

Kalgoorlie Miner

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HD **Stratum another source for Norton**
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Stratum Metals, the Brisbane-based **company** developing its East Menzies **gold** project, is emerging as another potential **ore** source for the hungry Paddington mill.

As **Chinese**-owned Norton **Gold** Fields seeks to reach its ambitious goal of doubling annual production to 300,000 ounces by 2017, tiddlers such as one-time market darling Stratum could become part of the picture. Norton, in which **China**'s biggest **gold** producer Zijin **Mining** Group holds an 82 per cent **stake**, has already done deals with the likes of Kalgoorlie-based Phoenix **Gold**.

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The Dianmin Chen-led Norton has also been in discussions about processing options with another neighbour, Excelsior **Gold**, boasting almost 500,000oz of **gold** reserves.

Excelsior is already funded through to the definitive feasibility study phase and looms as another potential target for Norton, which is in the process of a hostile takeover of Bullabulling **Gold**.

In Stratum's case, the **company** is focusing on the Granny Venn and Auntie Nellie open-cut mines near Menzies.

Ore from both mines was processed at Norton's Paddington plant when they were last mined in the early 2000s.

Stratum's strategy is to aim for early **gold** production — possibly as soon as the March quarter next year — via toll treatment.

Any cash flow would be directed towards exploration, where potential has been identified at the Goodenough **gold** mine area and Four O'Clock **gold** target.

The area's potential was highlighted last year during a shaft sampling program, identifying 444 old mine shafts over 11km of strike, including 13 shaft spoil sample sites with average grades of 5g/t.

Stratum, which consolidated the historically prospective region in 2012-13, moved a step closer to the development phase on Tuesday when it announced an entitlement offer to raise \$3.03 **million**. It is the bidding of the **company**'s new board, following a major changing of the guard.

Since October, directors Kent Hunter, Ralph Stagg and Michael Addison have all resigned.

Managing director Martin Holland quit his post in February, but remains non-executive director.

Filling the void has been John Shepherd as a non-executive director, while Duncan Cornish is chief financial officer.

Stratum shares last changed hands for 1.3 cents.

CO cnchg : Bullabulling Gold Limited | nogof : Norton Gold Fields Ltd | sttumm : Stratum Metals Ltd

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