



Application for Works Approval

Part V Division 3 of the *Environmental Protection Act 1986*

Works Approval Number	W6591/2021/1
Applicant	Pilbara Iron Company (Services) Pty Ltd
ACN	107 210 248
File number	DER2021/000498
Premises	Paraburdoo Iron Ore Mine and Eastern Range Project Located within Tenements - AML70/246, AML70/4, L47/326, AG70/4 and AG70/14 ROCKLEA WA 6751
Date of report	26 November 2021
Decision	Works approval granted

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MANAGER, RESOURCE INDUSTRIES

an officer delegated under section 20 of the *Environmental Protection Act 1986* (WA)

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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 construction and operation of the premises. As a result of this assessment, works approval W6591/2021/1 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 21 July 2021, the applicant submitted an application for a works approval to the department under section 54 of the *Environmental Protection Act 1986* (EP Act).

The application is to undertake construction and operation of a new wastewater treatment plant (WWTP) and extension of the existing waste dump landfill at the premises (categories 85 and 64 activities). The premises is approximately 6 km north-east of Paraburdoo town.

The existing WWTP system did not trigger the Category 85 volumes and therefore has not been previously licensed. The old system will be decommissioned, and infrastructure removed offsite. The new WWTP will have a footprint of 0.04 ha and a maximum design capacity of 24 kL/day with an actual/expected throughput of 15 kL/day. There are no proposed changes to the existing 0.5 ha spray field. The construction of the new WWTP will be within a previously disturbed area.

The Paraburdoo operations currently disposes of inert and putrescible waste into the licensed Category 64 Waste Dump Landfill. It is proposed to increase the current footprint of the existing Waste Dump landfill to the south-east by 5.3 ha (i.e. increasing from approved 8.9 ha to 14.2 ha) to allow for alignment with a revised waste dump design since the initial submission in 2016. There will be no increase to the design capacity/throughput or types of waste to be accepted. Clearing of 1.7 ha will be required for the extension and will be undertaken under existing approved native vegetation clearing permit CPS 5090.

The premises relates to the categories and assessed design capacity under Schedule 1 of the *Environmental Protection Regulations 1987* (EP Regulations) which are defined in works approval W6591/2021/1. 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 works approval W6591/2021/1.

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 construction / operation which have been considered in this decision report are detailed in Table 1 below. Table 1 also details the control measures the applicant has proposed to assist in controlling these emissions, where necessary.

Table 1: Proposed applicant controls

Emission	Sources	Potential pathways	Proposed controls
Construction			
Dust	Placement of WWTP tanks and associated infrastructure (pipelines etc) Clearing of native vegetation	Air/windborne pathway causing impacts to adjacent native vegetation (sparse)	Dust will be managed via the requirements of the existing Licence L5275/1972/12 and standard operating procedures. Dust suppression will be implemented by use of water trucks and control of vehicle movements/restricted speeds during construction as required. Weather forecast monitored to ensure availability of water cart if risk of windy conditions.
Noise		Air / windborne pathway	Noise will be managed in accordance with <i>Environmental Protection (Noise) Regulations 1997 (WA)</i> .
Commissioning of new WWTP			
Partially treated sewage	WWTP during stabilisation process	Discharge to sprayfield	The WWTP will be filled with water to ensure that effluent discharges are diluted until system stabilization. Fortnightly monitoring of the water quality of the effluent.
Operation of WWTP and landfill extension			
Sewage Partially treated sewage Treated wastewater Treatment chemicals	Containment loss from WWTP and associated pipelines	Overland flow potential causing impacts to adjacent native vegetation (sparse) or surface water quality	Surface water management structures / bunding will ensure any spills are contained. Provision of spill response. Inspections and maintenance of the facility will be undertaken in accordance with manufacturers requirements. Alarm monitoring system to notify of any failures. The WWTP has an inbuilt emergency storage of approximately two days at normal flow to ensure that any problem can be rectified before overflow occurs. Any potential overflow can be diverted to holding tanks to prevent spillage. Standard management procedures are

Emission	Sources	Potential pathways	Proposed controls
			<p>expected to effectively mitigate the risk of sewage emissions.</p> <p>Cumulative volume of all effluent discharges will be recorded monthly.</p> <p>Representative effluent discharge samples will be collected and analysed quarterly.</p>
Treated wastewater	Discharge to the irrigation spray field (0.5 ha).	Overland flow potential causing impacts to adjacent native vegetation (sparse) or surface water quality	<p>The sprayfield is appropriately sized to ensure nutrient (nitrogen and phosphorus) application rates are appropriate for nutrient application criteria for Risk Category C (WQPN 22) and do not exceed targets specified in Australian Guidelines for Sewerage Systems – Effluent Management.</p> <p>The sprinkler system is designed to reduce overlap and maximise evaporation.</p> <p>Location of spray fields separated from major drainage channels.</p> <p>Staff will monitor the facility weekly.</p> <p>Sprinklers at the spray field will be monitored and maintained weekly as part of the weekly WWTP checks.</p> <p>The discharge effluent volumes will be monitored monthly, and water quality parameters quarterly.</p>
Leachate from landfill cell	Rainwater infiltration through landfill	Infiltration through soil Groundwater quality	<p>It will be operated in accordance with conditions 21 - 24 of the current Licence L5275/1972/12.</p> <p>Landfill located more than 100 m from any surface water bodies and at least 3 m higher than the water table within the approved area.</p> <p>Manage stormwater on the waste dump landfill site so that water that has come into contact with waste is to be retained on the site</p>
Dust	Landfill operation	Air/windborne pathway causing impacts to adjacent native vegetation	Existing dust controls as per L5275/1972/12 will continue to be implemented including: Spraying working surfaces with water using water carts
Odour		Air/windborne pathway	<p>Due to the inert nature of the waste material, no odours will be emitted from the waste dump landfill. No other putrescible waste other than wooden pallets will be disposed of.</p> <p>Regular covering of wastes with inert fill will ensure odour emissions do not impact the offsite environment.</p>

Emission	Sources	Potential pathways	Proposed controls
			Operation of landfill will continue in accordance with conditions 21-24 of Licence L5275/1972/12.

The applicant proposed minimum effluent quality performance criteria are listed in Table 3. The proposed nitrogen and phosphorous application to the 0.5 hectare spray field will be below the maximum application rate for Risk Category C listed in Water Quality Protection Note 22: Irrigation with Nutrient-rich Wastewater (DoW 2008). The expected annual nutrient loading for the spray field is 175.2 kg/ha/year.

Table 2 Applicant proposed minimum effluent quality performance criteria

Parameter	Applicant proposed specifications
Total suspended solids	<30 mg/L
Biochemical oxygen demand	<20 mg/L
Total nitrogen	<10 mg/L
Total phosphorous	< 2 mg/L
<i>E.coli</i>	<10 cfu/100mL
Residual free chlorine	>0.5 mg/L
pH	6.5 – 8.5

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 3 and

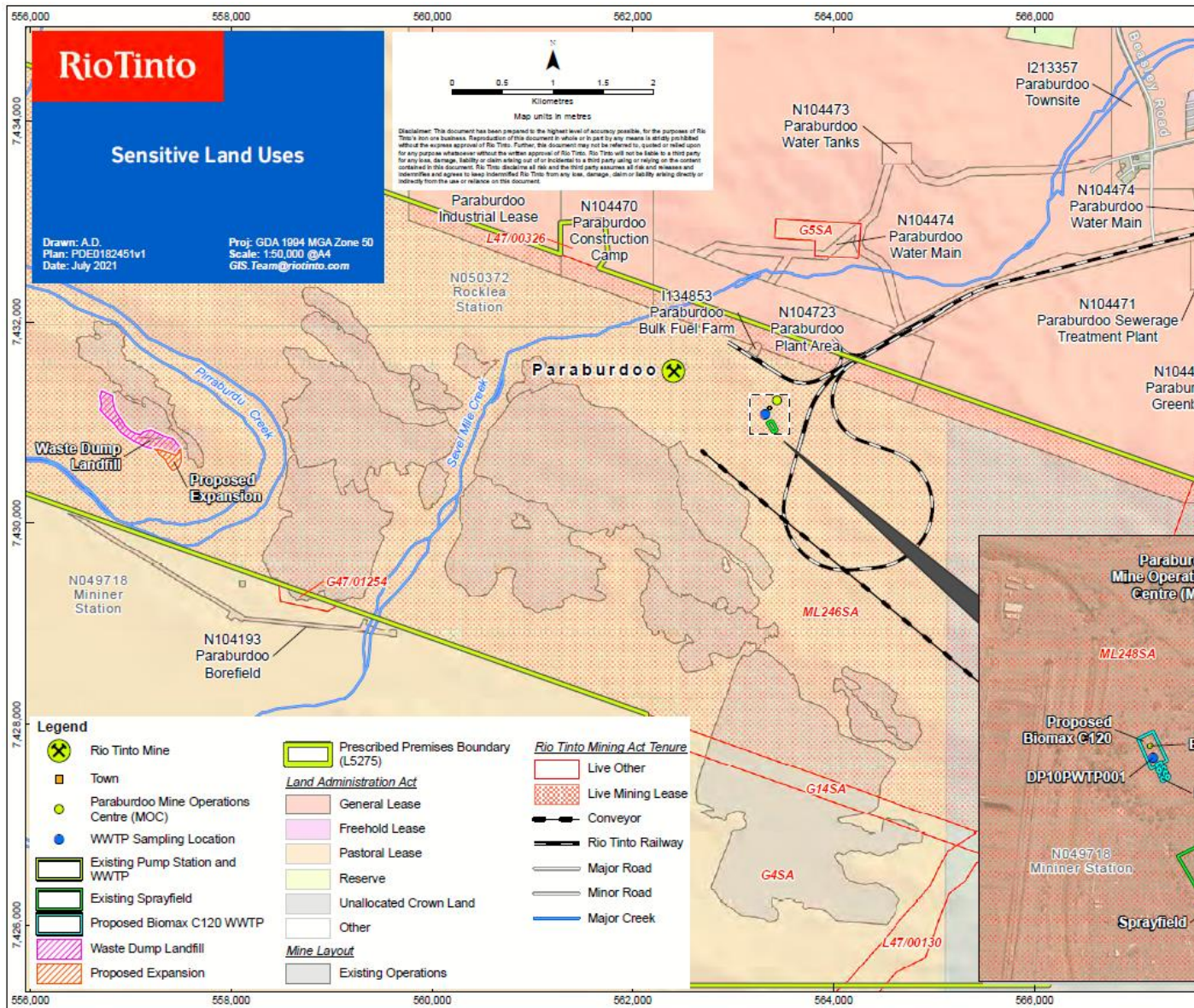


Figure 1 provide a summary of potential human and environmental receptors that may be impacted as a result of activities upon or emission and discharges from the prescribed premises (Guideline: Environmental Siting (DWER 2020)).

Table 3: Sensitive human and environmental receptors and distance from prescribed activity

Human receptors	Distance from prescribed activity
Town of Paraburdo	5 km to the north-east of the WWTP and 10 km to the north-east of the Waste Dump landfill.
Rocklea Pastoral Station	1.2 km to the north-west of the WWTP and 1.5 km to the north of the landfill The Delegated Officer considers it unlikely a risk event for dust or noise emissions will occur as a source pathway receptor linkage does not exist based on the distance from proposed activities. Therefore, this receptor is not further considered in the risk assessment below.

Environmental receptors	Distance from prescribed activity
Aboriginal and other heritage sites	600 m to the south-east of the WWTP and 250 m to the south-east of the landfill.
Paraburdoo Drinking Water Reserve – P1	5.7 km to the north of the WWTP and 11 km north-east of the landfill The Delegated Officer considers it unlikely a risk event will occur as a source pathway receptor linkage does not exist based on the distance from proposed activities. Therefore, this receptor is not further considered in the risk assessment below.
Seven Mile Creek	1.5 km to the north of the WWTP
Pirraburdu Creek	500 m to the south of the Waste Dump Landfill extension area
Reminiscent native vegetation	Adjacent to spray field
Wildlife	Within minesite

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 works approval 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 4.

Works approval W6591/2021/1 that accompanies this decision report authorises construction, commissioning and time-limited operations. The conditions in the issued works approval, as outlined in Table 4 have been determined in accordance with *Guidance Statement: Setting Conditions* (DER 2015).

A licence is required following the time-limited operational phase authorised under the works approval to authorise emissions associated with the ongoing operation of the premises i.e. category 85 activities. A risk assessment for the operational phase has been included in this decision report, however licence conditions will not be finalised until the department assesses the licence application.

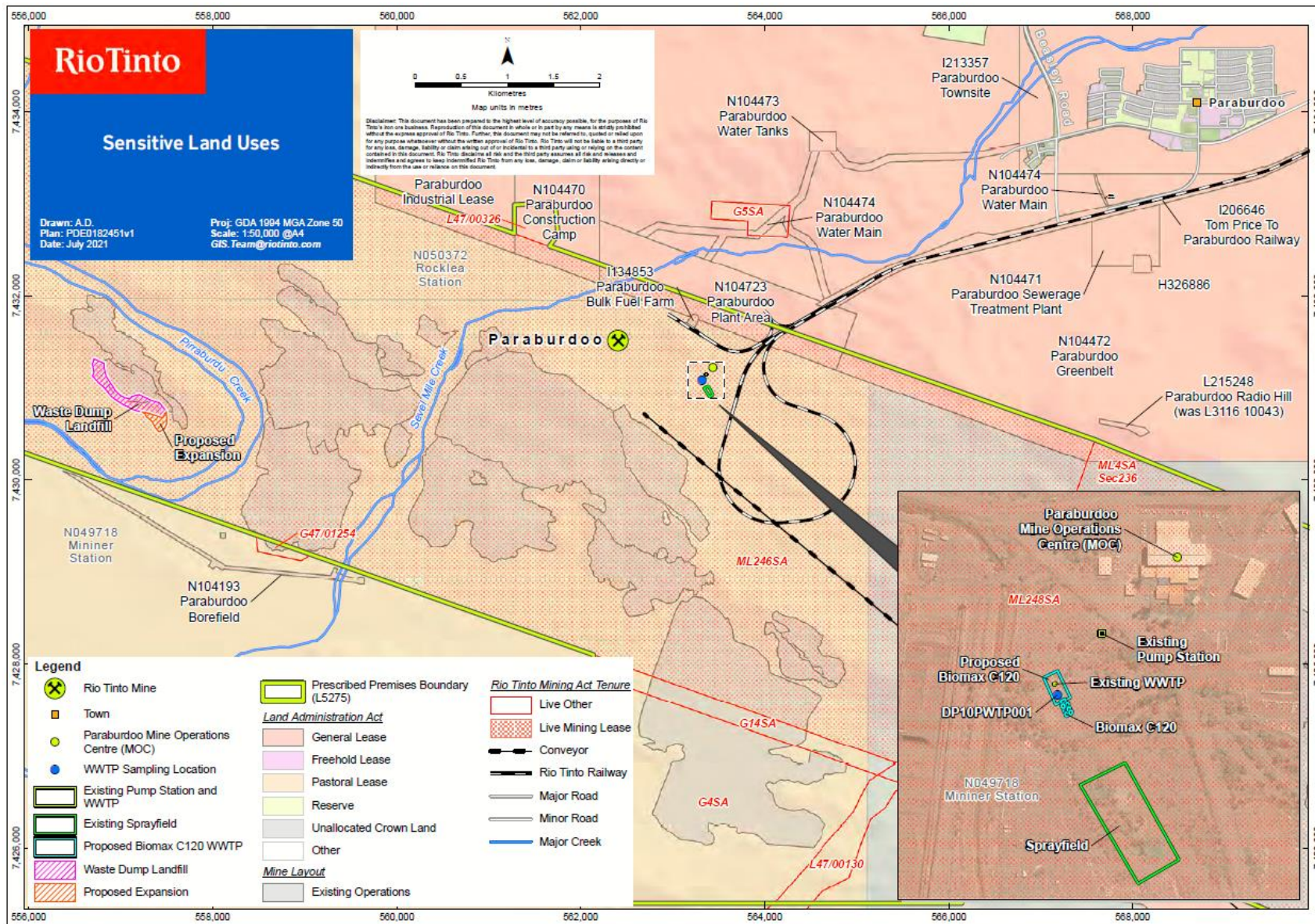


Figure 1: Distance to sensitive receptors

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Table 4: Risk assessment of potential emissions and discharges from the premises during construction, commissioning and time limited operation

Risk events					Risk rating ¹ C = consequence L = likelihood	Applicant controls sufficient?	Conditions ² of works approval	Justification for additional regulatory controls
Sources / activities	Potential emission	Potential pathways and impact	Receptors	Applicant controls				
Construction								
Placement of WWTP tanks and associated infrastructure (pipelines etc)	Dust	Air/windborne pathway causing impacts to adjacent native vegetation	Remaining native vegetation (sparce)	Refer to Section 3.1.1	C = Slight L = Unlikely Low Risk	Y	N/A	N/A
Construction of new Category 64 landfill	Dust	Air / windborne pathway causing impacts to adjacent native vegetation	Adjacent native vegetation	Refer to Section 3.1.1	C = Slight L = Unlikely Low Risk	Y	N/A	N/A
Commissioning and Time Limited Operation								
Containment loss from WWTP and associated pipelines	Sewage	Overland flow causing impacts to adjacent native vegetation or surface water quality	1.5 km to the north of the WWTP Adjacent native vegetation (sparce)	Refer to Section 3.1	C = Slight L = Unlikely Low Risk	Y	<u>Condition 1 – design and installation requirements</u>	N/A
	Partially treated sewage							
	Treated sewage						<u>Condition 5 – commissioning requirements</u>	
Discharge to the irrigation spray field	Treated wastewater	Overland flow potential causing impacts to adjacent native vegetation, wildlife or surface water quality	1.5 km to the north of the WWTP Adjacent native vegetation (sparce) Wildlife	Refer to Section 3.1	C = Minor L = Unlikely Medium Risk	N	<u>Condition 1 – design and installation requirements</u> <u>Condition 5 – commissioning requirements</u> Condition 6 – authorised discharge to spray field	<u>Additional controls added:</u> Condition 7 - Quality controls and NATA accredited laboratory added to applicant proposed monitoring to ensure quality data collected

Risk events					Risk rating ¹ C = consequence L = likelihood	Applicant controls sufficient?	Conditions ² of works approval	Justification for additional regulatory controls
Sources / activities	Potential emission	Potential pathways and impact	Receptors	Applicant controls				
							<u>Condition 7 – monitoring of emissions</u> <u>Condition 15, Table 7 - emissions and discharge monitoring during time limited operations</u>	and reported. Condition 15 requires monthly monitoring during time limited operations, monitoring frequency to be reviewed for ongoing operations
Disposal of class II waste into landfill (expanded footprint)	Leachate	Leachate seepage through base and embankments to soil and groundwater	Underling groundwater	Existing Licence L5275/1972/12 conditions 12,13, 14, 15 and 16 apply				
	Windblown waste	Air/windborne pathway	Adjacent native vegetation and wildlife	Existing Licence L5275/1972/12 conditions 12, 14 and 15 apply				

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 5 provides a summary of the consultation undertaken by the department.

Table 5: Consultation

Consultation method	Comments received	Department response
Application advertised on the department's website on 24 September 2021	None received	N/A
Local Government Authority (Shire of East Pilbara) advised of proposal on 29 September 2021	None received	N/A
Department of Health (DoH) advised of proposal 29 September 2021	DoH replied on 14/10/2021 Refer to Appendix 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Site specific soil evaluation was conducted as per AS/NZS 1547-201. Report submitted as part of the application - The applicant is required to provide a compliance report after commissioning
Applicant was provided with draft documents on 2 November 2021	Comments received on 24 November 2021. Refer to Appendix 1	Refer to Appendix 1

5. Conclusion

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

References

1. Department of Environment Regulation (DER) 2015, *Guidance Statement: Setting Conditions*, Perth, Western Australia.
2. Department of Water and Environmental Regulation (DWER) 2020, *Guideline: Environmental Siting*, Perth, Western Australia.
3. DWER 2020, *Guideline: Risk Assessments*, Perth, Western Australia.
4. Rio Tinto 2021, Application supporting documentation, DWER reference DWERDT481114

Appendix 1: Summary of applicant's comments on risk assessment and draft conditions

Condition	Summary of applicant's comment	Department's response
1	The applicant requested the rewording of the condition to read: WWTP designed to meet the following treated effluent quality.	Condition amended
2, 3 and 17	Administrative	Amended
9 (c)	<p>The applicant requested that the requirement to report on the vegetation health within the irrigation area is removed from Condition 9.</p> <p>It is expected that the vegetation health will fluctuate depending on seasonal variations and times of maximum effluent irrigation.</p> <p>There are no recorded sensitive vegetation species within the spray field area and therefore fluctuating health is not expected to have a significant impact on flora and vegetation in the small spray field area.</p>	Requirement removed
14	<p>The applicant considers this condition a duplication since compliance with conditions of the Works Approval will be assessed and reported in the Time Limited Operations (TLO) report required by Condition 17.</p> <p>The Works Approval application (Part 4, Table 5) stated that these "limits" were "target values" acknowledging that whilst the WWTP will be designed and built to achieve the target values, it is unlikely that the system will operate under optimal conditions at all times.</p>	Condition removed
15 - Table 7	<p>The applicant requested that the column with heading "Limit" in Table 7: Emissions and discharge monitoring during time limited operations is replaced with "Target".</p> <p>The manufacturer's design of the WWTP is intended to meet these target values for treated effluent discharge quality, it is unlikely that these target values will be achieved at all times during the operation of the WWTP. These target values supplied by the manufacturer are only projected to be met under optimal operating and testing conditions, and which are not the usual conditions within the Pilbara region. Given the WWTP and spray field's large distances away from sensitive receptors, these values are deemed overly conservative from an environmental impact and risk</p>	Monitoring requirements will be according to Table 4 given the low volume of effluent to be discharged (24 m ³ /day).

Condition	Summary of applicant's comment	Department's response
	management perspective, particularly given the proposed controls already listed in the draft Works Approval. The use of the word 'limit' specifies that any exceedance (considered probable during TLO) will be required to be reported as a non-compliance. 'Targets' will allow for the expected variability in treated wastewater quality.	
17 (b)	The applicant requested that condition 17(b) is reworded to the following: a summary of monitoring parameter results obtained during time limited operations under condition 16 and comparison of results against previous monitoring results and relevant guidelines.	Condition amended to read: (b) a summary of monitoring results obtained during time limited operations under condition 14.

Appendix 2: Application validation summary

SECTION 1: APPLICATION SUMMARY		
Application type		
Works approval	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Date application received	21 July 2021	
Applicant and Premises details		
Applicant name/s (full legal name/s)	Pilbara Iron Company (Services) Pty Ltd	
Premises name	Paraburdoo Iron Ore Mine	
Premises location	AML70/246, AG70/4, AG70/14, L3116/4589, AML70/4 ROCKLEA WA 6751	
Local Government Authority	SHIRE OF ASHBURTON	
Application documents		
HPCM file reference number:	DWERDT481114	
Key application documents (additional to application form):	Cover Letter Supporting Documents	
Scope of application/assessment		
Summary of proposed activities or changes to existing operations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Addition of Category 85 onto the Licence to allow for the construction and operation of the 24kL/day WWTP at the Paraburdoo MOC; Increase the footprint of the existing approved Category 64 - Waste Dump Landfill by 5.3 ha (no changes to production or design capacity/throughput of the landfill are proposed, currently approved for 2,000 tonnes per annum) 	
Category number/s (activities that cause the premises to become prescribed premises)		
Table 1: Prescribed premises categories		
Prescribed premises category and description	Assessed production or design capacity	Proposed changes to the production or design capacity (amendments only)
Category 85: Sewage facility	N/A	24 kL/day
Legislative context and other approvals		
Has the applicant referred, or do they intend to refer, their proposal to the EPA under Part IV of the EP Act as a significant proposal?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Referral decision No: N/A Managed under Part V <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Assessed under Part IV <input type="checkbox"/>
Does the applicant hold any existing Part IV Ministerial Statements relevant to the application?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Ministerial statement No: N/A EPA Report No: N/A
Has the proposal been referred and/or assessed under the EPBC Act?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	N/A

Has the applicant demonstrated occupancy (proof of occupier status)?	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	Mining lease / tenement <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Has the applicant obtained all relevant planning approvals?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/>	Approval: Expiry date: If N/A explain why? An application with the Shire of Ashburton to construct the WWTP is currently under assessment. The application was lodged 08th June 2021.
Has the applicant applied for, or have an existing EP Act clearing permit in relation to this proposal?	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	CPS No: 5090 Clearing is approved under CPS 5090 and all conditions of this permit will be adhered to.
Has the applicant applied for, or have an existing CAWS Act clearing licence in relation to this proposal?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Application reference No: N/A Licence/permit No: N/A
Has the applicant applied for, or have an existing RIWI Act licence or permit in relation to this proposal?	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	Application reference No: N/A Licence/permit No: GWL109318
Does the proposal involve a discharge of waste into a designated area (as defined in section 57 of the EP Act)?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	N/A
Is the Premises situated in a Public Drinking Water Source Area (PDWSA)?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 5.7 km to the north of the WWTP and 11 km north east of the landfill	Name: Paraburdoo Water Reserve Priority: P1 Are the proposed activities/ landuse compatible with the PDWSA (refer to WQPN 25)? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/> Compatible with DWER's Paraburdoo Water Reserve drinking water source protection plan
Is the Premises subject to any other Acts or subsidiary regulations (e.g. <i>Dangerous Goods Safety Act 2004, Environmental Protection (Controlled Waste) Regulations 2004, State Agreement Act xxx</i>)	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	Mineral Lease ML246SA granted pursuant to the <i>Iron Ore (Hamersley Range) Agreement Act 1968</i>
Is the Premises within an Environmental Protection Policy (EPP) Area?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	N/A

Is the Premises subject to any EPP requirements?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	N/A
Is the Premises a known or suspected contaminated site under the <i>Contaminated Sites Act 2003</i> ?	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	<p>Classification and Date:</p> <p>6661, Rio Tinto Paraburdoo, 1480 Heavy Vehicle Refuelling Area, Mining Lease M246SA (AML70/246). Form 1, Contaminated - restricted use, Jan 31, 2012 8:00 AM</p> <p>8961, Paraburdoo Mine, Locomotive refuelling area (previously referred to as the main train refuelling area), unallocated Crown Land, part of Lot 108 On Plan 220373, WA 6754 . Form 1, Possibly contaminated - investigation required, Apr 9, 2015 8:00 AM</p> <p>6038, Rio Tinto Paraburdoo Bulk Fuel Depot, Lot 140, Mining Lease M246SA (AML70/246). Form 1, Possibly contaminated - investigation required, Apr 16, 2020 8:00 AM</p> <p>11680, Approximate spatial representation of section of Lot 108 on Deposited Plan 220373 and Lot 32 on Deposited Plan 241590 adjacent to Rio Tinto Paraburdoo Bulk Fuel Depot, Incomplete Report, N/A</p>

Appendix 3: DoH comments

Comment	Department's response
There is currently no reference to the number of personnel that will be using the proposed upgraded wastewater treatment plant. Demonstrate that the system is cable to accommodate peak load	Instruments issued under Part V of the EP Act regulate emissions and discharges from prescribed activities. The instrument ensures appropriate design and manages potential impacts to sensitive receptors. Please note that the number of personnel is outside of scope of this assessment.
Specific site and soil evaluation report during the wettest season as per AS/NZS 1547:2012	Impacts from discharges to land are assessed and regulated under the issued works approval.
Provide engineering certification of the performance	Conditions 2 and 3 of the issued works approval require an Environmental Compliance report to be submitted, which includes confirmation of correct construction as per conditions, and certification by a qualified, competent civil or structural engineer.
On-site infrastructure and spray fields need to be designed and maintained to ensure they do not breed mosquitos.	Condition 5 and condition 13 specify that ponding and pooling in the irrigation area must be prevented.
A formal application to the Department of Health for assessment is required.	Applicant notified on 27 October 2021