicable	Compliant
13.	Upon the direction of the Minister, the person taking the action must ensure that an independent audit of compliance with the conditions of approval is conducted and a report submitted to the Minister. The independent auditor must be approved by the Minister prior to the commencement of the audit. Audit criteria must be agreed to by the Minister and the audit report must address the criteria to the satisfaction of the Minister.	Acknowledged. This condition will be fulfilled if requested by the Minister.	Not applicable	Compliant

Table 4 Revisions

	Condition	Action	Supporting documentation	Compliance
14.	If the person taking the action wishes to carry out any activity otherwise than in accordance with the plans, as specified in the conditions, the person taking the action must submit to the Department for the Minister's written approval a revised version of that plan. The varied activity shall not commence until the Minister has approved the revised plan in writing. The Minister will not approve a revised plan, unless the revised plan would result in an equivalent or improved environmental outcome. Of the Minister approves the revised plan that plan must be implemented in place of the plan originally approved.	Acknowledged. Actions relating to the project have been undertaken in accordance to Northparkes Management Plans. Additionally, any project changes would be managed in accordance with the Northparkes Procedure for Management of Change (MOC). This MOC procedure ensures changes in site activities are identified and if appropriate, proper requests sent for approval of revised plans.	Not applicable	Compliant
15.	If the Minister believes that it is necessary or convenient for the better protection of listed threatened species and communities or listed migratory species to do so, the Minister may request that the person taking the action make specified revision to the relevant management plan specified in the conditions and submit the revised plan for the Minister's written approval. The person taking the action must comply with any such request. The revised approval plan must be implemented. Unless the Minister has approved the revised plan then the person taking the action must continue to implement the originally approved plan, as specified in the conditions.	Acknowledged. At the time of writing, the Minister has not made any requests that Northparkes make specific revisions to management plans relevant to EPBC 2013/6788.	Not applicable	Compliant
16.	If, at any time after 5 years from the date of this approval, the person taking the action has not substantially commenced the action, the person taking the action must not substantially commence the action without the written agreement of the Minister.	The action as approved under EPBC 2013/6788 commenced in early 2015.	Not applicable	Compliant

Table 5 Publication of plans

	Condition	Action	Supporting documentation	Compliance
17.	The person taking the action must maintain accurate records substantiating all activities and outcomes associated with or relevant to the above conditions of approval, including measures taken to implement the management plans required by this approval, and make them available upon request to the Department. Such records may be subject to audit by the Department or an independent auditor in accordance with section 458 of the EPBC Act, or used to verify compliance with the conditions of approval. Summaries of audits will be posted on the Department's website. The results of audit may also be publicised through general media.	Acknowledged. Accurate records have been kept for the activities undertaken to comply with EPBC 2013/6788. Also, all documents produced for the project have been managed in accordance with the Northparkes Procedure for Document Control.	Not applicable.	Compliant