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Mine strikes gold with no sod turned

BY JASON WALLS

BENDIGO has once again produced gold after a five-year hiatus, albeit without a sod being turned.

GBM Gold this week produced a 62 ounce (1.94kg) gold doré bar following clean up works at its Bendigo Goldfield site after completing a takeover in May.

The gold was left behind in the previous mine operator's processing plant and GBM chief executive officer John Harrison estimated its value at about \$100,000.

"That's purely from cleaning up the machines in the mill," he said.

"The gold can be hung up in the machine and pulling the tops off and sweeping them out gives you more gold."

The company will now move on to washing sand in its Kangaroo Flat Sand Dam, which Mr Harrison predicted could yield a further 7000 ounces of gold, with the waste sand then on sold to the construction industry for use in concrete production.

But while he stressed GBM was committed to actively working the mine, Mr Harri-

son said any actual digging would be some way off.

"We estimate there's up to 7000 ounces in the sand dam and that will be starting next year and we'll also be looking at the underground potential of Bendigo," he said.

"But we just got in place and we've got to go through the data and where there are potential areas and work up a plan from there, and that will take more than 12 months, a lot more."

Monash University environmental engineering head, Gavin Mudd, played down the significance of the gold produced so far, but said GBM appeared to be heading in the right direction.

"That's not that much gold given the cost of cleanup, it wouldn't even be coming close to the cost of cleaning out the mill but it had to be done," he said.

"The most significant thing is treating the tailings and getting that out of there.

"Pretty much anywhere in Bendigo you've always got a lot of residences and things like that around the area, so making sure the tailings are finally addressed, they're finally rehabilitated

and that area is cleaned up, that's a big step and is certainly something that should be welcomed."

- with Joseph Hinchliffe