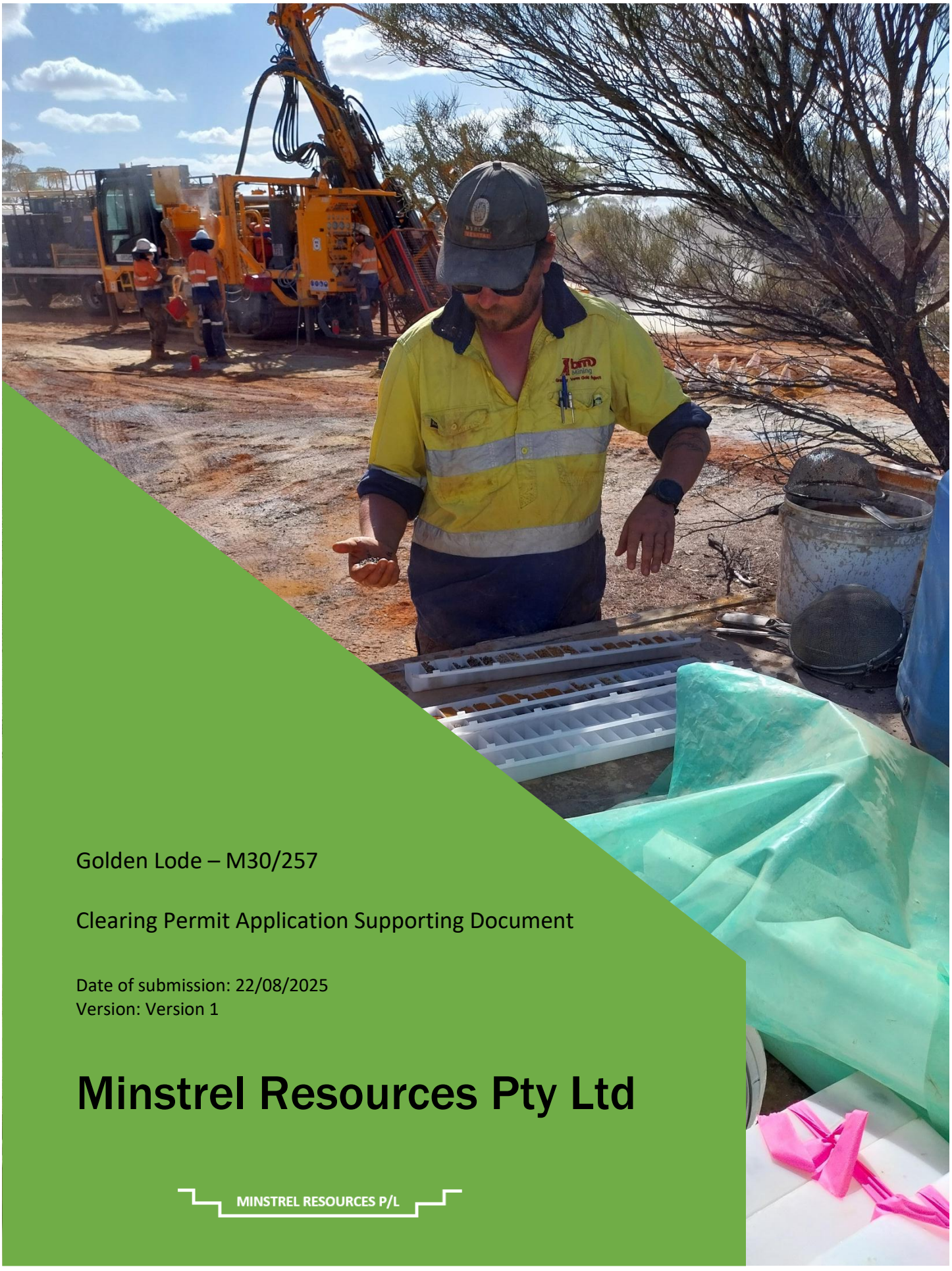


Golden Lode – M30/257

Clearing Permit Application Supporting Document

Date of submission: 22/08/2025
Version: Version 1

Minstrel Resources Pty Ltd

MINSTREL RESOURCES P/L

PROJECT OWNER & TENEMENT HOLDER	Minstrel Resources Pty Ltd 37 Tranby Road Maylands WA 6051 ABN: 659 917 683	Minstrel Resources Pty Ltd 37 Tranby Road Maylands WA 6051 ABN: 659 917 683
CONTACT DETAILS	Alexander McCulloch – Director alex.macca1313@gmail.com 0407 774 017	
COMMODITY	Gold	
PROJECT DESCRIPTION	The Golden Lode Project ("The Project") is a proposed open pit gold operation located 130km north-west of Kalgoorlie within the Ularring Land District, Shire of Menzies on M30/257. The tenure is wholly owned by Minstrel Resources Pty Ltd and is in good standing. The Project tenure is located primarily on Crown Land (Reserves 10111 and 12202), Unallocated Crown Land and partially on the Ex Credo Pastoral Lease, managed by the Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions (DBCA). The mine site is accessed from Coolgardie via the unsealed Coolgardie North Road. The tenure has been subject to historic mining activity, with scattered underground mining undertaken in the 1920s with small quantities of high-grade ore produced. In the early 1990's a two-compartment shaft was sunk to the east of the orebody with levels at approximately 30m and 90m below surface. Ore was trucked and treated offsite. The Mine Plan involves development of an open pit. No processing will be conducted on site, with ore to be trucked to a third-party location for off-site processing. The current LOM is 2 years. New infrastructure proposed that will require clearing of native vegetation includes a waste rock landform, ROM pad, internal mine roads, pit and other supporting infrastructure required for mining operations.	
THIS CLEARING PERMIT (PURPOSE) APPLICATION	This Application for a Clearing Purpose Permit is submitted for the proposed mechanical clearing of native vegetation up to **95ha** on M30/257 covering an open pit, WRL construction, mine site infrastructure and roadworks within the **174ha** clearing permit envelope.	
RELEVANT TENEMENTS	Golden Lode – M30/257	
DISTRIBUTION	The Department of Mines, Petroleum, and Exploration (DMPE) - Native Vegetation Branch Minstrel Resources Pty Ltd	
AUTHORIZED FOR SUBMISSION	Alexander McCulloch Director Date: August 2025	

Document Revision Information

Revision ID	Date	Amendment	Author
1	22/08/2025	Final	MAE

STATEMENT OF LIMITATIONS

In the preparation of this document report MA Environmental (MAE) Consultancy relied on data, plans and other information provided by Minstrel Resources Pty Ltd in its capacity as manager of the Project. Except as otherwise stated in the Report, MAE has not verified the accuracy or completeness of the information or undertaken any test work. MAE will not be liable in relation to incorrect conclusions or recommendations should any data or information, be incorrect, misrepresented or otherwise not fully disclosed to MAE. Within the limitations imposed by the commission, the assessment of the site and preparation of the report have been undertaken in accordance with generally accepted practices using a degree of care ordinarily exercised by professional Environmental Consultants. No other warranty, expressed or implied is therefore made.

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ATTACHMENT C – Surface Water Assessment (Hydrologia, 2025)
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ATTACHMENT E – Fauna Survey and Assessment (Terrestrial Ecosystems, 2025)
ATTACHMENT F – ACHIS Search Results

1 Introduction

1.1 Project Background

The Golden Lode Project (“The Project”) is a proposed open pit located 130km north-west of Kalgoorlie within the Shire of Menzies. The proposed disturbance is wholly located on M30/257 which is held by Minstrel Resources Pty Ltd (MRPL). The proposed Project development is located primarily Crown Reserves 10111 and 12202 (Common), Unallocated Crown Land and partially on the Ex Credo Pastoral Lease, now managed by the Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions (DBCA) for future conservation estate (Figure 1). The mine site is accessed from Coolgardie via the unsealed Coolgardie North Road.

The tenure has been subject to historic mining activity, with evidence of scattered small scale underground mining from the 1920s. In the early 1990’s a two-compartment shaft was sunk to the east of the orebody with levels at approximately 30m and 90m below surface. Ore was treated offsite.

The current Mine Plan with a LOM of 2 years involves development of an open pit. Ore will be trucked to a third-party Mill for off-site processing.

New infrastructure is proposed that will require clearing of native vegetation and will include a low relief waste rock landform, ROM pad, internal mine roads, pit, temporary camp and supporting infrastructure for the mining operations.

Mining is expected to commence in Q1 2026.

1.2 Current Status

The Golden Lode Project (GLP) is a proposed open pit mine, located within granted mining tenure on Crown Land and partially on the Ex Credo Pastoral Lease. The Golden Lode Project location with respect to land use and access is shown in Figure 1.

There are currently no Clearing Permits in force for the mine site, which has been disturbed by past activities associated with the historic former Davyhurst township, timber cutting, mining and pastoralism. The current Mine Plan has indicated clearing of up to 95ha is required on M30/257 to allow for development of the mine including construction of a WRL, ROM pad, pit and associated mine infrastructure.

Biophysical surveys to support the Clearing Permit application were undertaken in late 2024 and 2025. Reports are referenced in Attachments D and E. The Study Area surveyed for this Clearing Permit Application is shown Figure 4 and Figure 5.

A summary of current permitting and required site approvals is shown in
Table 1.

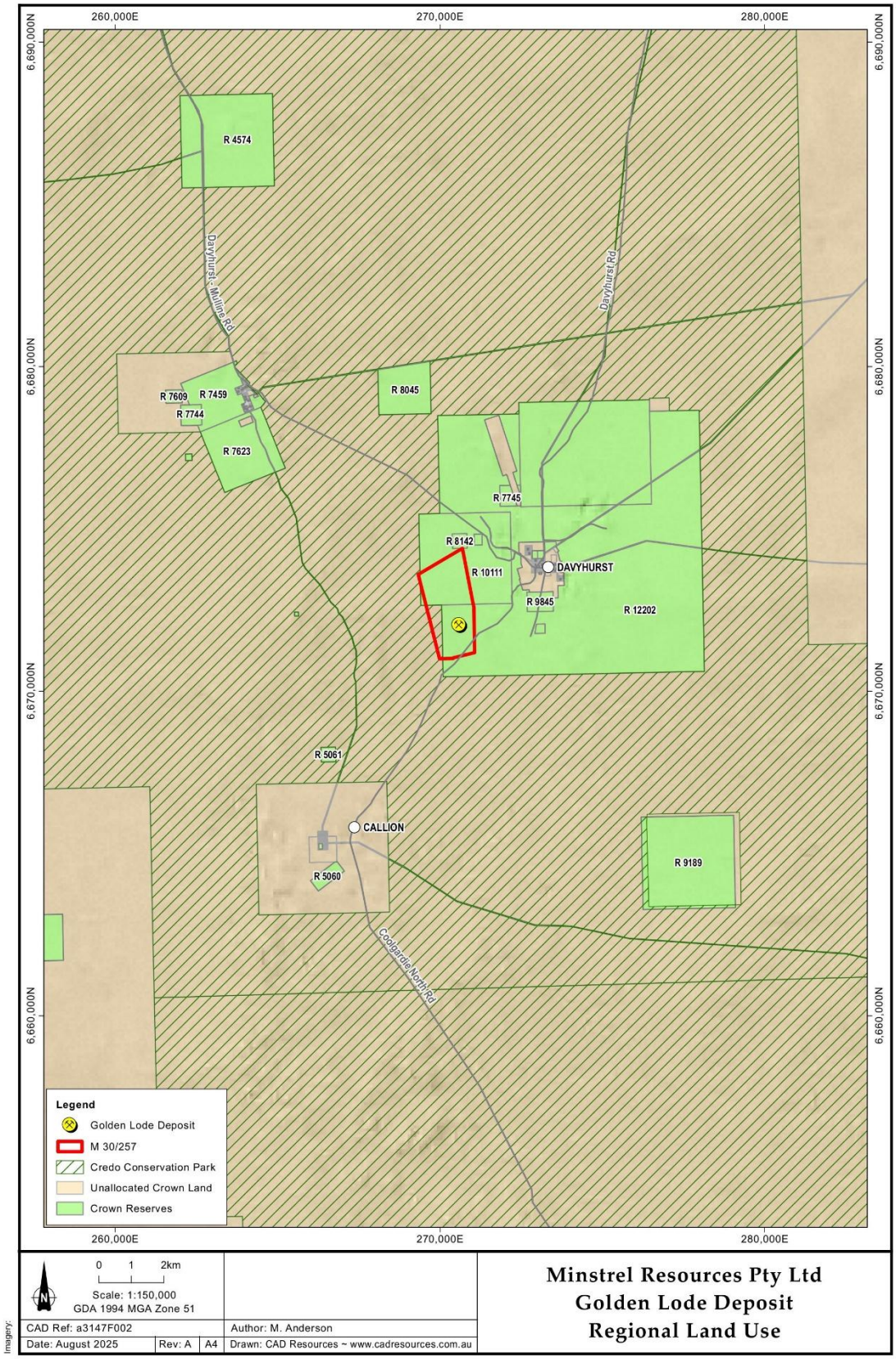


Figure 1 Regional access and land use

Table 1 Summary of Project Permitting and Approvals

Approval Required	By Whom	Status
Mining Tenure	DMPE	Tenement M30/257 is granted and in good standing. Wholly owned by Minstrel Resources Pty Ltd.
Development approvals	DMPE	The Mining Development Closure Proposal (MDCP) for this Project is in preparation and is expected to be submitted in Q4 2025.
Impact on Threatened Species	DBCA	No priority or threatened flora species, PECs or TECs were recorded within the Project area. No unique or restricted vegetation communities were identified, and all vegetation types/communities are common, widespread and well represented in the Eastern Goldfields subregion (NVS, 2024). One active Mallee Fowl mound was recorded within the tenement boundary. The separation distance from the closest (Northern) boundary of the Clearing Permit Envelope is approximately 580m, greater than the buffer of 200m required by the DBCA during breeding season. This will ensure the nest mound will not be directly impacted by the proposed development. A Management Plan will be developed to reduce the potential impact of vegetation clearing. The impact of clearing on other vulnerable species that may occur in the area is considered low (Terrestrial Ecosystems, 2025).
Heritage	DPLH Heritage Council & SOM	No Registered or Other Heritage Place Aboriginal sites (DLPH 2025) are recorded on the ACHIS Database for the Minstrel Tenure. A Heritage Survey was completed in August 2025 by representatives from the Marlinyu Ghoorlie Native Title Claimant Group. The Preliminary Advice (Terra Rosa 2025) has been received and reports that no registered DPLH/Lodged DPLH Places or no Marlinyu Ghoorlie places were identified within the Survey Area. A search enquiry of the Heritage Council inHERIT database and a review of the Shire of Menzies Municipal Inventory of Heritage Places (SoM, 2022) did not identify any registered places associated with the project area.
Clearing Permit (Purpose)	DMPE	This Clearing Application for a Purpose Permit applies to M30/257 for mine site development and construction of supporting infrastructure
Pit Dewatering	DWER	Not applicable. To date, groundwater has not been intersected in resource drilling and the requirement for dewatering is expected to be minimal. If encountered, recovered waters will be directed to in-pit sumps and will be fully utilized for dust suppression.
Groundwater Well Licence	DWER	Not required. No groundwater has been intersected to date. Water required for mining will be obtained from an external source.
Local Authority	SOM	Installation of a haul road onto Coolgardie North Road Reserve and building requirements associated with the proposed temporary camp and associated amenities will be obtained from the Shire with details included in the Mining Proposal.

Decision Making Authority (DMA) Code:
DMPE - The Department of Mines, Petroleum, and Exploration (formerly DEMIRS)
DBCA – Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions
SOM – Shire of Menzies
DPLH – Department of Planning Lands and Heritage
DWER – Department of Water and Environmental Regulation

2 This Proposal

This application for a Clearing Permit (Purpose) within M30/257 seeks approval for the removal of native vegetation covering up to 95ha from the 174ha clearing permit envelope as shown on Figure 2. The proposed clearing area disturbance is temporary, as rehabilitation will be undertaken progressively, or at the completion of the Life of Mine (LOM) on all mine disturbed areas except the mining void. Details of the tenure area, survey area and proposed Application Area are shown in Table 2.

Table 2 Tenure area, survey area and proposed application area

TENURE	TENURE AREA (ha)	INVESTIGATION AREA (ha)	MAX CLEARING (ha)	CP ENVELOPE
M30/257	405ha	405ha	95ha	174ha

This programme will result in the clearing of vegetation by mechanical means, with recovered vegetation track rolled and stockpiled for later rehabilitation use at the completion of the Project. Topsoil and root stock will be recovered and managed in accordance with Minstrel's management procedures. These will be outlined in the Mining Development and Closure Proposal (MDCP), expected to be submitted to the department in Q4 2025. Clearing, if approved, is scheduled to commence in Q1 of 2026, with clearing undertaken on an as-required basis over the LOM.

2.1 Location and Ownership

The proposed clearing is located in the North Coolgardie Mineral Field - Ularring District 30 on granted M30/257 within Crown Reserves and partially on the Ex Credo Pastoral Lease, now managed by the Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions (DBCA). The mining tenure is wholly owned by Minstrel Resources Pty Ltd.

2.2 Project Description

The current Mining Plan is designed to mine a conventional oxide/transitional Open Pit, using small-medium sized open pit mining equipment. Due to the oxide/transitional nature of the host material, it is expected that the pit will not require drilling and blasting. If drilling and blasting is required, equipment will be mobilised on a campaign basis with no explosives being stored on-site.

The ore will be transported along existing public / private roads to a third-party location for off-site processing.

The mine and the proposed clearing is not located wholly or partially in a gazetted occupied Township, Environmentally Sensitive Area (ESA), Schedule 1 Area, Threatened Ecological Community (TEC) or on a Pre-1978 State Agreement Act Area, Pre-1899 Crown Grant Areas, Biodiversity Reserve, World Heritage Property, Soil Reference Site, Red Book Area, Bush Forever Site; or registered Heritage Site.

This site does not contain any permanent water bodies and will not potentially impact on significant lakes or wetlands, Water Supply Catchment areas, Water Reserve or Public Drinking Water Source Areas (DWER, 2021 and DWER, 2025).

Proposed mining infrastructure, current tenure and Clearing Permit Boundary is shown on Figure 2.

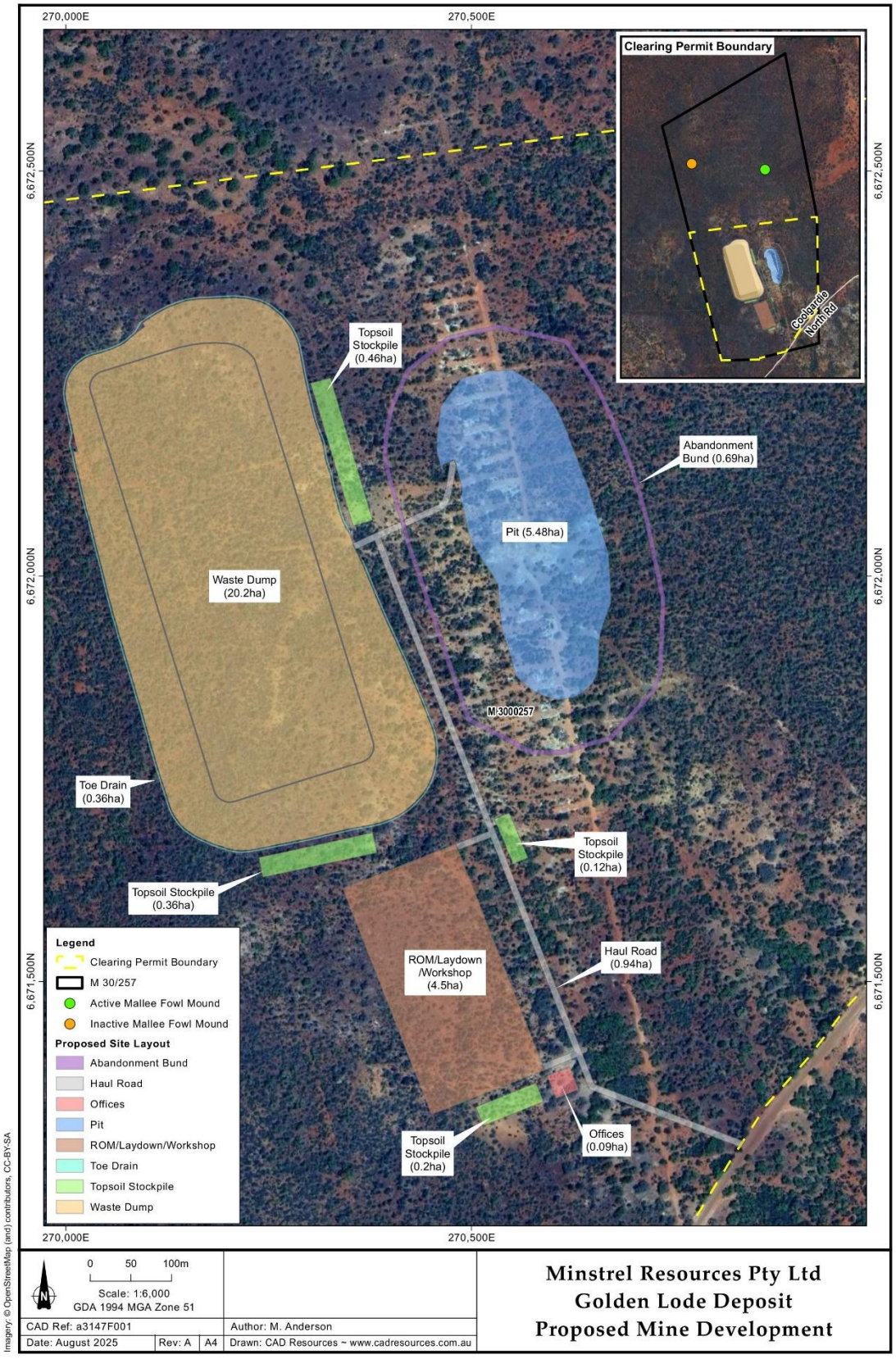


Figure 2 Golden Lode Proposed Mine Layout and Clearing Permit Application Area

3 Existing Environment

The Golden Lode deposit lies in the Coolgardie (COO) bioregion, more specifically the Eastern Goldfields (COO03) subregion. The subregion is characterised by gentle undulating plains. The west is interrupted by low hills and ridges of Archaean greenstones. In the north and east, there is a series of large playa lakes, the remnants of major, ancient drainage lines (Cowan, 2001). The dominant soil type is Calcareous earths, evident on most greenstone and plain areas away from the salina bottomlands.

The vegetation consists primarily of Mallees, diverse Acacia thickets and shrub heaths on sandplains, with Eucalyptus Woodlands, Dodonaea and chenopod shrublands on the greenstones terrain units. The salt lakes support dwarf shrublands of samphire (Cowan, 2001).

The dominant lands are UCL and Crown reserves supporting pastoral grazing, native pastures-conservation and recreation activities and Mining leases (Cowan, 2001).

In the mine environment overlying the basement rocks are alluvial, colluvial, eolian and lacustrine deposits of Cainozoic age. Topographic elevations in the immediate region range from 470m to 500m above sea level and the terrain is classified as being low relief with erosional escarpments (breakaways), low stony rises of more resistant rocks, bordering areas of laterite and sand plain with playas and or salinas in the bottom lands. The Golden Lode minesite is one of several gold mines located in these granite-greenstone terrains most of which are located on low stony rises which form on or below catchment divides and carry sheet wash areas and ephemeral drainage lines that flow for short periods after seasonal rain fall (Waddell and Galloway, 2023).

3.1 Climate

The Project area is characterised as an arid to semi-arid climate, typical of the northern part of the Eastern Goldfields subregion. Summers are hot, while winters are milder. Rainfall is both irregular and highly variable across the district.

During summer, winds are usually easterly to south easterly due to influence of anticyclonic high-pressure systems moving eastwards. Summer months usually feature almost stationary heat lows, resulting in fine, hot conditions with little variation in temperature overnight. Occasionally, remnant tropical cyclones may pass over the area, having crossed the coast between Carnarvon and Port Hedland. These usually pass in a south-easterly direction, weakening as they progress becoming rain-bearing troughs or depressions. Strong wind gusts associated with these depressions can be up to 130km/h (Kalgoorlie, 15/11/1979). These winds can cause severe wind erosion problems and dust storms (Pringle, et.al 1994).

Climatic conditions in winter are influenced by anticyclones moving west to east, with more variable and weaker winds. Winters are usually milder, though temperatures can occasionally fall below freezing.

3.1.1 Rainfall

The long-term average annual rainfall recorded at nearby weather stations range from 249.0mm at Menzies (Bureau of Meteorology (BOM) Station No. 12052 – 1896-2024), 265.6mm at Coolgardie (BOM Station No. 12018 – 1893 to 2025) and 265.7mm at Kalgoorlie (BOM Station 12038 – 1939 to 2025).[1]

Rainfall is both irregular and highly variable across the district and there may be extended periods between significant rainfall events (Pringle et. al., 1994). Larger rainfall events tend to occur in January to March, with the highest average monthly rainfall occurring in January to March and June. June to August is characterised by more frequent, smaller rainfall events, with the highest average number of days of rain (BOM Station 12038 – 1939 to 2025).

[1] Observations recorded at other stations were inconsistent/not up to date and have been excluded from this report.

3.1.2 Temperature

Temperatures are generally hot in summer with a mean daily maximum temperature averaging around 32.1ºC - 33.7ºC for Kalgoorlie-Boulder during the period of December through to February, and cool in the winter with the mean for June and July ranging from 5.1ºC to 6.3ºC (BOM Station 12038 – 1939 to 2025)[2]. In winter temperatures can occasionally fall below freezing.

3.1.3 Evaporation

The annual average evaporation levels for the north-eastern Goldfields range from around 3000mm at Menzies to 3800mm at Wiluna, with 3300mm at Leonora. Kalgoorlie has an average annual evaporation of 2697mm (Pringle et. Al, 1994). Generally, rainfall does not exceed the evaporation rate in the area at any time during the year.

3.2 Landforms and Soil

3.2.1 Regional Geology

The Golden Lode Project is situated in the NNW striking Coolgardie-Mt Ida greenstone belt, a western branch of the Norseman-Wiluna belt. The belt hosts the boundary between the Eastern Goldfields Province (Kalgoorlie Terrane) and the Southern Cross Province (Barlee/Callion Terrane). The terrane boundary is defined by the Mt Ida Fault Golden Lode lies within a subdivision of the Kalgoorlie Terrane, the Coolgardie Domain, which is bounded by the Zuleika Shear to the east and the Mt Ida Fault to the west. Several other major structures, including the Kunanalling Shear and Bullabulling Shear also converge in the belt (Dietman, 2025).

The greenstone sequence comprises a variety of extrusive and intrusive mafic to ultramafic rocks, fine-grained sedimentary rocks and felsic volcanic to volcaniclastic rocks. Dividing the belt is an internal granite body termed the Ularring Granite. Most rock types are moderately to strongly foliated with pronounced lineation and have been regionally metamorphosed to upper Greenschist-lower Amphibolite facies. (Figure 3) (Dietman, 2025).

3.2.2 Local Geology

The salient structure of the Golden Lode Project is a well-defined, sub-vertical sheared lithological contact which trends north through the tenement. To the west is a sequence of foliated metasediments, to the east, mafic to ultramafic schists. The gold mineralisation occurs in associated with metamorphosed and strongly altered mafic volcanic schists. Lodes are characterised by sulphide bearing quartz veining and are commonly carbonatized. The surface expression of the contact is obscured by lateritic soils, and oxidation is up to 80 metres deep (Dietman, 2025).

Landforms in the mine area are described using the land systems approach defined by Pringle et.al. (1994) with the mining operations located in the Kanowna Land System (Waddell and Galloway, 2023).

This Land System comprises low rises to 10m-20m relief, gently undulating lower plains with quartz/stone mantles and level to very gently inclined alluvial plains with poorly defined, sparse drainage patterns. The Golden Lode mine site is located on a low stony ridge with alluvial plains to the east and south-east. Vegetation free areas often contain a mantle of quartz or calcareous pebbles and are subject to sheet flow. (Pringle et. al., 1994). Drainages are typically poorly developed, narrow, non-tributary, and unidirectional with the potential to become channelized in slope sections where flows concentrate (Waddell and Galloway, 2023).

3.2.3 Soils

The soils of the foot slopes vary, ranging from red shallow loamy duplex soils to calcareous loamy earths that tend to be saline.

[2] Climate and rainfall data from Kalgoorlie-Boulder Airport was adopted for the purpose of this report, as the nearest weather station with the most complete and up to date observations. Kalgoorlie-Boulder Airport (station number 012038) is located approximately 113 km southeast of the project area.

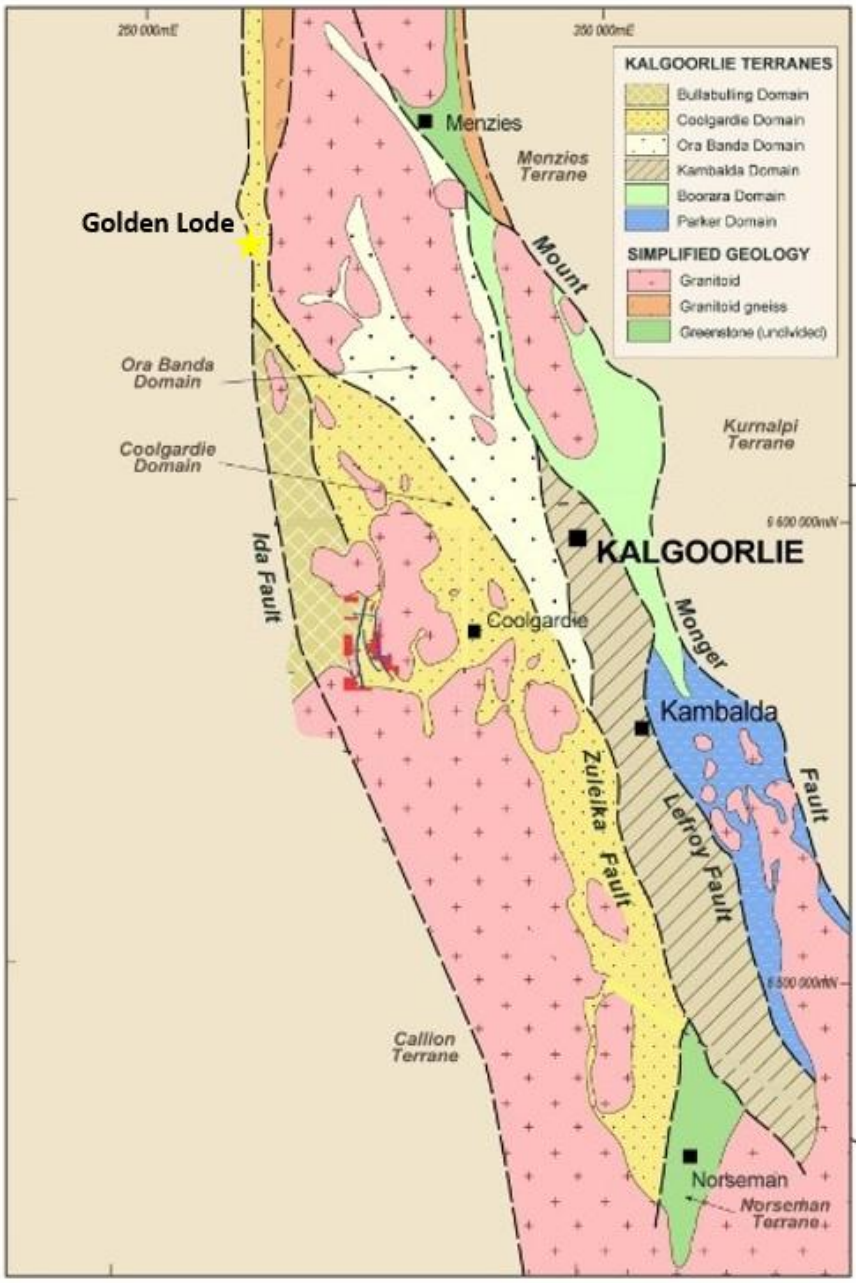


Figure 3 Regional Geology (Dietman, 2025)

3.3 Water Resources

3.3.1 Groundwater

The Project is located in the Kalgoorlie (51-9) 1:250,000 scale Hydrogeologic map area, in the larger Goldfields Groundwater Area and the Rebecca Groundwater Subarea (as proclaimed in 1979 under the *Rights in Water and Irrigation Act)* (GDS, 2025).

Bores located 4 km northeast of the Golden Lode deposit have salinities that range from 20,000 to 42,000 mg/L. Bores located 2 km south of the Golden Lode Project have reported salinities that range from 38,000 to 45,000 mg/L. There are no historic bores reported on mining tenement M30/257. It is assumed that any bores which intersect water bearing fractures would have similar salinities to the regional bores (GDS, 2025).

No 5C groundwater abstraction licences are currently held by Minstrel Resources, with the closest groundwater licence (GWL66199) owned by Carnegie Gold Pty Ltd., approximately 2km from the east boundary of M30/257 (GDS, 2025). Regional Bores within 10km of the project are outlined in Figure 4 of the report prepared by Groundwater Development Services (GDS, 2025)

Running through the centre of the proposed Golden Lode Pit is a sheared contact between mafic volcanics and metasedimentary rocks which has the potential to form a fracture rock aquifer system if recharge conditions were present. Water supplies for historic townships and stock watering in the Davyhurst - Callion area were all derived from surface water harvesting and storage arrangements due to the lack of suitable groundwater. The water prospectivity at Golden Lode is expected to be very low due to the lack of local rainfall runoff and low aquifer recharge potential (GDS, 2025).

The proposed pit will be mined to a maximum depth of 66mbgl, with the occurrence of groundwater in resource drill holes reported to be at a vertical depth of 78mbgl. It is assumed that the potential for groundwater inflows into the pit are very low, with any inflows to the pit from limited seepage. Should inflows occur, they can be addressed by in-pit sumps, with water used for dust suppression purposes. It is unlikely that dewatering bores will be required on site (GDS, 2025).

Groundwater connectivity between the proposed pit development and the regional surface water features is negligible. Drawdown of local aquifers, or impacts to the aquifer or other users as a result of mining of the pit is unlikely. Should a pit pond form post mining, it is likely to be seasonal, develop from incident rainfall and result in limited impact to the environment, aquifer or other users (GDS, 2025).

There are no known Groundwater Dependant Ecosystems in the tenement or near mine area. The local groundwater quality has been reported to be brackish to saline, and the only beneficial use for groundwater encountered on tenement M30/257 would be for industrial and mining purposes.

Further detail is outlined in the Hydrogeologic Desk Top Study prepared by Groundwater Development Services (GDS, 2025) (see Attachment B).

3.3.2 Surface Drainage

The Project area lies across a catchment divide associated with four sub-catchments. Catchments to the south of the site drain to the southeast, terminating in Wangine Lake. Catchments to the north of the site drain northeast into Papertalk Creek. The creek dissipates onto a broad wash plain 15 km to the northeast terminating in a series of relatively small salt lakes 40 km northeast of the site. In very wet periods the lakes could overtop and flow toward Lake Goongarrie to the east (Hydrologia, 2025).

As the Project is located high in the catchment, drainage lines are not well defined. There are no large, defined streams near proposed project infrastructure. The area is drained by broad shallow flow paths with limited development of incised drainage lines through the Project area (Hydrologia, 2025).

A surface water assessment of the mine site was completed by Hydrologia in 2025 to identify flood risks (see Attachment C) associated with the proposed pit and associated infrastructure. No flood risks were identified and perimeter pit bunding will be established to direct surface flows away from the development areas into local drainage lines and vegetated flow zones.

3.4 Dust and Erosion Impact Management

Land management assessments for the Kanowa Land System highlight that narrow drainage tracts and Alluvial Plain terrain units are susceptible to water erosion where perennial shrub cover is substantially reduced (Waddell and Galloway, 2023), or the soil mantle surface is extensively disturbed. While both of these activities will occur as part of the mine establishment, application of sound land care management practices can substantially reduce the risks of environmental harm and can remediate impacts to drainage that have occurred as a part of past activities. The primary objective is to minimise soil erosion and dust generation and the export of material into ephemeral drainage lines and into verge vegetation.

The following strategies will be implemented to achieve the clearing and rehabilitation objectives:

- Identify areas of representing increased potential for erosion hazards and avoid disturbance of these areas wherever possible;
- Provide environmental supervision and co-ordination of work teams during clearing and topsoil recovery;
- Schedule vegetation clearing to match development needs;
- Minimise ground disturbance and restrict clearing to designated areas;
- Reinstate drainage line at the completion of any earthworks programme where possible
- Schedule any ephemeral creek-crossing construction activities to coincide with no creek flow periods, where practicable;
- Return stripped topsoil and rootstock to the original horizon to promote rapid revegetation and surface stabilisation;
- Keep topsoil stockpiles out of inappropriate areas such as watercourses and areas subject to wetting by poorer quality waters;
- Control access and prevent vehicular movements over topsoil stockpiles;
- Rehabilitate progressively where required and re-spread cleared vegetation selectively to create habitats;
- Reform access roads to similar pre-construction surface conditions, and
- Install erosion control structures along roads and areas of high erosion risk.

The following strategies will be implemented to achieve dust minimisation:

- Minimise clearing and avoid unnecessary machinery movements,
- Rehabilitate and/or stabilise disturbed surfaces as soon as possible, and
- Damp down with water of suitable quality from water trucks as necessary
- Manage site vehicle speeds.

3.5 Flora and Fauna

3.5.1 Flora

Native Vegetation Solutions (NVS, 2024) completed a Flora and Vegetation Survey covering approximately 406ha within the granted mining tenement M30/257. The area surveyed included the area proposed for clearing, project development and rehabilitation as part of the proposed pit mining operation at Golden Lode. The investigation area is shown in Figure 4.

The study area reported a total of 92 species from 22 Families and 40 Genera from within the survey area. Nine major vegetation groups were recorded in the survey area, with condition ranging from completely degraded to very good. No weed species were recorded within the survey area (NVS, 2024).

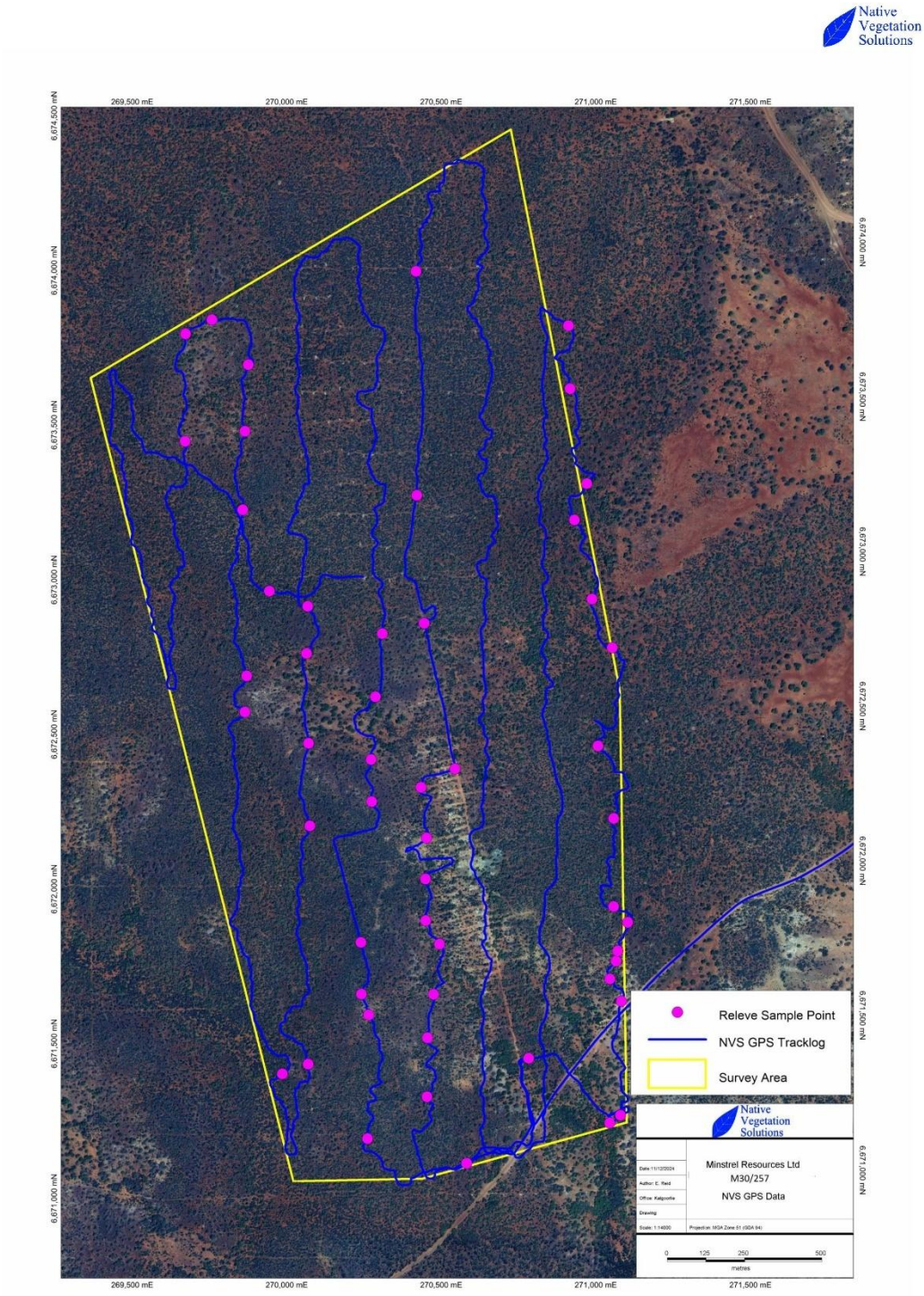
No PECs (as listed by the DBCA) or TECs (as defined by the DBCA and the *EPBC Act (1999)* were recorded in the survey area. No unique or restricted vegetation communities were identified, and all vegetation types/communities are common, widespread and well represented in the Eastern Goldfields subregion. There were no threatened or priority flora recorded in the survey area (NVS, 2024).

Current desktop and field survey evidence suggests that any proposed disturbance/clearing of vegetation will result in a loss of some flora and vegetation. However, given the size of the area and the extent of the Beard (1990) vegetation association elsewhere, the impact on the vegetation and its component flora will not affect the conservation values of either or create fragmentation or patches of remnant vegetation (NVS, 2024).

The following recommendations were made as a result of the flora survey and will be incorporated into the Site Environmental Management Plan:

- Weed control measures should be implemented during and following earthworks; and
- Dust control measures should be implemented during earthworks

Further flora and vegetation information is referenced in Attachment D.



Map 2: NVS GP Data

Figure 4 Native Vegetation Solutions Survey Area Map (NVS, 2024)

3.5.2 Fauna

Terrestrial Ecosystems was commissioned in December 2024 by Minstrel Resources to complete a fauna survey of the Mining Tenement M30/257, approximately 406ha in size (Figure 5). A basic and targeted survey was conducted, with the targeted component focussing on Malleefowl mounds and Arid Bronze Azure butterflies.

This objectives of this survey were to

- indicate the vertebrate fauna assemblage (reptiles, amphibians, mammals and birds) in and near the project area so that potential impacts on the fauna and fauna assemblage might be adequately assessed;
- locate and record recently active Malleefowl mounds in the area;
- assess and survey the area for Arid Bronze Azure (butterfly);
- describe and map the major vertebrate fauna habitats present in the Project area;
- list the vertebrate fauna species potentially present in the Project area;
- discuss potential impacts on species listed as threatened under State and Commonwealth legislation; and
- recommend management strategies to mitigate potential impacts on the vertebrate fauna (Terrestrial Ecosystems, 2025).

The methodology for the survey follows recommendations in Environmental Protection Authority (EPA; 2020) *Technical Guidance – Terrestrial vertebrate fauna surveys for environmental impact assessment* and supporting Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions ABAB survey guidelines. The report is referenced in Attachment E.

The Project Area is located in the Southern Cross (C003) Interim Biogeographic Regionalisation of Australia (IBRA) subregion within the Coolgardie Biogeographic region (Cowan 2001). The area has two broad fauna habitats: mixed Eucalyptus woodland over thick acacia and sclerophyll shrubland and mixed Eucalyptus woodland over open acacia and sclerophyll shrubland. Fauna habitat condition varied across the Project area, but was mostly very good. (Terrestrial Ecosystems, 2025). Evidence of feral animals was present throughout the Project area, including tracks of wild dogs, feral cats and rabbit scats.

A list of fauna species with special status in either State or Commonwealth or are on the DBCA Priority species list and potentially present in the vicinity of the Project area is listed in Table 9 of the report, along with an assessment of likelihood of occurrence within the Project area. Of the species listed, the following were potentially or likely to be present in the Project area:

Southern Whiteface (*Aphelocephala leucopsis)* is listed as vulnerable under the BC Act and EPBC Act, and is potentially present in the project area. Given its widespread distribution, abundance in surveys and ability to move if disturbed, it is unlikely to be significantly impacted by vegetation clearing and low impact activities in the project area.

Removing or destroying a Southern Whiteface active nest could be considered a significant impact; therefore, if vegetation clearing is to be undertaken during the breeding season (usually July to October in this region, presuming there have not been early rains, which can bring the breeding season forward), then there needs to be a check that no Southern Whiteface active nests will be impacted (Terrestrial Ecosystems, 2025).

Malleefowl (*Leipoa occellata*) is listed as Vulnerable under the Commonwealth *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (EPBC Act) and Schedule 3 of the Western Australian *Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016* (BC Act). Much of the habitat in the Project area is suitable for Malleefowl. One active and one inactive Mallee Fowl mound were recorded in the survey area, along with one individual Mallee Fowl sighted (see Figure 2 and Figure 5). If appropriate buffers are enforced near the mounds, habitat clearing is unlikely to significantly impact Malleefowl. There is potential for birds to be killed by vehicles once the site is operational and habitat clearing will increase habitat fragmentation and movement pathways for feral and pest species (Terrestrial Ecosystems, 2025).

Other: Peregrine Falcons and the Central Long-eared Bat may be present in the Project area. Both species will readily move if disturbed and are unlikely to be significantly impacted by vegetation clearing. No host ants, Arid Bronze Azure or Inland Hairstreak were recorded (Terrestrial Ecosystems, 2025).

A series of recommendations were provided in the Terrestrial Ecosystems (2025) report that will assist in minimising the impact on the habitats of a range of animals during clearing and mining operations. These include:

- Development of Vertebrate Fauna Management Plan prior to any ground disturbance.
- All Malleefowl observed or adversely impacted to be recorded. This will be included in Annual Reports to the DMPE and DBCA in Kalgoorlie.
- Induction and awareness: for all contractors and staff involved in vegetation clearing, development and ongoing operations in the project area.
    - Ensure staff are aware of the possible presence and issues associated with fauna in the area,
    - Implementation of process to manage fauna in the Project area,
    - Ensure reporting of deaths or sightings of Mallee fowl and other conservation-significant species.
- Dust: Suppression and management programs to minimise impacts on adjacent vegetation and fauna habitat.
- Minimise habitat fragmentation - where possible:
    - Align access routes along existing tracks and other barriers,
    - Follow boundaries of broad-scale vegetation types in the area,
    - Minimise clearing and avoid fragmentation of habitat,
- Progressive rehabilitation of areas once they are no longer required,
- Minimise impacts of feral animal species:
    - No pets to be allowed on site,
    - Feral pest numbers to be monitored and controlled,
    - Remove or contain rubbish likely to attract feral animals or pests,
- Limit vehicle speeds to reduce likelihood of collisions with fauna,
- No feeding of native fauna,
- Temporary capping of holes on completion of drilling and permanent capping or closure of holes on conclusion of exploration.
- Implementation of a 200m buffer around Malleefowl mound in breeding season (September to March), and 50m in non-breeding season,
- Undertake clearing outside of the Southern Whiteface breeding season of July to October, acknowledging that rainfall events can influence the breeding season.
    - If clearing is to occur in the Southern Whiteface breeding season, a Zoologist familiar with the species to search the area for active nests before vegetation clearing is undertaken,
    - If an active Southern Whiteface nest(s) is found, a 250m buffer is implemented around the nest site until all chicks have fledged.

The report concluded that although the vegetation in the project area is in good to very good condition; multiple areas have recently been burned, with introduced predators likely to have had significant impacts on the vertebrate fauna in the Project area.

The area assessed is small (i.e. ~406ha) compared to the availability of similar habitats in adjacent areas, with clearing for the Project area likely to be significantly smaller (less than 95ha). Habitat in the area is similar to many square kilometres of adjacent habitat; therefore, clearing of the vegetation is unlikely to significantly impact the vertebrate fauna when considered in a bioregional context (Terrestrial Ecosystems, 2025).

Although there are anticipated short-term impacts on fauna, they are not considered to significantly impact fauna habitat and assemblages in a bioregional context in the long term. The overall impact on fauna species and species of conservation significance will be minimal, provided the recommended management procedures are implemented and adhered to (Terrestrial Ecosystems, 2025).

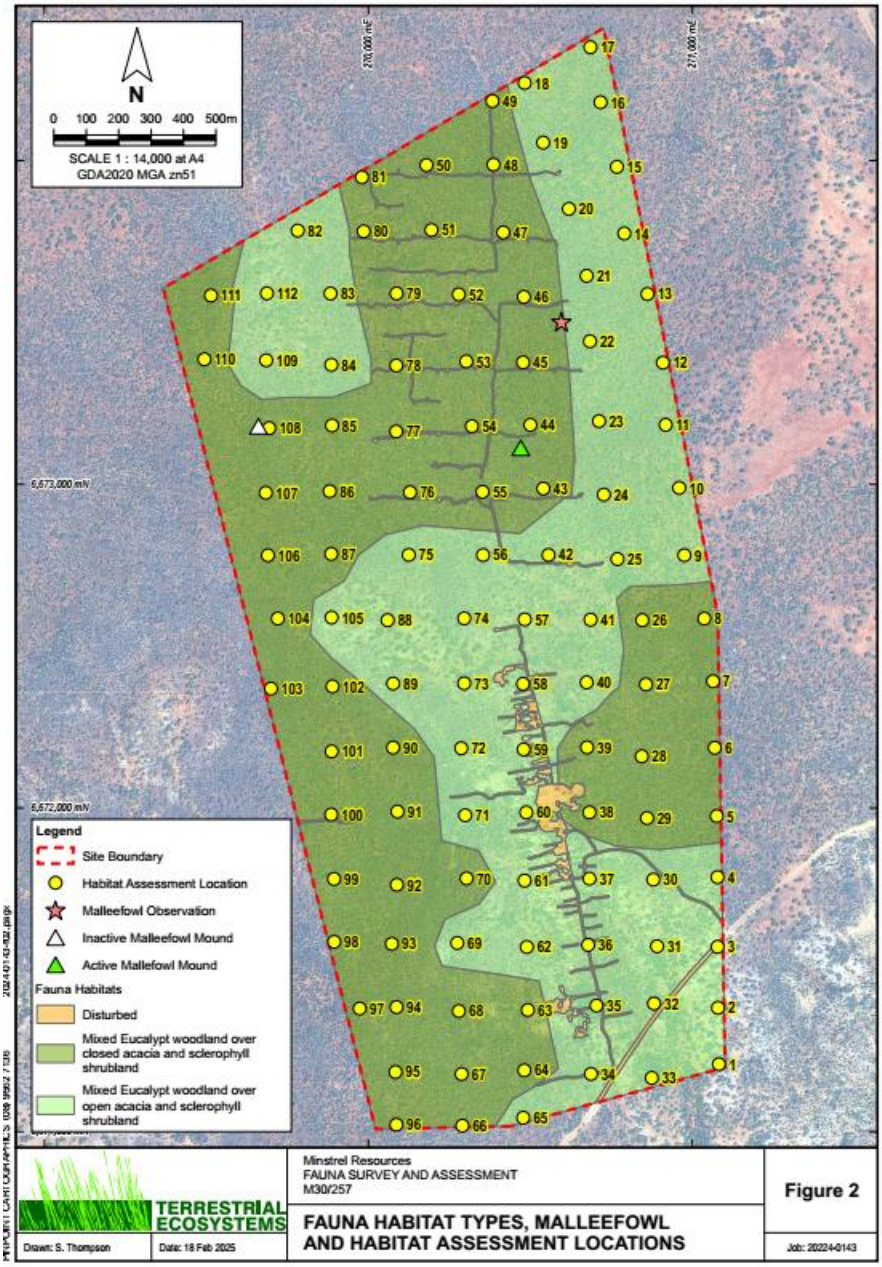


Figure 5 Fauna habitat types, Mallefowl and habitat assessment locations (Terrestrial Ecosystems, 2025)

3.6 Conservation Significance

The significance of the biota of the Project area was assessed in three contexts – State, regional and local levels. As no threatened Flora was recorded during the field survey, the proposed development of mining areas has no floral conservation significance at a state level.

Of the fauna which potentially occur in the area, Terrestrial Ecosystems identified 4 species of conservation significance that has the potential to occur in the Golden Lode Project area.:

- Southern Whiteface (*Aphelocephala leucopsis*) - Vulnerable species under the *BC Act 2016* and *EPBC Act 1999. (Not sighted during the 2025 pedestrian survey)*
- Malleefowl (*Leipoa ocellata*) - Vulnerable under the *BC Act 2016* and *EPBC Act 1999*
- Central Long-eared Bat (*Nyctophilus major tor*) – Priority 3 with the DBCA
- Peregrine Falcon (*Falco peregrinus*) - Otherwise specially protected under the *BC Act 2016*

Of the Scheduled species identified in the desktop study, all are in urgent need of conservation attention and Action Plans involving a range of conservation activities are being managed by the DBCA with some success.

The LOM is of short duration (less than 2 years) and the impact of the limited clearing on regional fauna is expected to be minimal, with the return of many terrestrial species back into disturbed areas after site decommissioning and rehabilitation.

Threatening processes identified in the CALM Biodiversity Audit (Cowan 2001), include vegetation clearing and fragmentation, grazing pressure, feral animals (goats, foxes and cats), changed fire regimes, weed spread, salinity, mining and poaching birds’ species. A Site Management Plan to mitigate and manage those processes relevant to mining will be developed and implemented as part of Mine development.

The proposed mine development is part of a land system and vegetation associations that are relatively widespread in the region. There is no evidence that floral habitat of regional significance will be significantly impacted by the proposed mining operations. Operational impacts can be managed through:

(a) minimisation of disturbance and clearing,
(b) avoiding permanent changes to drainage patterns and sheet flow zones,
(c) controlling weed spread,
(d) reducing impacts to soils and verges by using best quality ground water during dust suppression, and
(e) progressive rehabilitation of disturbed areas

There are no assemblages of plant species that are representative of TEC or PEC communities. The drainage lines are ephemeral and do not support riparian or wetland vegetation. Additional detail available in attachments B, C and D)

A risk-based summary of potential impacts associated with clearing up to 95ha at the Golden Lode mine site measured against the 10 Clearing Principles (EPA 1986) is outlined in Table 3.

Table 3 Summary of Findings Against the 10 Clearing Principles

No.	Principle/Assessment
a)	**Clearing principle:** Native vegetation should not be cleared if it comprises a high level of biological diversity. **Assessment:** Proposal is unlikely to be at variance with this principle A total of 22 Families, 40 Genera and 92 Species were recorded within the survey area. Nine major vegetation groups were recorded in the survey area and range from Completely Degraded to Very Good condition (using the scale of Keighery 1994) (NVS, 2024). No Priority Flora, Threatened Flora, PECs or TECs were recorded in the survey area. No unique or restricted vegetation communities were identified, and all vegetation types/communities are common, widespread and well represented in the Eastern Goldfields subregion (NVS, 2024). The national objectives and targets for biodiversity conservation recognize that the retention of 30% or more of the pre-clearing extent of a Beard vegetation association is necessary if Australia's biological diversity is to be protected. The extent of the Beard vegetation units 40 and 468 within the survey area at the Association WA scale is less than 1% of the total area and the Beard vegetation units are above the 30% threshold at State, bioregional and subregional scale (NVS, 2024).
b)	**Clearing principle:** Native vegetation should not be cleared if it comprises the whole or a part of, or is necessary for the maintenance of, a significant habitat for fauna indigenous to Western Australia. **Assessment:** Proposal is unlikely to be at variance with this principle The field assessment conducted by NVS (2024) established that the condition of the vegetation in the proposed disturbance area ranged from "Completely Degraded" to "Very Good" with most of the area falling into the "Very Good" Category. Areas which were affected by historic exploration were deemed in "Completely Degraded" condition. No areas of vegetation were assessed to be in "Pristine" condition. No unique or restricted vegetation communities were identified, and all vegetation types/communities are common, widespread and well represented in the Eastern Goldfields subregion. DBCA Assessment Protocols for the Survey of the Inland Hairstreak and ABAB butterflies were followed and documented in attached Terrestrial Ecosystem (2025) Report. No host ants, or Arid Bronze Azure or Inland Hairstreak Butterflies were recorded. Presence of Malleefowl were recorded (Terrestrial Ecosystems, 2025) approximately 580m north of the proposed clearing permit envelope, exceeding the 200m buffer currently recommended by the DBCA to limit potential impacts on active mounds during breeding season. The assessment conducted by Terrestrial Ecosystems (2025) concluded that clearing of vegetation will not compromise significant habitat necessary for the maintenance of fauna indigenous to Western Australia. The uncleared fauna habitat of the Project area is like that in the many square kilometres of adjacent habitat; therefore, clearing of the vegetation is unlikely to significantly impact the vertebrate fauna when considered in a bioregional context. A series of recommendations were provided in the NVS (2024) and Terrestrial Ecosystems (2025) reports that will assist in minimising the impact on the habitats of a range of taxa during clearing and mining operations.

c)	**Clearing principle:** Native vegetation should not be cleared if it includes, or is necessary for the continued existence of, rare flora. **Assessment:** Proposal is unlikely to be at variance with this principle. No Threatened or Priority flora were recorded during the survey (NVS, 2024).
d)	**Clearing principle:** Native vegetation should not be cleared if it comprises the whole or a part of, or is necessary for the maintenance of a threatened ecological community. **Assessment:** Proposal is unlikely to be at variance with this principle. No Threatened or Priority Ecological Communities were identified within the survey area (NVS, 2024).
e)	**Clearing principle:** Native vegetation should not be cleared if it is significant as a remnant of native vegetation in an area that has been extensively cleared. **Assessment:** Proposal is unlikely to be at variance with this principle The proposed mine development area to be cleared is not considered to be significant as a remnant of native vegetation, as the condition of the vegetation in the area surveyed ranged from "Completely Degraded" to "Very Good" with most of the area falling into the "Very Good" Category (NVS, 2024). No unique or restricted vegetation communities were identified in the survey area, and all vegetation types/communities are common, widespread and well represented in the Eastern Goldfields subregion. Given the size of the area and the extent of the Beard (1990) vegetation association elsewhere, the impact on the vegetation and its component flora will not affect the conservation values of either or create fragmentation or patches of remnant vegetation (NVS, 2024).
f)	**Clearing principle:** Native vegetation should not be cleared if it is growing in, or in association with, an environment associated with a watercourse or wetland. **Assessment:** Proposal is unlikely to be at variance with this principle The Project area is located on a topographic rise and is not in an area prone to flooding. The drainage lines are small, discontinuous and ephemeral (GDS, 2025) and would not support riparian or wetland vegetation. No waterbodies or GDEs were identified within the survey area (NVS, 2024). There are no threatened plant communities, RAMSAR Wetlands or mapped ecologically sensitive surface water features within 20 km of the project (GDS, 2025). The known depth of the local aquifer standing water level is about 78 mbgl and water quality is saline, parameters unsuited for GDEs.
g)	**Clearing principle:** Native vegetation should not be cleared if the clearing of the vegetation is likely to cause appreciable land degradation. **Assessment:** Proposal is unlikely to be at variance with this principle The area surveyed has a degree of existing disturbance, with condition ranging from "Completely Degraded" to "Very Good" with most of the area falling into the "Very Good" Category (NVS, 2024). No vegetation was considered "Pristine" condition (NVS, 2024). The Project area is considered small in comparison with the availability of similar habitats in adjacent areas. No unique or restricted vegetation communities were identified, and all vegetation types/communities are common, widespread and well represented in the Eastern Goldfields subregion. It is unlikely that the Project will impact on groundwater, surface water quality or drainage channels (GDS, 2025). Clearing impacts can be managed by staged clearing, retaining vegetation buffers where practical and adopting progressive rehabilitation practices. Much of the area is undulating, supports

	natural rock clasts as pavements and will pose a low erosion risk. Opportunities to enhance environmental biodiversity values through rehabilitation will be adopted. Minstrel Resources will implement a progressive management approach to land clearing and site rehabilitation, such that the clearing will not cause appreciable long term land degradation.
h)	**Clearing principle:** Native vegetation should not be cleared if the clearing of the vegetation is likely to have an impact on the environmental values of any adjacent or nearby conservation area. **Assessment:** Proposal is unlikely to be at variance with this principle Two former Pastoral stations in the district are UCL and are being managed for future inclusion in the Conservation estate: - Ex Goongarrie Station 50km to the east and Ex-Credo Station are currently being managed as Conservation Parks. Ex Credo contains the Rowles Lagoon Conservation Park and Clear and Muddy Lakes Nature Reserve - both freshwater wetland areas, located approximately 40 – 45 km south of, and will not be impacted by the GL proposal. There are no gazetted conservation areas in the near vicinity to the Golden Lode minesite.
i)	**Clearing principle:** Native vegetation should not be cleared if the clearing of the vegetation is likely to cause deterioration in the quality of surface or underground water. **Assessment:** Proposal is unlikely to be at variance with this principle Hydrogeology and Surface Water assessments were undertaken in 2025 and are referenced in Attachment B and C respectively. These reports demonstrate that it is unlikely the Project will impact on groundwater, surface water quality or drainage (GDS, 2025). There are no permanent water courses, wetlands or Public Drinking Water Sources Areas in the Application Area. The report prepared by GDS (2025) advised that: • Groundwater connectivity between the proposed pit development and the regional surface water features is negligible. • Connectivity between the ore body and the local aquifer is likely to be restricted to minor fractures. • The area immediately around tenement M30/257 has very low recharge potential. Due to the low recharge across tenement M30/257, it is assumed that the potential for good groundwater flows in the fractured rock would be negligible to low. • The local groundwater quality has been reported to be brackish to saline. The only beneficial use for groundwater encountered on tenement M30/257 would be for industrial and mining purposes only. The reports prepared by GDS (2025) and Hydrologia (2025) indicate that: • There are no natural pools or permanent water bodies in the area or nearby, and no large defined channels in the Project area (Hydrologia, 2025) • The Project area is located on a low topographic rise and is not in an area prone to flooding. It is unlikely that the development of the pit will impact on surface water quality or drainage channels (GDS, 2025) • Surface water in the region is associated with saline lakes and will be brackish to saline. There are no beneficial uses associated with the surface water features, other than supporting flora or fauna which are adapted for saline environments (GDS, 2025). Groundwater has limited connectivity with low flow potential. Surface run off is ephemeral and seasonal, and there are no permanent streams, large drainage channels or permanent natural water bodies present. Surface water and groundwater present is likely to be brackish to saline, with no beneficial use aside from mining or industrial purposes. Limited scale vegetation clearing over the proposed development is unlikely to have a significant impact to either the surface or groundwater quality.

	Stormwater runoff diversion and control will be implemented as part of site water runoff management. Any in flows to the pit are likely to be from seepage, and can be managed with in pit sumps, with water used for dust suppression. Historic mining records and recent hydrological assessments of the underlying site geology shows that there are no near mine surficial deposits which provide local beneficial use resources, and no identified structural fractured rock aquifers containing groundwater resources (oxide/fresh rock interface).
j)	**Clearing principle:** Native vegetation should not be cleared if clearing the vegetation is likely to cause, or exacerbate, the incidence or intensity of flooding. **Assessment:** Proposal is unlikely to be at variance with this principle The Project area is located on a low topographic rise and is not in an area prone to flooding. The drainage lines are small, discontinuous and ephemeral (Hydrologia and GDS 2025). Due to the mine site’s position in the landscape, and the high evaporation rate, the proposed limited clearing is unlikely to cause, or exacerbate, the incidence or intensity of flooding. Stormwater runoff diversion and control around mining infrastructure will be implemented as part of site water runoff management.

4 Sensitive Environmental Receptors

This section provides details of any sensitive (environmental or social) receptors potentially impacted by the open pit mining proposal at the Golden Lode Project.

The Golden Lode deposit is located on Crown Land and partially on the Ex Credo Pastoral Lease. The Credo Conservation Park is managed by the Department of Biodiversity Conservation and Attractions. The Pastoral Lease was purchased through the Pastoral Lands Board in 2007 as a representation of the Western Woodlands and the southern portion is an important water catchment area for Rowles Lagoon, situated 47km south of Golden Lode in the adjoining catchment. The Credo Homestead is situated 45km south of Golden Lode and therefore not considered a susceptible receptor for this mining project. The Kalgoorlie DBCA is kept informed of developments.

4.1 Heritage, Community and Consultation

Searches of the Department of Planning, Land and Heritage online Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Inquiry System (ACHIS) - Site Register for the relevant tenure – M30/257 have not identified any sites within the proposed Golden Lode project area (see Attachment F).

A heritage survey was undertaken by Terra Rosa Consulting in August 2025. The released Preliminary Advice (August 2025) has not identified any aboriginal heritage sites requiring management. At the time of submission, the report was yet to be finalised. A copy will be to be submitted with the Mining Development and Closure Proposal in Q4 2025.

There are no impacts to areas of significant European cultural heritage within the proposed mining area. The current expectation is that should any examples of European mining heritage be identified, the Shire of Menzies will be advised.

Minstrel Resources have completed a range of community and regulatory consultation. This has included correspondence with Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions (DBCA), Department of Mines, Petroleum, and Exploration (DMPE) and with the Native Title Claimant Group Marlinyu Ghoorlie. Discussions have also been held with local government (Shire of Menzies) and Ora Banda Mining P/L who operate the Davyhurst process plant located approximately 3km north east of M30/257. This process will continue during the planned short mining period.

4.2 Weed Management

No weed species were identified during the recent site inspection of the proposed Project Development area (NVS, 2024). Operational management strategies adopted to stop the introduction or spread of weed species include:

- Materials (i.e. soil) should not be removed from sites for reuse where weed infestations are evident without prior spraying;
- All earthmoving equipment and vehicles are washed down prior to the initial transport to site and are soil free;
- Infestations in the general Project area and stockpiles will be brought to the attention of the Mine Management for action;
- Undertake progressive rehabilitation of disturbed areas, (where feasible) to assist in reducing weed spread by promoting competition from local native species, and;
- Mine personnel are made aware of weed issues through the Site Induction Programme.

4.3 Land Discharge

There is a minimal risk for liquid waste such as hydrocarbons to enter the environment during land clearing and stockpiling operations. Servicing of earth moving equipment will only be permitted in designated Works areas.

4.4 Closure and Rehabilitation Management

The Australian and New Zealand Minerals and Energy Council and the Minerals Council of Australia have jointly produced a high-level framework for the development of Mine Closure Plans. The Western Australian Department of Mines, Petroleum and Exploration (DMPE formerly DEMIRS) published two revised Statutory Guidelines that will come into effect with the commencement of the Amendment Act, currently planned for September 2025:

- Guideline for preparing Mine Closure Plans (DEMIRS, March 2025)
- Guideline for preparing Mining Development and Closure Proposals (DEMIRS, May 2025)

Under the new framework a standalone MCP will no longer be required at the project approval stage. As the Project proposal is expected to be lodged with DMPE in late 2025 an MDCP will be prepared in accordance with the new guidelines.

The Golden Lode Mining Development and Closure Proposal (MDCP) will include details to ensure closure has been adequately considered at the mining approval stage. Mine closure aspects arising from the proposed development will be addressed and areas cleared in accordance with this Clearing Permit Application will be identified. Rehabilitation will be conducted in accordance with the MDCP, and if applicable, subsequent MCPs.

4.5 Rehabilitation Concepts

Rehabilitation is defined as the implementation of procedures resulting in the return of an area to a sustainable biological condition such that it does not require ongoing maintenance. The primary objectives for the closure and rehabilitation of the Golden Lode site and infrastructure are outlined below.

These are:

- Ensure risks to public safety are minimised and that the community do not inherit any closure liabilities and site is returned to a condition that will support current land uses.
- Stable topographic conditions are established that will support, a self-sustaining indigenous vegetation community consistent with the Land System and final land use objectives.
- Minimise off site impacts by removing deleterious materials, controlling infiltration, erosion, sedimentation and the degradation of existing drainages.
- Employ rehabilitation methods that are technically effective and cost efficient, rely on standard and proven engineering practices that do not require ongoing maintenance to ensure performance.
- Ensure the protection and conservation during rehabilitation works of any identified elements of the cultural and conservation estate within the mining leases.

Temporary Care and Maintenance: In the event of a Temporary Mine Closure, the transition from operations to Care and Maintenance status will be an orderly and managed process in accordance with the provisions of the approved Plan.

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