Broken Hill mining project now on public exhibition

The NSW Department of Planning is seeking public feedback on a proposal for a renewed lead-zinc-silver ore mine at the Rasp Mine in the south of Broken Hill in the State’s Far West.

The proponent, Broken Hill Operations Pty Ltd, is seeking approval to:

- establish an underground mine at the Rasp Mine to extract 8.45 million tonnes of lead-zinc-silver ore;
- process 750,000 tonnes of ore per year at the surface for up to 12 years;
- construct and extend associated infrastructure, plant, equipment and activities; and
- transport concentrate by rail to a smelter and/or port.

The Rasp site has been used for mining since the 1880s, however in recent years no large scale activities have been undertaken in this part of Broken Hill.

The project has the potential to generate around 140 jobs for Broken Hill residents, of which 90 would be ongoing.

The Department’s Deputy Director-General, Richard Pearson, said the environmental assessment was deemed adequate for public exhibition following detailed review to ensure it met the Department’s assessment requirements.

“The proponent was required to address issues such as air quality, noise and blasting, soil and water, heritage, potential health impacts, waste and rehabilitation in its environmental assessment,” Mr Pearson said.

“Having met these requirements, the environmental assessment is now on public exhibition for an extended period of 36 days, from 2 July until 6 August 2010, and I encourage interested members of the public to lodge a submission providing feedback during this time.

“Any submissions received will be carefully considered, along with the proponent’s response to the issues raised in these submissions, as part of the Department’s assessment of the project.”

The proposal is being assessed under the State’s major project assessments system as it is a mining proposal valued at over $30 million.

The environmental assessment for the project can be viewed at:

- Department of Planning Information Centre, 23-33 Bridge Street, Sydney;
- Broken Hill City Council Administrative Centre, 240 Blende Street, Broken Hill; and
- Nature Conservation Council, Level 2, 5 Wilson Street, Newtown.
All relevant project documents are also publicly available on the Department's website, and can be accessed by visiting http://majorprojects.planning.nsw.gov.au and following the links to the 'On Exhibition' page.

Submissions may be emailed to plan_comment@planning.nsw.gov.au, or posted to Major Development Assessment, Department of Planning, GPO Box 39, Sydney NSW 2001.