

30 May 2022

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Sent by email to:
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Dear Steve

Re: Tomingley Gold Mine – Proposed Modification 7 to MP 09_0155

Tomingley Gold Operations Pty Ltd (the “Applicant”) is proposing a seventh modification (“MOD7”) to MP 09_0155 for the Tomingley Gold Mine (the “TGO Mine”). The proposed modification would seek approval for construction and use of a proposed new access ramp (“Northern Ramp”) for the approved Wyoming 1 Open Cut and minor changes to the approved final landform (the “Proposed Modification”).

The modification application would be made under Section 4.55(2) of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979* (EP&A Act). The development, as modified, would remain substantially the same as the approved development on 31 August 2018, the date on which the TGO Mine was declared to be a State Significant Development.

The purpose of this letter is to provide the Department with a range of background information on:

- previous modification applications;
- the need for the Proposed Modification;
- a brief overview of the proposed activities and the options that were considered and rejected;
- an overview of the proposed approach to the environmental assessment of the Proposed Modification;
- the statutory and approvals context;
- the interaction of the proposed MOD7 with those applications awaiting determination, namely Modification 6 (“MOD6”) and Tomingley Gold Extension Project (“TGEP”) applications;
- the Applicant’s proposed agency and community engagement; and
- the next steps.

The letter concludes with a request for the Department’s requirements for the *Modification Report*.

Previous Modification Applications

MP 09_0155 has been modified five times. An additional modification, namely MOD6, has recently undergone public submission, and a *Submissions Report* is currently in preparation. The following provides a brief overview of each modification since the TGO Mine was declared to be a State Significant Development on 31 August 2018.

- MOD4 – Approved on 25 May 2020 to permit construction and use of Stages 7 to Stage 9 Cell 1 of Residue Storage Facility 1.
- MOD5 – Approved on 5 May 2021 to permit the following.
 - Construction and use of Stages 1 and 2 of Residue Storage Facility 2.
 - An extension of Mine Life from 31 December 2022 to 31 December 2025.
 - Extension of the TGO Mine Site boundary to incorporate Residue Storage Facility 2.
 - Use of Caloma 2 Open Cut for backfilling operations.
- MOD6 – in progress, with approval sought for the construction and use of Residue Storage Facility 1 Stage 9 Cell 2, including:
 - an increase in the capacity of Residue Storage Facility 1 from approximately 8.93 million tonnes (Mt) to approximately 9.33Mt.
 - a 2m increase in the approved maximum elevation of Cell 2 of Residue Storage Facility 1 from 284.5m AHD to 286.5m AHD, consistent with the approved Stage 9 Cell 1.

Need for the Proposed Modification

The Wyoming 1 Open Cut is one of four approved open cuts for the TGO Mine and is the location of the Portal to the Wyoming 1 Underground Mine and San Antonio Roswell (SAR) Exploration Dive (**Figure A**).

Localised and minor geotechnical unravelling and movement has occurred in northeastern section of the Wyoming 1 Open Cut, since mid-2017 (the “Ramp Failure”) (**Figure A**). A range of measures were successfully implemented to manage associated risks, including:

- steepening of the ramp and relocation of the associated switchback further from the failure;
- installation of surface water drainage structures to divert water away from the area; and
- installation of additional survey prisms and daily monitoring for further movement.

In January 2022, following more than 500mm of rain in 10 weeks, further movement was identified. This has required further assessment of long-term management options to secure access to the Wyoming 1 Open Cut and Underground, as well as the SAR Underground, should it be approved. Following extensive consultation, including with the Resources Regulator Mines Inspectorate and independent geotechnical engineers, the Applicant has determined to establish a new Northern Ramp. This would permit access to the Open Cut at a greater distance from the Ramp Failure, thereby reducing the potential for future operational and safety risks.

Options Considered and Rejected

A range of options have been considered by the Applicant in determining that the proposed Northern Ramp is the preferred option to address the identified safety and operational risks associated with the Ramp Failure. The *Modification Report* will include a detailed description and assessment of all options assessed.

- Separate box cut – rejected because the depth to competent material, commonly between 50m and 100m below surface, would require a larger area of disturbance and greater volume of material to be extracted than the proposed Northern Ramp. In addition, potential locations for a box cut would not be within the existing Mining Lease and substantial underground development would be required to link any proposed box cut to the existing underground workings.
- Use of another Open Cut for access – rejected for the following reasons.
 - Wyoming 3 Open Cut – currently 60% to 70% backfilled with waste rock and used as the primary water storage for the TGO Mine. There are no other suitable water storages within the TGO Mine Site.
 - Caloma 1 and 2 Open Cuts – Caloma 2 is currently being backfilled with waste rock from the active Caloma 1 mining operations, with these Open Cuts to be fully backfilled as part of TGEF.
 - SAR Open Cut – yet to be approved a suitable portal location is unlikely to be available until the late 2020's.
- Steepening of the existing Wyoming 1 Ramp – the existing ramp has a slope of approximately 1:6 (V:H), the maximum that can be tolerated by the most underground mining equipment and substantially steeper than can be tolerated by open cut mining equipment.
- Cut back along the northern or western wall of Wyoming 1 Open Cut – this would bring the Wyoming 1 Open Cut closer to the Wyoming Central Dam or Residue Storage Facility 2 and would require underground mining and processing operations to cease for the duration of the cutback program.
- Buttrressing and stabilisation of the Ramp Failure – no suitable material is currently available in sufficient volumes for buttressing and any buttress would likely adversely impact on the volume of the sump in the base of the open cut required for ongoing underground mining operations.

Overview of the Proposed Activities

Construction of the Northern Ramp

Figures B and C present the proposed layout of the Northern Ramp. In summary, the Northern Ramp would permit access from the Central Haul Road to the existing ramp, bypassing upper section of the existing ramp.

The following presents the indicative design criteria for the Northern Ramp. The proposed design is based on a geotechnical assessment by SMEC Holdings Limited (SMEC).

- Length.....approximately 500m
- Haul road widthbetween 15m and 25m
- Bench face (batter) angle approximately 45°
- Bench heightapproximately 15m

- Berm widthapproximately 15m
- Overall wall angle (toe to crest) approximately 29°
- Volume of material to be extractedapproximately 0.75Mm³

Use and Placement of Stockpiled and Extracted Material

The Northern Ramp would be located within an area of the TGO Mine Site currently used for soil stockpiling. Stockpiled soil would be removed and either used immediately for rehabilitation of the outer face of Residue Storage Facility 1 or would be relocated to existing soil stockpile areas.

Material extracted during construction of the Northern Ramp would comprise Alluvial material. Depending on the properties of that material, it would be:

- used immediately or stockpiled for use in construction or capping of Residue Storage Facilities 1 or 2;
- stockpiled for subsequent construction of site infrastructure or for use in rehabilitation; or
- placed permanently within the Caloma Open Cuts.

Revised Final Landform

MOD7 would require minor changes to the approved final landform, including an increase in the area of the Wyoming 1 final void by approximately 3.2ha.

Other Approved Operations

No other operations are proposed or would be required to be modified and no additional land would be disturbed.

Proposed Environmental Assessment

Table A presents a brief overview of the potential environmental risks associated with the Proposed Modification, as well as the proposed approach to assessing those risks.

Table A
Potential Environmental Risks

Page 1 of 2

Environmental Aspect	Potential Environmental Risks	Anticipated Assessment Approach
Geotechnical Stability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Proposed Modification would result in modification of the existing open cut walls. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The <i>Modification Report</i> will be supported by a detailed geotechnical assessment undertaken by a suitably qualified expert. • Reliance will be placed on previously completed erosion assessments of the Wyoming 1 Open Cut.
Soils	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Proposed Modification would result in the disturbance of Soil Stockpile 2. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The <i>Modification Report</i> will be supported by a soils assessment undertaken by a suitably qualified expert. The assessment will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – characterise the stockpiled soil; – identify locations within the TGO Mine Site where the soil could be immediately used for progressive rehabilitation or stockpiled; and – identify any ameliorants or other treatments that may potentially be required for use in progressive rehabilitation or to ensure continued viability if being re-stockpiled.

Table A (Cont'd)
Potential Environmental Risks

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Environmental Aspect	Potential Environmental Risks	Anticipated Assessment Approach
Biodiversity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> As there would be no disturbance of additional land, there would be negligible additional biodiversity or heritage risk. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The <i>Modification Report</i> will demonstrate that all land to be disturbed has been previously lawfully disturbed. A qualitative assessment demonstrating that there would be no additional impacts on biodiversity or heritage values would be included.
Heritage		
Noise	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> As the Northern Ramp would be constructed using equipment already on site, there would be no additional noise or air quality emissions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The <i>Modification Report</i> will include a qualitative noise and air quality assessment based on recent monitoring results. Additional modelling may be undertaken if required.
Air Quality		
Surface Water	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> As all disturbance would be undertaken within the existing dirty water catchment, there would be negligible additional surface water risk. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The <i>Modification Report</i> will demonstrate that there would be negligible additional surface water or groundwater-related impacts.
Groundwater	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> As all extraction operations would be undertaken above the regional water table, there would be negligible additional groundwater risk. 	
Traffic and Transportation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> As the Proposed Modification would not change off-site transportation, there would be negligible additional traffic risk. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The <i>Modification Report</i> will demonstrate that there would be negligible additional traffic-related impacts.
Visual amenity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> As the Proposed Modification would result in placement of relocated soils and waste rock into existing, approved locations, there would be negligible additional visual risk. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The <i>Modification Report</i> will demonstrate that there would be negligible additional visual amenity-related impacts.
Social and Economic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Proposed Modification would reduce the risk of harm to the Applicant's employees and of an unplanned interruption of mining operations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The <i>Modification Report</i> will demonstrate that the additional social and economic impacts are likely to be positive.
Final landform	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Proposed Modification would increase the area of the Wyoming 1 Final Void, as well as reducing the wall angles in the vicinity of the Northern Ramp. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The <i>Modification Report</i> will demonstrate that the Proposed Modification would result in reduced risk of geotechnical instability in the vicinity of the Northern Ramp. The <i>Modification Report</i> would also include a robust assessment of options assessed for rehabilitation and the final landform.

Statutory and Approvals Context

The Applicant anticipates that the following approvals or agreements would be required to facilitate the proposed activities.

- Modification of MP 09_0155 under Section 4.55(2) of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979*.

The following approvals or licences will not be required to be modified for the following reasons:

- Additional Mining Lease – all activities would be undertaken within the existing Mining Lease.
- A modified EPL – there would be no changes to the nature of the activities undertaken on site nor the area of the premises.
- Additional biodiversity offsets – there would be no additional disturbance of vegetation.

- Water Licences – the proposed activities would not impact upon the volume of water that would be used by the Mine, nor would additional groundwater or surface water be captured.

Proposed Interaction of MOD7 and Existing Applications

The Applicant anticipates that the Proposed Modification would proceed in parallel with the existing applications for MOD6 and TGEP. Should the application for TGEP be approved prior to determination of the Proposed Modification, the Applicant would work with the Department of Planning and Environment to ensure that either:

- the existing development consent, MP 09_0155, is retained until the Proposed Modification is determined; or
- the Proposed Modification is amended to seek consent to modify any new approval granted for TGEP.

Proposed Engagement

The following presents the proposed government agencies, in addition to the Department of Planning and Environment, to be consulted during preparation of the *Modification Report*.

- Environment Protection Authority
- Resources Regulator
- Mining, Exploration and Geoscience
- Narromine Shire Council

Next Steps

Based on the above, the proposed next steps and anticipated timing are as follows:

- RWC submit *Modification Report* for high level reviewby 15 June 2022
- RWC submit *Modification Report* for exhibitionby 30 June 2022
- DPE determine application Quarter 3 2022
- Commencement of construction of the Northern Ramp Quarter 4 2022

Finally, I would be grateful if the Department could please provide your requirements for the *Modification Report* which will be prepared in accordance with the *State significant development guidelines – preparing a modification report* dated December 2021.

I trust that this provides you with the information that you require at this stage. Please do not hesitate to contact me should you require additional information.

Yours sincerely



Mitchell Bland
Managing Director/Principal

Attached: Figures A, B and C





