Decision Report

Application for Licence

Part V Division 3 of the Environmental Protection Act 1986

Licence Number L3017/2025/1

Applicant Siberia Mining Corporation Pty Ltd

ACN 097 650 194

File number APP-0029328

Premises Siberia Gold Operations

Ora Banda-Davyhurst Road

ORA BANDA WA

Mining tenement M24/960

As defined by the coordinates in Schedule 1 of the licence

Date of report 13 October 2025

Decision Licence granted

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1. Decision summary

This decision report documents the assessment of potential risks to the environment and public health from emissions and discharges during the operation of the premises. As a result of this assessment, licence L3017/2025/1 has been granted.

2. Scope of assessment

2.1 Regulatory framework

In completing the assessment documented in this decision report, the Department of Water and Environmental Regulation (the department; DWER) has considered and given due regard to its regulatory framework and relevant policy documents which are available at https://dwer.wa.gov.au/regulatory-documents.

2.2 Application summary and overview of premises

On 3 June 2025, Siberia Mining Corporation Pty Ltd (the applicant) submitted an application for a licence to the department under section 57 of the *Environmental Protection Act 1986* (EP Act).

The application is to seek a licence relating to category 6 - mine dewatering at the Siberia Gold Operations (SGO) Sand King Mine. The premises is approximately 20 km north of Ora Banda and 58 km south of Menzies.

The Siberia Gold Operations is a satellite mining operation that is part of the broader Ora Banda Mining Limited (OBM) Davyhurst Gold Project (DGP). The Siberia tenure has been the subject of historic and modern mining activity since the 1980's with the current pit mining campaign recommencing in Q3 – 2021.

The mine site has been extensively disturbed by a combination of pastoral, mining activities and town development over nearly 100 years. Prior to recommencing operations in 2021, the project had remained on care and maintenance since 2018.

Stage 1 Open Pit Mining recommenced at the Siberia Gold Operations in 2020. This involved the recommencement of mining via an extension and deepening of the existing Missouri and Sand King open pits, construction of an additional two waste rock landforms, the establishment of an additional workshop, HDPE lined mine water storage and office complex. Stage 1 was completed in December 2024 and is followed by Stage 2 – underground operations within the Sand King Open Pit.

The premises relates to the category and assessed production / design capacity under Schedule 1 of the *Environmental Protection Regulations 1987* (EP Regulations) which are defined in licence L3017/2025/1. The infrastructure and equipment relating to the premises category and any associated activities which the department has considered in line with *Guideline: Risk Assessments* (DWER 2020) are outlined in licence L3017/2025/1.

On 12 June 2024 Works Approval W6904/2024/1 was granted for Category 6 dewatering activities at Siberia Gold Operations. This works approval authorises the construction and time limited operations of dewatering pipelines from the Sand King pit to Palmerston, Bewick and Missouri pits and a catch sump between the Sand King underground mine and Missouri Pit. To date, only the pipeline from the Sand King underground mine to Palmerston Pit has been constructed and was found compliant with the construction requirements of the works approval on 29 July 2025.

While drill information has provided no information that ground water inflows will be substantial, fractured rock aquifer systems are difficult to detect, commonly have short term yields, and are recorded in the district, so a precautionary risk assessment approach has been adopted. Initial dewatering rates for the decline and underground stope development have been modelled for up to 20 L/sec.

As Palmerston Pit is located along strike from the Sand King Pit and within the approved mining envelope, no telemetry system or catch pits will be required as any pipeline leaks will report via the v-notch pipe trench into the closest pit. The transfer tanks that supply water from the discharge/storage pit back into underground are fitted with an automatic shut off float switch and an overflow pipe back into the Sand King Pit. The pipeline corridor and discharge pit are inspected every 24 hours. Pipeline switching to an alternative storage pit will be undertaken manually as required.

Refer to Section 2.2.3 and Table 2 for details on the modelled water balance. Flow meters and sample locations will be installed at the discharge locations for each pit and are shown in Figure 1 and Figure 2. Water recovered for underground use will be metered at the transfer tanks.

2.2.1 Pipeline construction and operation

Groundwater is recovered by underground pumps and stored in the mine storage sumps, where any sediment settling occurs, before being pumped via a pipeline to the adjacent Palmerston Open Pit. The pipeline is PN16 160 mm HDPE butt welded and located in a bunded V-notch trench. This infrastructure is authorised for operation as a Category 6 premises through licence L3017/2025/1.

The mine water stored in the pit will be recovered on demand and recycled back for underground mining use and dust suppression. The recycled water infrastructure (pipes and tanks) was approved by the Department of Mines, Petroleum and Exploration (DMPE) as part of OBM Mining Proposal Reg ID 121808 (2024) and will be metered for reporting under section 5C of the Rights in Water and Irrigation Act 1914 (RIWI Act) (GWL154498). It does not form part of the Category 6 dewatering activities as authorised under L3017/2025/1.

A return water pipeline will also be placed in the bunded corridor from the pits back to the four 32,000 L transfer tanks situated on the western crest of the Sand King Pit in the designated 'controlled drainage area' (not part of the Category 6 application). The primary tank will have an overflow pipe back into the Sand King Pit.

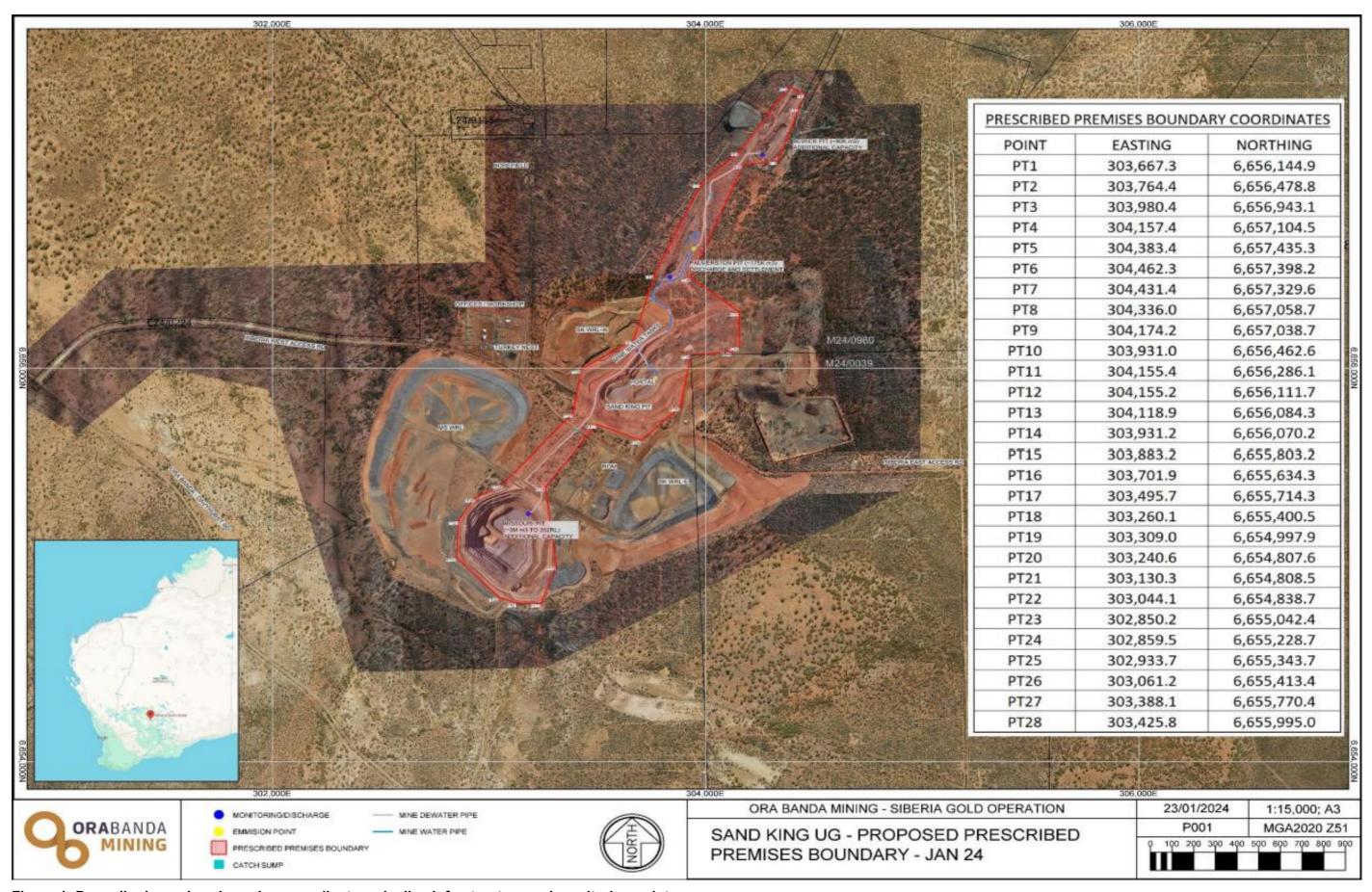


Figure 1: Prescribed premises boundary coordinates, pipeline infrastructure and monitoring points.

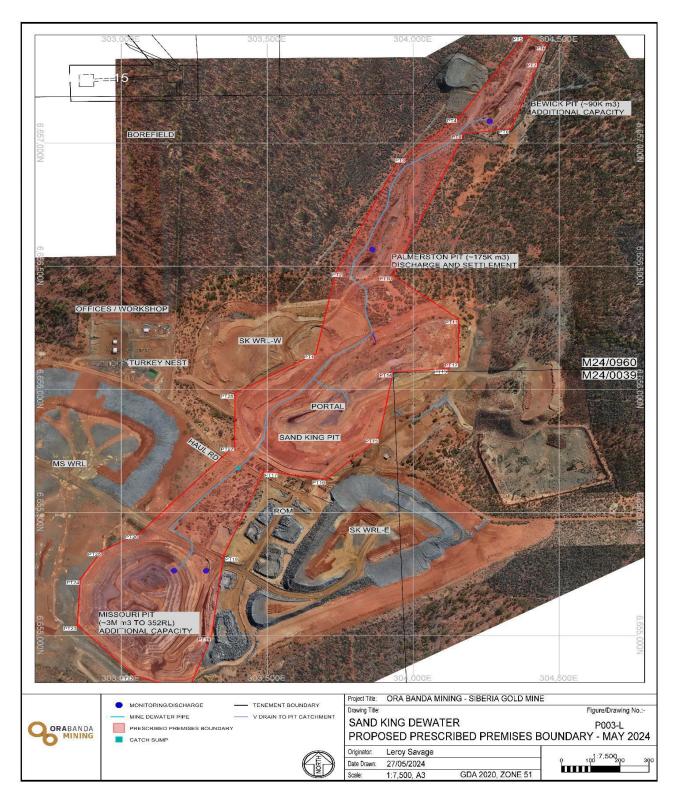


Figure 2: Siberia Gold Operations - Category 6 dewatering pipeline infrastructure discharge and monitoring locations

2.2.2 Groundwater quality

Regional groundwater is typically saline to hypersaline. Mafic wall rocks in both the Missouri and Sand King Pits have historically produced limited inflows of groundwater from a depth greater than approximately 70 m below surface in the pits and historic shafts.

Water abstraction for mining and mineral processing in the Davyhurst - Siberia area has drawn upon aquifers underlying the Sand King Borefield, the palaeochannel aquifers underlying the Battery Dam Borefield to the north and localised, low yielding fractured rock saline aquifers associated with shear zones within the pit environments.

The Sand King borefield is underlain by two aquifers, the lower and upper. The lower aquifer consists of semi-consolidated fine to coarse angular quartz sands and sandy clay overlying oxidised granite. The upper aquifer comprises homogenous siliceous magnesite and carbonate, with poorly developed sandy lenses. Overlying the upper aquifer is a clay unit consisting of puggy clay, chert, minor sand lenses and ironstone. The clay unit is overlain by approximately 10 m of alluvial sand and soil.

Aquaterra (2003) described the groundwater in the area as predominantly hyper saline (>30,000 mg/L TDS), ranging between 30,000 and 170,000 mg/L TDS. Salinity generally increases in a northerly and easterly direction towards the drainage sinks. Aquaterra believe the aquifers in the mine area are associated with the limited low yield fractured rock aquifers in the basalt pile and the Sand King Borefield.

Recent sampling of the Siberia Project Pit void storages suggests that the groundwater is brackish to saline with total dissolved solids (TDS) ranging from 13,000 mg/L to 37,000 mg/L, refer to Table 1. The major ionic composition of the groundwater is salts of sodium and chloride with minor levels of sulphate, magnesium and calcium present. Most other ions are by comparison in low total concentration.

Testing of the Sand King Borefield as part of groundwater licensing reporting (OBM 2024) showed that pH's ranged from 5.3 (acidic) to 7.8 (alkaline) and the pH of the water pumped from the Sand King Mine in December 2023 was 6.86. Total Dissolved Solids were hypersaline (35,000mg/L – 42,000mg/L). Sodium, magnesium, chloride and sulphate are the predominate ions, with chloride, manganese and total iron exceeding the drinking water and irrigation water guidelines (ANZECC/ARMCANZ Water Quality Guidelines 2000).

Table 1: Groundwater parameters of the Sand King, Missouri, Palmerston and Bewick pits

Pit name	Sample date	рН	Total dissolved solids (TDS)mg/L
Sand King Pit	19.07.2023	8.2	37,000
	30.04.2025	7.41	29,285
Palmerston Pit	19.07.2023	8.1	13,000
	30.04.2025	7.41	29,285
Bewick Pit	Dry	-	-
Missouri Pit	19.07.2023	7.5	21,000

2.2.3 Siberia Mining gold project water balance

The applicant believes a conservative allowance of groundwater inflows is up to 630,000 kL (20 L/sec) per annum, of which approximately 80% will be utilised for mine use, road maintenance and dust suppression. Table 2 outlines the proposed water balance for the Siberia Underground Operations.

Table 2: Proposed Siberia Gold Operations water balance - supplied by applicant

FACTOR	DESCRIPTION	Make Loss Use kL/day	Interval (Days)	Volume for Storage- Discharge kL/Yr	COMMENTS/ASSUMPTIONS/SOURCE
	Annual Rainfall (267.9mm) – 6.4mm/Day	-	42	-	42 rain days year. Annual Evaporation 3208mm; Pan F=0.67
	Groundwater Inflow Allowance -SK UG Dewatering	1,728	365	630,000	Worse case modelling for Licencing purposes 20l/s
INPUTS	Groundwater Inflow Allowance – Missouri Pit -0.5L/s	43.2	365	15,768	Current estimate – not monitored
	TOTAL INFLOW	1,771	-	646,768	
	Rainfall - Palmerston Pit Catchment (13,710m²)	87	42	3,654	Pit pond is ephemeral – winter months
	Rainfall - Bewick Pit Catchment (12,709m²)	81	42	3,402	Pit pond is ephemeral - winter months
	Rainfall - Missouri Pit Floor Catchment (90,700m²)	580	42	24,360	Limited area pit pond is permanent
	Rainfall - Sand King Pit Floor Catchment (43,500m²)	278	42	11,676	Limited area pit pond is permanent
	Total Pit Catchment Day Input R(6.4)x160,620m ² /1000	1028	42	43,176	Low annual rainfall has limited influence on pit water balance
	TOTAL INPUTS	-	-	689,944	
LOSS	Pit Evaporation Estimate: Allow 3,208mm per year for 3 Voids (117,120m²). SK not a storage void. No seepage loss considered due to very low HC for basalt.	P/B-136 (M- 467)	365 365	49,694 (170,606)	Total average annual evaporative loss of 220,300kL calculated for continuous discharge into 3 storages. With 14l/s recycle factor only 2 pits(26,419m²) are required for 6l/s storage
	TOTAL LOSSES			49,694	
	Dust Suppression (Mine Environs and ROM) -Tanker	150	220	33,000	25kL Mine Tanker – 6 trips/day - 220days
USAGE	Dust Suppression (Sib H/R to DHurst - Tanker	250	220	55,000	50kL Road Tankers, 70km round trip – 5 trips/day-220 days
RECYCLE	Mining Use - Storage Tanks (recycled)	1,209	365	441,500	Wash Down underground workings, Equipment wash down
	TOTAL MINE USAGE			529,000	
STORAGE	Year 1 abstraction for storage/reuse @ 20L/s is +ve	-	-	111,250	Y#1 PWB residual is +111,250kL suggesting that @20L/s
	Storage capacity (kL) to 5m Freeboard-Berwick	-	-	90,000	supply for UG will not require supplement from SK Borefield
	Storage (kL) to 5m Freeboard-Palmerston	-	-	170,000	Two Pit Storage capacity is adequate with Pit 3
	Storage capacity(kL) to 5m Freeboard-Missouri	-	-	9,780,000	Contingency storage.

Assumptions- Evaporation Annual Mean-Leon-3,473mm/Kal 2,943mm- DoA -Tech Bull 65; Missouri Inflow – Allow 0.5l/s – no usage monitoring data

The applicant predicts that after allowing for mine and dust suppression use, and evaporation, the ground water available for disposal to Palmerston Pit is expected to be approximately 54,000kL per annum. Active storage capacity for each of the discharge pits with a 5 m freeboard allowance is 170,000 kL for Palmerston, 90,000 kL for Bewick and 9,780,000 kL for Missouri. This capacity equates to over 15 years respectively of discharge at 20 L/s without losses or recycle considerations. After allowing for mine use, dust suppression, road maintenance and evaporation, the residual volume will be approximately 111,250 kL per annum.

The applicant has stated that monthly field water quality monitoring (EC, pH) will be undertaken in conjunction with the water meter readings from the pit crest discharge location(s) that were actively discharging during the month. Freeboard monitoring will be undertaken by visual inspection of the surveyed freeboard line painted 5 m below the pit crest on the pit access ramp wall, and a monthly survey of the pit pond surface relative level (RL). The applicant will adapt inspection frequency based on a 6-monthly review of mine abstraction data.

2.2.4 Monitoring relating to groundwater extraction licence GWL

The Sand King Borefield remained in care and maintenance until December 2021, when the Siberia Gold Operation recommenced full-scale mining. The applicant is aware of seven (7) bores currently on the Sand King Borefield Register with three historic bores either decommissioned or destroyed. Refer to Figure 3.

Bores SKWB06B and SKWB07 are listed on the applicant's borefield register as observation bores within proximity of the Sand King Pit and associated dewatering storage pits and the applicant states that SKWB03 has also been utilised as a monitoring bore.

The applicant's '2020 Groundwater Licence Operating Strategy for the Sand King Borefield' requires that annual standing water levels (SWL), field EC, and pH were taken during care and maintenance, and monthly SWL's, field EC and pH are taken during operations, along with an annual major component analysis on groundwater from active production and monitoring bores.

Previous reporting of the SWL in the Sand King bores (Hydrosolutions 2008) ranged between 21 m (SKWB02) and 31.35 m (SKWB03). Bore test reports from 2016 indicate SWL for SKWB03 was at 29.65 m, SKWB06 was 30.45 m and SKWB08 was 26 m.

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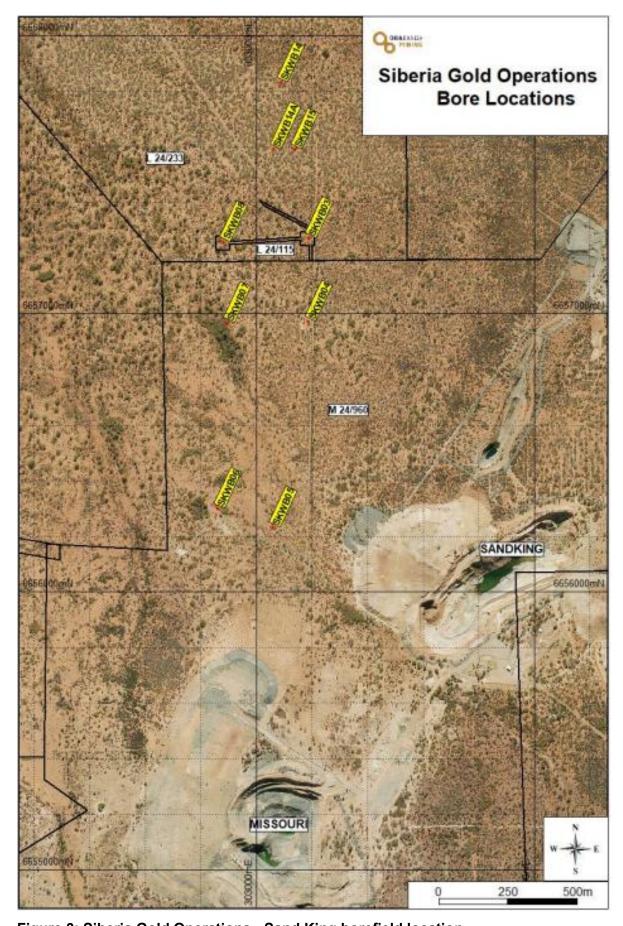


Figure 3: Siberia Gold Operations - Sand King borefield location

3. Risk assessment

The department assesses the risks of emissions from prescribed premises and identifies the potential source, pathway and impact to receptors in accordance with the *Guideline: Risk Assessments* (DWER 2020).

To establish a risk event there must be an emission, a receptor which may be exposed to that emission through an identified actual or likely pathway, and a potential adverse effect to the receptor from exposure to that emission.

3.1 Source-pathways and receptors

3.1.1 Emissions and controls

The key emissions and associated actual or likely pathway during premises operation which have been considered in this decision report are detailed in Table 3 below. Table 3 also details the control measures the applicant has proposed to assist in controlling these emissions, where necessary.

Table 3: Proposed applicant controls

Emission Sources		Potential pathways	Proposed controls	
Operation				
			Pipeline inspections once every 24 hours.	
			Adequate and maintained containment bunds.	
	Operation of pipelines transferring hypersaline water (pumps, overtop of catch sump, etc.	Direct discharge to land resulting in impacts to soil structure and vegetation health	Clay lined catch sump 10 m x 10 m x 1.5 m between Sand King underground mine and Missouri Pit	
			Water pressure will not exceed the design criteria for the pipeline sections.	
			Water flow meters fitted on tank / pit discharge locations.	
			Pipeline bunds direct flow back into adjacent pit voids	
Hypersaline water	Discharge of hypersaline water from Sand King underground sediment sump into Palmerston Pit		Mine water pumped directly to Palmerston, Bewick and Missouri Pits	
		Seepage through walls of pit resulting in groundwater mounding causing impacts to vegetation health	Monthly field water quality monitoring (EC, pH) will be undertaken from the receiving pit discharge sampling locations.	
			Baseline pit water monitoring conducted which confirms pit waters have similar compositions.	
			Monthly field water monitoring conducted (pH, EC, and TDS) at active storages with quarterly analysis of major components and total recoverable hydrocarbons (TRH)	
			Adherence to RIWI Act groundwater licence GWL154498 Operating Strategy and abstraction volumes. Cumulative water abstraction volumes are tracked monthly during operations.	

Emission Sources		Potential pathways	Proposed controls
		Overtopping of pit(s) causing impacts to vegetation health	 Monthly water volume and visual pit level monitoring Monthly survey of discharge pit water surface RL. Installation of 5 m freeboard markers on the discharge pit ramps.
Hydrocarbons	Operations of pumps, fuel storage tank rupture, etc.	Spills or leaks impacting native vegetation	 Appropriately designed and maintained service truck for infrastructure servicing and maintenance. Hydrocarbon spill kits readily available at generator refueling site. Hydrocarbon management and spill procedure included as part of employee induction. Collection of waste oil and grease as per Site Waste Management Plan. Small quantities of hydrocarbons stored within active machinery. Waste hydrocarbons are stored and removed off site for reuse/disposal. Stored hydrocarbons are bunded. Quarterly water monitoring from active discharge pits to include TRH.

3.1.2 Receptors

In accordance with the *Guideline: Risk Assessment* (DWER 2020), the Delegated Officer has excluded the applicant's employees, visitors, and contractors from its assessment. Protection of these parties often involves different exposure risks and prevention strategies, and is provided for under other state legislation.

Table 4 below provides a summary of potential human and environmental receptors that may be impacted as a result of activities upon or emission and discharges from the prescribed premises (Guideline: Environmental Siting (DWER 2020)).

Table 4: Sensitive human and environmental receptors and distance from prescribed activity

Human receptors	Distance from prescribed activity				
Ora Banda Mining Davyhurst mine accommodation	35 km west of the premises Not considered further as a sensitive receptor due to distance from prescribed premises.				
Environmental receptors	Distance from prescribed activity				
Native vegetation					
Note, no threatened and/or priority flora were recorded in the Siberia survey area, conducted prior to recommencement of mining operations in 2019.	Adjacent to Palmerston and Bewick pits (between 50 – 100 m), 370 – 440 m from Sand King and Missouri pits.				
Survey area was 52 ha between the decommissioned TSF and the Missouri open					

pit, to smaller northern areas of infrastructure (Palmerston and Bewick pits).			
Surface waters including dams. There are no permanent watercourses or other surface water features in the Project area. Stream flows occurs only after heavy storms or after persistent low intensity rainfall. The area has long term low erratic rainfall and high evaporation, and the applicant considers risks associated with flooding are very low. There are no known beneficial users of surface water within the disturbance envelope of the Siberia Gold Operations.	Surface water dams adjacent to the Project area are utilised by the pastoralist to provide seasonal water for stock purposes and these will not be disturbed by the mining operations. All bores within the disturbance envelope are managed under GWL 154498(4).		
Groundwater	Depth to groundwater in the vicinity of the Sand King pit range between 25 m to 30 m. Recent sampling of the Siberia Project Pit void storages suggests that the groundwater at both these pits are brackish to saline with Total Dissolved Solids (TDS) ranging from 13,000 mg/L to 37,000 mg/L. The major ionic composition of the groundwater is salts of sodium and chloride with minor levels of sulphate, magnesium and calcium present.		
Aboriginal and other heritage sites	No Registered Aboriginal Heritage sites identified within M24/960. The nearest identified sites are: >5 km west of premise boundary – Registered site Rowe's Rock (water source) >9 km southeast of premises boundary – Lodged site Paddy's Knob (mythological) Due to the distance of these nearest identified sites, there is unlikely to be a risk event and therefore they have not been considered further in this assessment.		

3.2 Risk ratings

Risk ratings have been assessed in accordance with the *Guideline: Risk Assessments* (DWER 2020) for each identified emission source and takes into account potential source-pathway and receptor linkages as identified in Section 3.1. Where linkages are in-complete they have not been considered further in the risk assessment.

Where the applicant has proposed mitigation measures/controls (as detailed in Section 3.1), these have been considered when determining the final risk rating. Where the delegated officer considers the applicant's proposed controls to be critical to maintaining an acceptable level of risk, these will be incorporated into the licence as regulatory controls.

Additional regulatory controls may be imposed where the applicant's controls are not deemed sufficient. Where this is the case the need for additional controls will be documented and justified in Table 5.

Licence L3017/2025/1 that accompanies this decision report authorises emissions associated with the operation of the premises i.e. dewatering activities.

The conditions in the issued licence, as outlined in Table 5 have been determined in accordance with *Guidance Statement: Setting Conditions* (DER 2015).

Table 5: Risk assessment of potential emissions and discharges from the premises during operation

Risk events					Risk rating ¹	Applicant	2 1111		
Sources / activities	Potential emission	Potential pathways and impact	Receptors	Applicant controls	C = consequence L = likelihood controls sufficient?		Conditions ² of licence	Justification for additional regulatory controls	
Operation	Operation Control of the Control of								
		Pipeline leak or rupture	Surrounding native vegetation	Refer to Section 3.1	C = Minor L = Unlikely Medium Risk	Y	Condition 1	Pipeline is located in bunded corridors that support spillway back into the adjacent pit. Pipeline is inspected every 24 hours.	
Transfer of hypersaline water between Sand King underground mine sediment sump and Palmerston pit.	Hypersaline water from Sand King mine	Seepage through base and walls of pit resulting in groundwater contamination and mounding causing impacts to vegetation health via root uptake	Native vegetation	Refer to Section 3.1	C = Moderate L = Unlikely Medium Risk	Y	Condition 1 Condition 2 Condition 3 Condition 14 (Addition of discharge pit water sampling)	The Delegated Officer considers the risk of groundwater mounding impacting the root zone of vegetation to be low, given the predicted residual dewater discharge volume of about 111,250 kL per annum (approximately 54,000kL per annum for Palmerston Pit) and capacities of the receiving pits (primarily Palmerston and Bewick), groundwater depth (about 20-25 mbgl at the Sand King borefield) and the upper aquifer being a clay unit overlain by about 10 m of alluvial sand and soil. The Delegated Officer considers the licence holder proposed controls to mitigate the risk of seepage impacting native vegetation to be generally sufficient, primarily the monitoring of water quality.	
		Overtopping of Palmerston pit causing impacts to vegetation health.	Surrounding native vegetation	Refer to Section 3.1	C = Minor L = Unlikely Medium Risk	Y	Condition 1 Condition 2	N/A	
Operation of dewatering equipment (pumps etc.)	Hydrocarbons	Spills or leaks impacting native vegetation	Surrounding native vegetation	Refer to Section 3.1	C = Slight L = Unlikely Low Risk	Y	N/A	N/A	

Note 1: Consequence ratings, likelihood ratings and risk descriptions are detailed in the Guideline: Risk Assessments (DWER 2020).

Note 2: Proposed applicant controls are depicted by standard text. Bold and underline text depicts additional regulatory controls imposed by department.

4. Consultation

Table 6 provides a summary of the consultation undertaken by the department.

Table 6: Consultation

Consultation method	Comments received	Department response		
Application advertised on DWER's website on 21 July 2025	No comments received	N/A		
City of Kalgoorlie- Boulder advised on 31 July 2025	Comments from the City of Kalgoorlie Boulder were received on 17 August 2025. The main concern from the City was in relation to rehabilitation and the potential long-term impacts on disturbed areas. Additionally, the associated risk of further desertification in the region without sufficient rehabilitation.	The department notes this comment, however regulating rehabilitation activities is outside the scope of Part V of the <i>Environmental Protection Act 1986</i> . The scope for assessment under Part V relates to the emissions and discharges associated with the construction and operation of the proposal. Rehabilitation requirements are regulated by the Department of Mines, Petroleum and Exploration.		
Applicant was provided with draft documents on 11 September 2025	No comments received	N/A		

5. Conclusion

Based on the assessment in this decision report, the delegated officer has determined that a licence will be granted, subject to conditions commensurate with the determined controls and necessary for administration and reporting requirements.

References

- 1. Aquaterra 2003, *Hydrogeological Report Siberia Project. A report prepared for Siberia Mining Corporation*, Subiaco, Western Australia
- 2. Department of Environment Regulation (DER) 2015, *Guidance Statement: Setting Conditions*, Perth, Western Australia.
- 3. Department of Water and Environmental Regulation (DWER) 2020, *Guideline: Environmental Siting*, Perth, Western Australia.
- 4. DWER 2020, Guideline: Risk Assessments, Perth, Western Australia.
- 5. Hydrosolutions Pty Ltd 2008, Sand King Borefield, Siberia Project GWL 154498 (1) Annual Groundwater Monitoring Report, 2007 for Davyhurst Gold Pty Ltd, Willeton, Western Australia
- 6. Ora Banda Mining (OBM 2024), Siberia Mining Corporation Works Approval Application supporting documentation, Subiaco, Western Australia
- 7. Siberia Mining Corporation Pty Ltd 2024, *Application form: Works Approval Category* 6 *Dewatering at Siberia Gold Operations*, Subiaco, Western Australia.