

BHP BILLITON PLC
Form 6-K
March 02, 2004

SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE COMMISSION

Washington, D.C. 20549

FORM 6-K

REPORT OF FOREIGN ISSUER

PURSUANT TO RULE 13a-16 OR 15d-16 OF

THE SECURITIES EXCHANGE ACT OF 1934

For the Date of

5 February 2004

BHP Billiton Plc

Registration Number 3196209

Neathouse Place

London SW1V 1BH

United Kingdom

Indicate by check mark whether the registrant files or will file annual reports under cover of Form 20-F or Form 40-F.

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|-----------|-------------------------------------|--|-----------|--------------------------|
| Form 20-F | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | | Form 40-F | <input type="checkbox"/> |
|-----------|-------------------------------------|--|-----------|--------------------------|

Indicate by check mark whether the registrant by furnishing the information contained in this Form is also thereby furnishing the information to the Commission pursuant to Rule 12g3-2(b) under the Securities Exchange Act of 1934

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|-----|--------------------------|--|----|-------------------------------------|
| Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> | | No | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
|-----|--------------------------|--|----|-------------------------------------|

If "Yes" is marked, indicate below the file number assigned to the registrant in connection with Rule 12g3-2(b):

Date 5 February 2004

Number 07/04

**BHP BILLITON APPROVES IRON ORE CAPACITY
EXPANSION PROJECT**

BHP Billiton today announced the approval of a significant brownfields expansion project in its Western Australian iron ore business.

Capacity at the Pilbara iron ore operations will be increased from 100 million tonnes per annum (Mtpa) to 110Mtpa by the end of CY2004. The capital cost for the project is expected to be US\$111 million (BHPB share US\$94.5 million).

President Carbon Steel Materials Bob Kirkby said: "BHP Billiton is currently completing studies for further long term expansions of its Western Australian iron ore business.

"In the interim, this project will ensure that BHP Billiton continues to meet the unprecedented rate of growth in demand for iron ore through a timely and capital efficient expansion," he said.

The BHP Billiton Iron Ore Rapid Growth Project will be completed on the back of infrastructure and equipment installed as part of the Area C and PACE projects and includes increased Area C plant capacity to 23Mtpa plus additional rail and port capacity.

Further information on BHP Billiton can be found on our Internet site: <http://www.bhpbilliton.com>

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BHP Billiton Limited ABN 49 004 028 077

Registered in Australia
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BHP Billiton Plc Registration number 3196209

Registered in England and Wales
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Telephone +44 20 7802 4000 Facsimile +44 20 7802 4111

The BHP Billiton Group is headquartered in Australia

SIGNATURES

Pursuant to the requirements of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934, the registrant has duly caused this report to be signed on its behalf by the undersigned, thereunto duly authorized.

BHP BILLITON

Plc
/s/ KAREN WOOD

Karen Wood
Title: Company Secretary
Date:

5 February 2004