

**Three Mile Hill Gold Project — change of
Ministerial condition due to modification of
processing facility**

Goldfan Limited

**Report and recommendations
of the Environmental Protection Authority**

**Environmental Protection Authority
Perth, Western Australia
Bulletin 593
November 1991**

THE PURPOSE OF THIS REPORT

This report contains the Environmental Protection Authority's environmental assessment and recommendations to the Minister for the Environment on the environmental acceptability of the proposal.

Immediately following the release of the report there is a 14-day period when anyone may appeal to the Minister against the Environmental Protection Authority's recommendations.

After the appeal period, and determination of any appeals, the Minister consults with the other relevant ministers and agencies and then issues his decision about whether the proposal may or may not proceed. The Minister also announces the legally binding environmental conditions which might apply to any approval.

APPEALS

If you disagree with any of the assessment report recommendations you may appeal in writing to the Minister for the Environment outlining the environmental reasons for your concern and enclosing the appeal fee of \$10.

It is important that you clearly indicate the part of the report you disagree with and the reasons for your concern so that the grounds of your appeal can be properly considered by the Minister for the Environment.

ADDRESS

Hon Minister for the Environment
18th Floor, Allendale Square
77 St George's Terrace
PERTH WA 6000
CLOSING DATE

Your appeal (with the \$10 fee) must reach the Minister's office no later than 5.00 p.m. on 29 November, 1991

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Pursuant to Section 46(1) of the Environmental Protection Act, the Minister for the Environment has asked the Environmental Protection Authority to inquire and report on the modification to the proposal for the Three Mile Hill Gold Project.

Goldfan Limited submitted a Notice of Intent for the Three Mile Hill Gold Project to the Environmental Protection Authority in May 1989. Following assessment of the Notice of Intent by the Environmental Protection Authority, the Minister for the Environment issued environmental approval, including conditions, on 28 August 1989 (Appendix 1). This approval contained a copy of the proponent's commitments which remain applicable to the modified proposal.

Modification to the gold treatment facility has meant that the facility could now treat 1.1 million tonnes of gold ore per annum in comparison to the previous level of 800,000 tonnes per annum: the level to which the company was constrained by the earlier approval. The additional water to treat the increased throughput will come from the dewatering operation at the nearby Bayley's underground gold mine.

The Environmental Protection Authority has assessed the modification to the original proposal and does not regard them as having the potential to significantly impact on the environment. It considers that the modification can be adequately dealt with via the pollution control provisions of Part V of the Environmental Protection Act. The modification will require a change to the Ministerial conditions on the proposal to reflect the change to the proposal as assessed by the Environmental Protection Authority in 1989.

Recommendation 1

The Environmental Protection Authority regards the modification to the gold treatment plant for the Three Mile Hill Gold Project as being environmentally acceptable and recommends that Condition 1 of the Ministerial statement for the proposal of 28 August 1989 be deleted and replaced by the following conditions.

- 1 (a) In implementing the proposal (including the increased throughput from 800,000 tonnes per annum to 1.1 million tonnes per annum), the proponent shall fulfil the commitments (which are not inconsistent with the conditions or procedures contained in this statement) made in the Notice of Intent. (A copy of the commitments is attached).**

The Authority notes that during the detailed implementation of proposals, it is often necessary or desirable to make minor and non-substantial changes to the designs and specifications which have been examined as part of the Authority's assessment. The Authority believes that subsequent statutory approvals for this proposal could make provision for such changes, where it can be shown that the changes are not likely to have a significant effect on the environment.

- 1 (b) Subject to these conditions, the manner of detailed implementation of the proposal shall conform in substance with that set out in any designs, specifications, plans or other technical material submitted by the proponent to the Environmental Protection Authority with the proposal. Where, in the course of that detailed implementation, the proponent seeks to change those designs, specifications, plans or other technical material in any way that the Minister for the Environment determines on the advice of the Environmental Protection Authority, is not substantial, those changes may be effected.**

Appendix 1

Ministerial statement that a proposal may be implemented



WESTERN AUSTRALIA
MINISTER FOR ENVIRONMENT

STATEMENT THAT A PROPOSAL MAY BE IMPLEMENTED (PURSUANT TO THE
PROVISIONS OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION ACT 1986)

THREE MILE HILL GOLD PROJECT NEAR
COOLGARDIE

GOLDFAN LTD

This proposal may be implemented subject to the following conditions:

1. The proponent shall adhere to the proposal as assessed by the Environmental Protection Authority and shall fulfil the commitments made in the Notice of Intent (copy of summary of commitments attached).
2. The proponent shall extend the duration of the proposed monitoring of the tailings dams for leakage of process water containing cyanide and other pollutants for a suitable period after the decommissioning of the project and shall submit the results to the Department of Mines.

The Department of Mines shall advise the Environmental Protection Authority on the proponent's performance and any remedial action required as a result of this monitoring shall be carried out by the proponent, to the satisfaction of the Environmental Protection Authority.

3. To ensure that traffic and services on or adjacent to the Great Eastern Highway are not adversely affected by dust from the minesite, the proponent shall undertake dust control in consultation with the Shire of Coolgardie to the satisfaction of the Environmental Protection Authority.
4. To improve the conditions for rehabilitation, the proponent shall investigate the potential for locating additional overburden stockpiles at a greater distance from the pit than proposed and shall report on this matter to the Environmental Protection Authority prior to the commencement of stockpiling.

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5. The proponent shall prepare a report annually as required on the rehabilitation programme and shall undertake decommissioning of the plant and rehabilitation of the minesite to the satisfaction of the Department of Mines.

At least six months prior to decommissioning, the proponent shall prepare a decommissioning and rehabilitation plan to the satisfaction of the Department of Mines.

The Department of Mines shall advise the Environmental Protection Authority on the proponent's performance and any remedial action required shall be undertaken by the proponent to the satisfaction of the Environmental Protection Authority.

6. The proponent shall ensure that run-off from the site does not have any adverse effects on local drainage systems.
7. No transfer of ownership, control or management of the project which would give rise to a need for the replacement of the proponent shall take place until the Minister has advised the proponent that approval has been given for the nomination of a replacement proponent. Any request for the exercise of that power of the Minister shall be accompanied by a copy of this statement endorsed with an undertaking by the proposed replacement proponent to carry out the project in accordance with the conditions and procedures set out in the statement.



Bob Pearce, MLA
MINISTER FOR ENVIRONMENT

25 AUG 1989

SUMMARY OF ENVIRONMENTAL COMMITMENTS

Goldfan Ltd has made the following commitments in its Notice of Intent to minimise environmental impacts arising from the establishment and operation of the Three Mile Hill project:-

1. Water Supply

- 1.1 - bore pumps designed to shut down in case of blockage or spillage.
- 1.2 - water pipe from Roger Spring buried 850 mm underground.
- 1.3 - hydrology study of minesite to be carried out in case dewatering becomes necessary.

2. Dust Control

- 2.1 - watering of haulage ways for dust suppression.
- 2.2 - roadways metalled with crushed overburden to minimize dust and need for watering.
- 2.3 - crushers and other equipment fitted with dust suppression devices.

3. Public Safety

- 3.1 - blasting managed to minimize flyrock, main highway to be shut 700 m either side of pit during blasting.
- 3.2 - safety bund 2 m high around final pit perimeter.
- 3.3 - hearing protection areas defined around the plant.
- 3.4 - sodium cyanide stored in locked compound.

4. Tailings Management

- 4.1 - construction of TD2 walls to minimize seepage.
- 4.2 - sumps to collect seepage from both tailings dams.
- 4.3 - monitoring bores downslope from TD2.
- 4.4 - tailings pipelines fitted with pressure alarms.
- 4.5 - process water recovery from TD1.
- 4.6 - 24 hour plant output capacity safety dam.

5. Rehabilitation

- 5.1 - removal and stockpile of all topsoil including vegetative matter.
- 5.2 - topdress and revegetate waste dump berms.
- 5.3 - progressive reduction in the face angle of dam walls (to 20 degrees), followed by topdressing and revegetation.
- 5.4 - cover, topdress and reseed tailings dams.
- 5.5 - deep rip roads to allow revegetation.
- 5.6 - revegetate verge of main haul road as soon as possible as a visual buffer.
- 5.7 - remove or bury all rubbish at completion of project.

6. General

- 6.1 - where possible, natural woodland will be preserved.
- 6.2 - topsoil stacked near highway as a visual buffer.
- 6.3 - diesel tanks (if needed) will be surrounded by a bund to contain any accidental spillage.