

## 5. CONSULTATION AND ENGAGEMENT

### 5.1 OVERVIEW

In accordance with section 29 (1)(a) and (b), Schedule 5 (clause 6 (1)(e)), Schedule 6 (clause 3 (1)(k)), Schedule 7 (clause 2 (1)(n)), Schedule 8 (clause 2 (1)(i)) and Schedule 11 (clause 3 (e)(v)) of the Act, this section provides details of the consultation and engagement undertaken by OGNZL with relevant administering authorities, iwi and other stakeholders.

Section 1.6 of this report identifies OGNZL's approach to consultation and engagement. OGNZL initiated consultation with members of the public and key stakeholders on the various elements of the project in July 2020, which has allowed for over four years of consultation with key stakeholders and the wider community. Less formal engagement with iwi and councils and other regulators began much earlier, around 2017 / 2018. OGNZL's intention was to initiate consultation early, whilst technical assessments were still being scoped and prepared, to allow adequate time for stakeholder concerns to be accounted for.

An important feature of the consultation programme for the WNP was respecting OGNZL's well established positive working relationships with key stakeholders. Ever since modern mining commenced at Waihi in 1987, OGNZL and its predecessors have maintained active and transparent engagement with their stakeholders. These existing relationships have provided a solid platform for understanding and respecting diverse viewpoints and have been vital in ensuring community input has contributed to the project's proposed design.

A key element of the engagement process has been the development, and use, of an animation prepared by visualisation experts Truescape. OGNZL engaged Truescape to develop an animation that succinctly illustrates and explains the WNP. The result is available for viewing on the WNP Website: <https://www.waihinorth.info/>. This project animation has been a crucial tool for concisely communicating what is a large and complex proposal. The animation is available on the WNP website, on OGNZL Waihi's Facebook page, in the Project Information Office, as well as on YouTube. The animation has also been shared with stakeholders during project tours and open days.

A summary of the key concerns raised during consultation, as outlined in full in the Consultation Report provided in **Part B** to these application documents, are outlined in the sections below.



## **5.2 LOCAL AND ADMINISTERING AUTHORITIES**

### **5.2.1 Overview**

Section 29 of the Act requires applicants for substantive applications to consult with the applicable local and administering authorities prior to lodging an application with the EPA. In the case of the WNP, the applicable local and administering authorities are:

- > Waikato Regional Council;
- > Hauraki District Council;
- > Thames Coromandel District Council;
- > Department of Conservation;
- > Ministry for Culture & Heritage and Heritage New Zealand Pouhere Taonga;
- > Ministry for the Environment; and
- > Ministry of Business, Innovation & Employment.

Details of the consultation with these parties is provided in the sub sections below.

### **5.2.2 Waikato Regional Council**

OGNZL recognises the importance of designing the WNP in a way that promotes the protection, preservation, conservation and enhancement of air, water, soil and ecosystems, as well as the natural character of Waihi, Wharekirauponga and the surrounding areas. To achieve this, it was paramount that the WRC was kept informed on the WNP development from the outset.

OGNZL has a longstanding and established working relationship with the WRC's Principal Advisor for Consents, and since the announcement of the project, weekly informal meetings have been held providing updates on the status of project development and technical assessments. WRC's Principal Advisor for Consents has also acted as a conduit to other representatives at WRC on issues and initiatives that pertain to them. This has resulted in several site visits and meetings with relevant WRC technical experts on topics including water, biodiversity, air quality and wetlands.

Where possible OGNZL has given WRC the opportunity to review and make comment on the relevant draft technical assessments prepared for the WNP, including providing the proposed draft conditions for the project to the WRC in early 2025. The review comments from WRC have been considered and, where possible, responded to prior to the lodging of this substantive application.



WRC has also provided guidance and advice to OGNZL on their expectation for adequate community and iwi engagement for the project, citing the need for project decision making to be informed by stakeholder engagement.

Significant engagement has been had with WRC throughout the preparation of the previously lodged (2022) application for the WNP that is being superseded by this substantive application, including the review of technical assessments by the Council's independent experts, and a thorough further information request process. In early 2025, OGNZL provided draft proposed conditions to WRC for consideration.

OGNZL provided formal written notice to WRC on 17 February 2025 of OGNZL's intention to apply for all approvals necessary to authorise the WNP under the Act (a copy of which is provided in **Part F** to these application documents). This letter included a request for written notice from WRC that there are no existing consents to which 124C(1)(c) or 165ZI of the RMA would apply if the WNP were to be applied for as a resource consent under the RMA (as per Section 30(3) of the Act).

Written notice was provided by WRC on 27 February 2025, confirming that there are no existing consents to which 124C(1)(c) or 165ZI of the RMA would apply (provided in **Part F** to these application documents).

### **5.2.3 Hauraki District Council**

OGNZL recognises the importance of working with the local community to create opportunities, build resilience and leave a positive, long-lasting legacy well beyond the mining lifecycle. To achieve this, it was paramount that the HDC (as the consent authority, a relevant landowner and a roading authority) was involved with project development from the outset.

OGNZL has a long-standing and established working relationship with HDC representatives and has endeavoured to keep these communication channels open throughout the pre-lodgement consultation period. Weekly consenting progress meetings with HDC's Senior Project Planner have been held since the June 2021 announcement of the WNP, and prior to that there had been regular engagement on Project Quattro and the Wharekirauponga Exploration Tunnel Project. Other meetings and formal engagement have also taken place on the project, including a number of presentations at Council Meetings, updates to the Chief Executive Officer, and several site visits.

HDC representatives have acknowledged the significant role mining plays in the economic and social wellbeing of the region but have been clear in the need for the Council to weigh these effects against any potential adverse negative effects associated with the project. In response to this, where possible OGNZL has given HDC the opportunity to review and make



comment on the relevant draft technical assessments prepared for the WNP prior to their lodgment. The review comments from HDC have been considered and where possible addressed prior to the lodging of the substantive application.

HDC has also provided guidance and advice to OGNZL on their expectation for adequate community and iwi engagement for the project, citing the need for project decision making to be informed by stakeholder engagement.

The WNP interacts with a number of formed and unformed roads under the authority of HDC. OGNZL has discussed how to best address these interactions with HDC. With regard to the unformed roads, HDC has consistently advised that it is paramount that continued access and ability to use these is maintained for the public. This has been taken into account and provided for in the project and ancillary transactions, for example the LTO parts of the HDC road reserve within the Coromandel Forest Park approved in September 2021, subject to consents for the project being granted.

Significant engagement has been had with HDC throughout the preparation of the previously lodged (2022) application for the WNP that is being superseded by this substantive application, including the review of technical assessments by the Council's independent experts, and a thorough further information request process. In early 2025, OGNZL provided draft proposed conditions to HDC for consideration.

OGNZL provided written notice to HDC on 17 February 2025 of OGNZL's intention to apply for all approvals necessary to authorise the WNP under the Act (a copy of which is provided in **Part F** to these application documents). This letter included a request for written notice from HDC that there are no existing consents to which 124C(1)(c) or 165ZI of the RMA would apply if the WNP were to be applied for as a resource consent under the RMA (as per Section 30(3) of the Act).

Written notice was provided by HDC on 26 February 2025, confirming that there are no existing consents to which 124C(1)(c) or 165ZI of the RMA would apply (provided in **Part F** to these application documents).

#### **5.2.4 Thames Coromandel District Council**

OGNZL provided written notice to TCDC on 19 February 2025 of OGNZL's intention to apply for all approvals necessary to authorise the WNP under the Act (a copy of which is provided in **Part F** to these application documents), together with an overview of the limited activities (environmental monitoring) proposed to take place within TCDC's jurisdiction.

This letter was followed up with a meeting on 24 February 2025, between OGNZL and TCDC. During the meeting, additional information on the proposed activities was shared, with a



particular focus on the methodology for installing and monitoring two piezometers, which are proposed to serve as groundwater monitoring 'control sites' for the project.

Subsequently, the proposed conditions for the project that relate to the activities in the TCDC area were provided to the council for consideration. This letter included a request for written notice from TCDC that there are no existing consents to which 124C(1)(c) or 165ZI of the RMA would apply if the WNP were to be applied for as a resource consent under the RMA (as per Section 30(3) of the Act).

Written notice was provided by TCDC on 3 March 2025, confirming that there are no existing consents to which 124C(1)(c) or 165ZI of the RMA would apply (provided in **Part F** to these application documents).

### **5.2.5 Department of Conservation**

OGNZL has sought to be open and transparent with the Department of Conservation with respect to its intentions to apply for the necessary authorisations to develop an underground mine at Wharekirauponga and to construct the related infrastructure to support this.

As the Wharekirauponga mineral exploration programme is located on land administered by the Department of Conservation, since December 2016 OGNZL has operated under an Access Arrangement and associated annual Authority to Enter and Operate (“**AEO**”) for exploration activities at Wharekirauponga. Throughout the undertaking of these exploration activities OGNZL has worked with the Department of Conservation to ensure that all activities including drilling work within the current Wharekirauponga Access Arrangement<sup>54</sup> area have been undertaken in a manner that is protective of conservation and recreation values (biodiversity and amenity), as reflected in the current access arrangement conditions. OGNZL has demonstrated a commitment to applying these same conditions throughout the development of the technical studies required to support the substantive application for the WNP.

The engagement undertaken by OGNZL with the Department of Conservation for the WNP initiated as engagement in relation to Project Quattro, in June 2020, which then transitioned into engagement for the WNP. Monthly engagement meetings with the Department of Conservation planning staff have occurred since December 2020 to provide regular progress updates and information such as the Truescape animation and project overview materials, whilst also providing the opportunity for the exchange of views.

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<sup>54</sup> Noting that OGNZL are seeking to replace this access arrangement with a new access arrangement as part of this substantive application.



Since the June 2021 announcement of the WNP, the Department of Conservation has visited OGNZL's Waihi Operations on a number of occasions. For example, in October 2021 the Department of Conservation attended a site visit focused on tailings storage and underground activities. This has provided the opportunity for the Department of Conservation to see and hear first-hand how OGNZL plans to develop and implement the WNP. OGNZL has also hosted the Waikato Conservation Board and the Department of Conservation representatives on site in 2022 providing a project overview and site visit of the Waihi operation.

Further, OGNZL has provided the Department of Conservation with draft technical reports and offered direct engagement between technical experts on topics of interest.

Throughout this engagement, the Department of Conservation has communicated and reiterated to OGNZL that the project must account for, and safeguard, the cultural, social, recreational, and environmental values of Wharekirauponga and the surrounding area.

OGNZL provided written notice to the Department of Conservation on 18 February 2025 of its intention to apply for all approvals necessary to authorise the WNP under the Act (a copy of which is provided in **Part F** to these application documents).

The Department of Consultation will be involved in the fast-track approvals process at several points post lodgment of the substantive application, including:

- > The EPA's completeness assessment (section 46 (1) of the Act) and subsequent functions in the processing of the substantive application (section 90 of the Act);
- > The Convener's decision to fix any non-default time frame for the issue of the Panel's decision documents (section 79 (2) (c) of the Act);
- > Reports for the Panel as specified in the Act (section 51 of the Act) or that the Panel considers necessary (section 67 of the FTAA);
- > Comments on the substantive application (section 53 (2) of the Act); and
- > Comments on conditions (section 70 of the Act).

OGNZL offered the the Department of Conservation an additional opportunity to receive a briefing on the WNP prior to the lodgement of the substantive application. This invitation was accepted and OGNZL provided a briefing to the Department of Conservation on 25 February 2025.

OGNZL also provided a notice of request for grant of right of access to the Department of Conservation (and the Ministry of Business, Innovation & Employment) on 28 February 2025 (a copy of which is provided in **Part F** to these application documents).



### 5.2.6 Ministry for Culture and Heritage and Heritage New Zealand Pouhere Taonga

OGNZL engaged with HNZPT to provide an overview of the WNP, which included a meeting at the HNZPT Auckland office in January 2025. Clough (2025) was provided to HNZPT (in draft) prior to the meeting.

Additionally, an archaeological authority application for the proposed Willows SFA has recently been granted outside of the fast-track process (reference number 2025/359).

OGNZL provided written notice to the Ministry for Cultural and Heritage and HNZPT on 18 February 2025 of its intention to apply for all approvals necessary to authorise the WNP under the Act (a copy of which is provided in **Part F** to these application documents).

The Ministry for Culture and Heritage and HNZPT will be involved in the fast-track approvals process at several points post lodgement of the substantive application, including:

- > The EPA's completeness assessment (section 46 (1) of the Act) and subsequent functions in the processing of the substantive application (section 90 of the Act);
- > The Convener's decision to fix any non-default time frame for the issue of the Panel's decision documents (section 79 (2) (c) of the Act);
- > Reports for the Panel as specified in the Act (section 51 of the Act) or that the Panel considers necessary (section 67 of the FTAA);
- > Comments on the substantive application (section 53 (2) of the Act); and
- > Comments on conditions (section 70 of the Act).

OGNZL offered the Ministry for Culture and Heritage and HNZPT the opportunity to receive a briefing on the WNP prior to the lodgement of the substantive application. This offer has not yet been accepted, however should the Ministry for Culture and Heritage and HNZPT wish to have a briefing post lodgment, OGNZL are happy for this to be arranged.

### 5.2.7 Ministry for the Environment

OGNZL provided written notice to the Ministry for the Environment on 18 February 2025 of its intention to apply for all approvals necessary to authorise the WNP under the Act (a copy of which is provided in **Part F** to these application documents).

The Ministry for the Environment will be involved in the fast-track approvals process at several points post lodgement of the substantive application, including:

- > The EPA's completeness assessment (section 46 (1) of the Act) and subsequent functions in the processing of the substantive application (section 90 of the Act);



- > The Convener’s decision to fix any non-default time frame for the issue of the Panel’s decision documents (section 79 (2) (c) of the Act);
- > Reports for the Panel as specified in the Act (section 51 of the Act) or that the Panel considers necessary (section 67 of the FTAA);
- > Comments on the substantive application (section 53 (2) of the Act); and
- > Comments on conditions (section 70 of the Act).

OGNZL offered the Ministry for the Environment the opportunity to receive a briefing on the WNP prior to the lodgement of the substantive application. This offer has not yet been accepted, however should the Ministry for the Environment wish to have a briefing post lodgment, OGNZL are happy for this to be arranged.

### **5.2.8 Ministry of Business, Innovation & Employment**

There has been periodic engagement on the project with the Ministry of Business, Innovation & Employment through the various NZ Petroleum & Minerals regulatory teams, including the Annual Review Meeting process where this application was discussed.

OGNZL provided written notice to the Ministry of Business, Innovation & Employment on 18 February 2025 of its intention to apply for all approvals necessary to authorise the WNP under the Act (a copy of which is provided in **Part F** to these application documents).

The Ministry of Business, Innovation & Employment will be involved in the fast-track approvals process at several points post lodgement of the substantive application, including:

- > The EPA’s completeness assessment (section 46 (1) of the Act) and subsequent functions in the processing of the substantive application (section 90 of the Act);
- > The Convener’s decision to fix any non-default time frame for the issue of the Panel’s decision documents (section 79 (2) (c) of the Act);
- > Reports for the Panel as specified in the Act (section 51 of the Act) or that the Panel considers necessary (section 67 of the FTAA);
- > Comments on the substantive application (section 53 (2) of the Act); and
- > Comments on conditions (section 70 of the Act).

OGNZL also offered the Ministry of Business, Innovation & Employment the opportunity to receive a briefing on the WNP prior to the lodgement of the substantive application. This invitation was accepted and OGNZL provided a briefing to the Ministry of Business, Innovation & Employment on 25 February 2025.





OGNZL also provided a notice of request for grant of right of access to the Ministry of Business, Innovation & Employment (and the Department of Conservation) on 28 February 2025 (a copy of which is provided in **Part F** to these application documents).

## **5.3 ENGAGEMENT WITH TANGATA WHENUA**

### **5.3.1 Overview**

OGNZL respects the traditions and cultures of local iwi and hapu and recognises the unique relationship that Māori have with their ancestral land, water, sites, wahi tapu and other taonga. Since 2019, OGNZL has sought on-going meaningful engagement with iwi to discuss their concerns and aspirations for the WNP. Specifically, OGNZL has engaged with the following iwi groups, which stated an association with the project area:

- > Ngaati Whanaunga;
- > Ngāi Tai ki Tāmaki;
- > Ngāti Hako;
- > Ngāti Hei;
- > Ngāti Maru;
- > Ngāti Porou ki Hauraki;
- > Ngāti Pū;
- > Ngāti Rahiri Tumutumu;
- > Ngāti Tamaterā; and
- > Ngāti Tara Tokanui / Ngāti Koi.

OGNZL has offered support and resourcing to each of the above iwi groups to prepare a CVA and / or CIA for the project, which would assist OGNZL in ensuring that Māori cultural values and interests, and the potential impacts of the WNP on these, are appropriately addressed.

There have been varying responses from iwi as to their interest in undertaking these assessments. A brief summary of these is outlined for each iwi below. In most cases, iwi have reserved their right to defer commenting or taking a position on the project until they, or another iwi group they have recognised as having authority over specific matters, have completed a robust CIA.

It is noted that, in accordance with section 53 (2)(b) and (c) of the Act, relevant iwi authorities and Treaty settlement entities have the opportunity to provide written comments on the substantive application, once it has been received by the Panel.



### **5.3.2 Ngaati Whanaunga**

From the outset of engagement, Ngaati Whanaunga advised that they reserve their position on the proposal until they had adequate time to complete a CIA. In April 2022, Ngaati Whanaunga provided a letter outlining the engagement they have had with OGNZL in respect of the WNP.

In November 2022, Ngaati Whanaunga submitted a CIA to OGNZL. The CIA describes Ngaati Whanaunga's history, cultural values, interests, and associations with the project area, provides an assessment as to how the proposed activities may influence these values, and suggests recommendations for avoiding, remedying, or mitigating identified cultural effects.

At the time of writing, Ngaati Whanaunga has expressed no objection to the lodgment of the consent applications, and requests that the CIA be confidential to OGNZL. However, OGNZL's interpretation of the key findings of the assessment is included in the assessment of cultural effects set out in Section 6.2 of this report.

### **5.3.3 Ngāi Tai ki Tāmaki**

Prior to the WNP, OGNZL did not have an established relationship with Ngāi Tai ki Tāmaki. In May 2022, following advice from a consenting authority, OGNZL contacted Ngāi Tai ki Tāmaki to provide an overview of the project, and to seek clarity on what Ngāi Tai ki Tāmaki interests are in the proposed project area, if any.

Ngāi Tai ki Tāmaki advised that the WNP is outside their immediate area of interest and that they would put support behind local iwi who are closer to the rohe. It is OGNZL's understanding that this position remains unchanged.

### **5.3.4 Ngāti Hako**

Ngāti Hako has a long-standing relationship with OGNZL's Waihi operations and is currently working with the OGNZL on a number of initiatives that came out of mediation for the approvals of the Correnso resource consents. These include the Iwi Advisory Group, Cultural Awareness Training, and the Cultural Balance Plan.

Initially, Ngāti Hako advised that, given this long-term relationship, OGNZL should have a comprehensive understanding of Ngāti Hako's interests and values, and declined to undertake a CIA.

Following further consultation, Ngāti Hako expressed interest in undertaking a CIA for the Wharekirauponga Underground Mine element of the project, advising their position on the other, more Waihi centric elements, had already been identified through their previous CIAs (for other OGNZL projects). When the resource consents for the project were lodged in 2022



(now being superseded by this substantive application), Ngāti Hako expressed no objection to the lodgement of the resource consent applications, contingent on being given the opportunity to undertake a cultural assessment prior to any hearings.

Subsequently, in August 2022 Ngāti Hako submitted a proposal to OGNZL, outlining their proposed CIA process, which was endorsed by OGNZL.

At the time of writing this report, all draft technical assessments and draft consent conditions have been provided to Ngāti Hako. Ngāti Hako have indicated that their cultural assessment is largely complete, but has however, requested additional time to consider the Fast-Track proposal and to integrate these considerations into its assessment before submitting it to OGNZL for review (which at time of writing has yet to be completed).

OGNZL continues to engage with Ngāti Hako and is committed to providing the necessary information, and resourcing, to support the completion of the cultural assessment. In the meantime, informal feedback received from Ngāti Hako is included in the assessment of cultural effects set out in Section 6.2 of this report.

#### **5.3.5 Ngāti Hei**

After initially advising that the WNP was south of their rohe, in December 2021 Ngāti Hei advised that they had recently re-reviewed the project information provided and advised that there is a Ngāti Hei interest in the Wharekirauponga area.

Ngāti Hei confirmed with OGNZL that they would like to undertake a CVA for the project and provided a letter not objecting to the lodgement and notification of the 2022 WNP resource consent application under the traditional RMA process (contingent on them having the opportunity to complete this assessment).

There has been no further meaningful engagement since this time, although that OGNZL has made regular contact and has offered support and resourcing to assist with the completion of the assessment.

OGNZL recognises that Ngāti Hei is likely to have several other commitments and kaupapa which put pressure on capacity, and that the project may not necessarily be a priority for them. OGNZL will continue to offer up opportunities for Ngāti Hei to engage further on the project.

#### **5.3.6 Ngāti Maru**

Ngāti Maru initially advised OGNZL that the project falls within the rohe of Ngāti Maru's hapū, Ngāti Pū, as well as Ngāti Tamatera. Ngāti Maru deferred to these groups to identify any potential cultural impacts associated with the project.



Subsequently, Ngāti Maru expressed an interest in reviewing the effects assessments for the project to gain a clearer understanding of the WNP, its potential impacts and opportunities. Further to this, several site visits have been conducted by Ngāti Maru representatives to continue developing an understanding of OGNZL's existing Waihi operations, as well as the project.

Although Ngāti Maru continue to defer to Ngāti Pū and Ngāti Tamaterā for a thorough assessment of the cultural impacts, they have made it clear that this does not constitute a proxy approval from Ngāti Maru for the project. Ngāti Maru has also expressed their strong connection to Tikapa Moana (the Hauraki Gulf) and emphasised the need to for the project to consider any potential adverse effects on the Ohinemuri River, which flows into the Waihou River near Paeroa and ultimately into Tikapa Moana.

### **5.3.7 Ngāti Porou ki Hauraki**

The relationship between Ngāti Porou ki Hauraki and OGNZL is relatively new, and was developed, formalised and documented through the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding in mid-2021.

Following the formalisation of this relationship, Ngāti Porou ki Hauraki confirmed their interest in undertaking a CIA and gave support for the lodgement and notification of the 2022 WNP resource consent application made under the traditional RMA process (contingent on them being given the opportunity to undertake this assessment prior to any hearings).

Following this, OGNZL shared the technical assessments for the project, together with the 2022 resource consent application and assessment of environmental effects, with Ngāti Porou ki Hauraki.

In December 2022, Ngāti Porou ki Hauraki informed OGNZL that they wished to terminate the Memorandum of Understanding and will no longer be completing a CIA or engaging with OGNZL further. Ngāti Porou ki Hauraki advised that they would participate in the formal legal and approvals feedback processes available. Ngāti Porou ki Hauraki representatives cited concerns over (their perception of) OGNZL's lack of openness and transparency regarding the project and its potential impacts, as the reason for this decision. While OGNZL does not consider it has acted in a manner without transparency, it acknowledges the decision to end the Memorandum of Understanding and has been respectful of the determination by Ngāti Porou ki Hauraki not to engage further.



It is OGNZL's understanding, confirmed by the MfE in their assessment for listing of the WNP<sup>55</sup>, that Ngāti Porou ki Hauraki's formal interests do not include the area of the WNP.

### **5.3.8 Ngāti Pū**

OGNZL, and its predecessors, have had a long-term and enduring relationship with Ngāti Pū, beginning at the early stages of exploration in Wharekīraponga, and focused on ensuring that mining activity is conducted in a way that maintains the biodiversity value of the Wharekīraponga area/wāhi.

Ngāti Pū expressed support for the lodgment and notification of the 2022 WNP resource consent application contingent on Ngāti Pū having the opportunity to complete their CIA prior to any hearings. This CIA has been delayed owing to unforeseen circumstances, but continues to be progressed, with a recent site visit conducted and several hui held with the OGNZL on the topic in early 2025.

OGNZL anticipates the completion of a draft assessment from Ngāti Pū in 2025 and will address any additional concerns not yet raised or resolved through other processes, at that time.

### **5.3.9 Ngāti Rahiri Tumutumu**

Prior to 2022, OGNZL did not have a relationship with Ngāti Rahiri Tumutumu. In May 2022, following advice from a consent authority and New Zealand Petroleum and Minerals, OGNZL contacted Ngāti Rahiri Tumutumu to provide an overview of the project and to seek clarity on any interests in the WNP area. Following an initial meeting, a site visit was attended by a Ngāti Rahiri Tumutumu representative.

During these interactions Ngāti Rahiri Tumutumu advised that they have cultural rights and interests throughout the Hauraki and that, whilst they have a special interest within the area of Te Aroha, these rights and interests also extend to Waihi and further afield.

Ngāti Rahiri Tumutumu confirmed that they would like to undertake a CVA for the WNP. It is anticipated that the CVA will outline the Ngāti Rahiri Tumutumu interests and associations with the Hauraki area so that these can be fully understood by the OGNZL. It is OGNZL's understanding that, with respect to identifying the potential cultural impacts associated

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<sup>55</sup> FTA211 - Waihi North Project (WNP) - MfE assessment form Stage 1

[https://environment.govt.nz/assets/what-government-is-doing/Fast-track-listed/Waihi-North-Project-WNP/211.04-FTA211-Waihi-North-Project-Sch-2A-MfE-assessment-form-Stage-1\\_Redacted.pdf](https://environment.govt.nz/assets/what-government-is-doing/Fast-track-listed/Waihi-North-Project-WNP/211.04-FTA211-Waihi-North-Project-Sch-2A-MfE-assessment-form-Stage-1_Redacted.pdf)



with the project, Ngāti Rahiri Tumutumu will defer to other iwi with a closer connection to the rohe.

As of the time of writing, this CVA has not yet progressed. However, OGNZL remains committed to understanding Ngāti Rahiri Tumutumu's broader cultural interests and associations with the Hauraki area, should they still wish to engage with OGNZL.

#### **5.3.10 Ngāti Tamaterā**

At the outset of engagement on the project, Ngāti Tamaterā advised that they reserve their position on the WNP until they had adequate time to complete a CIA. Ngāti Tamaterā provided support for the lodgement and notification of the 2022 WNP resource consent application, while acknowledging that they were reviewing the relevant technical assessments associated with the project required to inform the impact assessment portion of the CIA.

Since that time, OGNZL has shared the WNP technical assessments and draft conditions with Ngāti Tamaterā and has been available for regular meetings to discuss the findings of these assessments. OGNZL also responded to a request for further information submitted by Ngāti Tamaterā seeking clarity on several matters related to the technical assessments.

In June 2023, Ngāti Tamaterā provided a CIA to OGNZL. Since this time, the Ngāti Tamaterā Treaty Settlement Trust has chosen to make further updates to the report in light of the proposed Fast-Track application. OGNZL has provided further information and resourcing in respect to this, and expects to receive an updated assessment in 2025.

At this time, Ngāti Tamaterā has elected to keep the initially delivered CIA confidential. However, OGNZL's interpretation of the key findings of that assessment is included in the assessment of cultural effects set out in Section 6.2 of this report.

#### **5.3.11 Ngāti Tara Tokanui / Ngāti Koi**

In late 2021, OGNZL and Ngāti Tara Tokanui / Ngāti Koi developed, formalised and documented their relationship. This has provided a solid platform for engagement on the WNP.

Ngāti Tara Tokanui / Ngāti Koi has advised that they would reserve their formal position on the project until they had sufficient time to complete a comprehensive CVA and CIA, but also confirmed their support for the lodgment and notification of the 2022 WNP resource consent, while they reviewed the relevant technical assessments needed to inform the impact assessment portion of their CIA.



In September 2022, Ngāti Tara Tokanui / Ngāti Koi provided a CIA to OGNZL. The outlines Ngāti Tara Tokanui / Ngāti Koi history, cultural values, interests, and associations with the WNP area. It also provides an assessment of how the project may affect these values and offers recommendations for avoiding, remedying, or mitigating identified cultural effects.

Ngāti Tara Tokanui / Ngāti Koi has chosen to keep the CIA confidential. However, OGNZL's interpretation of the key findings from the assessment is included in the assessment of cultural effects set out in Section 6.2 of this report.

#### **5.3.12 Waihi Community Marae**

The Waihi Community Marae is not a traditional marae in the sense that it does not belong to any specific mana whenua group. It was established as a place where Māori living locally (often away from the area they affiliate to) could meet and connect with Māori culture, no matter where they are from.

Accordingly, OGNZL engages with the Waihi Community Marae as recognition that they have modern cultural interests in Waihi. The Waihi Community Marae is also included in the Iwi Advisory Group (see Condition C9 in the proposed conditions of consent set out in Part D of this report).

### **5.4 GOVERNMENT AGENCIES**

#### **5.4.1 Land Information New Zealand**

OGNZL has engaged directly with Toitū Te Whenua Land Information New Zealand (“**LINZ**”) in relation to the project since March 2020. This engagement has been in respect to elements of the project that relate to Crown property and property access, including activities associated with the use of the Martha Mine and the connecting conveyor over Union Hill, and a number of locations where planting is proposed outside of Areas 1 – 7. This has included meetings, provision of project overview materials, the Truescape animation, and a site visit.

Additionally, since 2018 OGNZL has engaged directly with LINZ Overseas Investment Office (“**OIO**”) in several transactions to obtain necessary regulatory approvals to purchase land required for Project Quattro and the Wharekirauponga Exploration Tunnel Project. In relation to what is now the WNP, this included property acquisition for the NRS, for the proposed TSF3 and for the Willows SFA. These transactions were approved by the OIO / relevant Ministers based upon satisfaction of the benefit to New Zealand test under the Overseas Investment Act. The land acquired for TSF3 was also subject to High Court proceedings brought by Coromandel Watchdog seeking to challenge aspects of the regulatory approval process for that transaction. The approval process was upheld.



Further to the engagement regarding the OIO process, LINZ sought to acquire a small part of the stream located on the Willows Road property. OGNZL has agreed to complete an associated boundary adjustment of the Willows Road property, transferring part of the stream to the Crown, however this transfer has not yet taken place.

OGNZL has had, and continues to have, interactions with LINZ Land Registration for technical transactions ancillary to the project, such as property boundary adjustments and the registration on land titles of unformed road realignments. The company also reports regularly to the OIO against conditions imposed for any regulatory approvals given.

#### **5.4.2 NZ Transport Agency Waka Kotahi**

OGNZL has engaged with NZTA Waka Kotahi to understand the potential effects of the project on the safe and efficient functioning of the transportation network.

Stantec was engaged by OGNZL to assess the traffic and transportation effects associated with the WNP and undertook engagement with Waka Kotahi directly from the outset of the drafting of their assessment. Through this process, Waka Kotahi provided guidance and specific feedback on best practice regarding roading upgrades and modifications to reflect the traffic use associated with the project, all of which have been considered in the Stantec report.

The requirement to upgrade the intersection of State Highway 25 and Willows Road was a topic of regular discussion with Waka Kotahi. The final design of the proposed upgrade of the intersection is subject to an independent design safety audit and post construction safety audit. These audits will be carried out by safety auditors appointed in consultation with Waka Kotahi.

### **5.5 ENVIRONMENTAL GROUPS**

#### **5.5.1 Forest & Bird**

At the announcement of the WNP in June 2021, an email was sent to the Thames-Hauraki branch of Forest & Bird providing them an overview of the project and extending an offer to meet to discuss it further. Forest & Bird did not take up this offer at the time.

In September 2021, Forest & Bird contacted OGNZL seeking information on the status of the resource consent application for the project. Forest & Bird were advised that OGNZL were still completing the technical and effects assessments required to support the project and had not yet lodged any formal applications. In this response, another invitation was made to meet and discuss the WNP in detail. Forest & Bird did not take up this offer.





### **5.5.2 Fish & Game Auckland / Waikato**

At the announcement of the WNP in June 2021, an email was sent to the Auckland-Waikato branch of Fish & Game providing them an overview of the project and extending an offer to meet to discuss it further. Fish & Game have not taken up this offer.

It is noted that, in accordance with section 53 of the Act, the New Zealand Fish & Game Council are one of the parties that will be invited to comment on the substantive application for the WNP.

## **5.6 OTHER STAKEHOLDERS AND MEMBERS OF THE COMMUNITY**

### **5.6.1 Key Consultation Events and Forums**

The Consultation Report provides a comprehensive overview of the consultation undertaken by OGNZL in respect to the wider Waihi community. This has included:

- > The establishment of a community engagement line (a free 0800 number that is available 7 days per week);
- > The establishment of a Project Information Office, which holds copies of detailed information brochures and other project materials available, along with a OGNZL staff member to answer questions and listen to views and ideas. Additionally, it provides another mechanism for stakeholders to offer feedback and request further information;
- > Community group presentations (the full list is included in the Consultation Report);
- > Hosting a series of ‘expert days’ where external consultants preparing assessment reports are available at the Project Information office to speak to interested parties;
- > Meetings with individual parties, including OGNZL door knocking over 40 individual properties;
- > Holding WNP ‘open days’ to provide opportunity for interested parties to find out information on the project;
- > Holding project tours; and
- > The utilisation of the existing Waihi Community Forum, whose purpose is to purpose is to receive, respond, and report on comments from the community on issues relating to OceanaGold’s mining activities in Waihi. The Waihi Community Forum is made up of two OGNZL representatives, two members from the HDC and up to five members drawn from the Waihi community.



### 5.6.2 Engagement Material

As part of the consultation process, OGNZL has produced a series of engagement material to provide the public information about the project. This has included:

- > The running of regular advertorials on the local radio station, Gold FM;
- > A monthly full page advertorial in the HC Post newspaper providing an update on the project, to publicise engagement events, advise where information can be found and provide general commentary on the project;
- > The preparation of a WNP Overview booklet, which has been iteratively updated over time with the most recent version dated November 2024;
- > The establishment of a project website that is dedicated to the WNP.<sup>56</sup> The website includes a general overview of the history of the Waihi operation, a description of the project, details around the indicative construction and operational methodologies and processes, and examples of the types of effects mitigation activities that might be implemented; and
- > The development of an animation of the project (which is discussed earlier in this section).

Full details of these engagement materials can be found in the Consultation Report.

### 5.6.3 Martha Trust

OGNZL regularly meets with the Martha Trust trustees to provide updates on the Waihi operation and proposed projects, often attending the Trust's Annual General Meeting ("AGM").

Several meetings have focused specifically on the WNP to inform the trustees about the project, including providing information regarding the additional land to be vested to the Martha Trust at the completion of closure and rehabilitation activities.

In 2021, the Martha Trust's deed was updated to allow for the transfer of additional land to the Martha Trust at closure, as needed for future projects and planned mining works. While the trustees have advised that they have appreciated the transparency regarding the WNP, it was generally agreed that the Martha Trust's functions would not be enacted until the site enters closure.

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<sup>56</sup> <https://www.waihinorth.info/>



OGNZL is scheduled to meet with the trustees again at their AGM in late March 2025, to provide an update on this substantive application. Engagement with the Martha Trust will continue throughout the life of the project, as it has for the existing Waihi operations.

## **5.7 SUMMARY OF FEEDBACK AND CONCERNS**

### **5.7.1 Overview**

The following sections provide a high-level overview of the feedback and concerns on the WNP that have been expressed to OGNZL through the consultation and engagement process.

### **5.7.2 Accommodation**

During the consultation, stakeholders often expressed concerns that the proposed increase in workforce numbers to support the project, combined with an already strained accommodation market in Waihi, could result in housing shortages, higher demand for rental properties, and increased living costs for existing residents.

In response to these concerns OGNZL engaged WSP to complete a Workforce Accommodation Assessment for the project. The assessment concluded that there will be enough long- and short-term accommodation in the region to meet workforce accommodation demands during Years 1 to 4 of the project. However, it has also been determined that without a market response to the accommodation demand, there is likely to be a shortfall in accommodation to support accommodation needs in the later stages of the project. In response, OGNZL has commenced several initiatives to reduce the project's accommodation demand and increase the available accommodation to support the project. These matters are set out in WSP (2025b) and in Section 6.19 of this report, and are summarised as follows:

- > A commitment to ensure that agreements with project contractors include specifications to hire general labour from the local area wherever possible, and to maximise local workforce participation through training and skills development;
- > The development of a Skills Development and Training Action Plan for the WNP, led by OGNZL in collaboration with local secondary and tertiary education providers, industry training organisations, and other relevant groups. As part of this initiative, the company has already commenced a driver licensing programme, hosted career days, provided first aid training for local college students, expanded the Waihi Gold Mine Education Trust's scholarship programme to include school leavers entering the trades, and is in the process of refreshing the site's internship and apprenticeship programmes; and



- > OGNZL-owned residential properties will remain available for rent to house staff, contractors, and the public, helping to increase the supply of rental properties in Waihi. A "stock-take" of the company's property portfolio is currently underway to optimise the use of these properties, with a budget allocated for adding to the available housing, including the potential construction of additional homes, if deemed necessary.

### 5.7.3 Air Quality

Air quality, specifically dust, was raised as a potential impact of the project by a number of Stakeholders. These concerns ranged from the potential amenity effects associated with dust, through to concerns of how it may impact their health.

Stakeholders who currently collect drinking water from the roof of their property were concerned about what might happen if dust settled on their roof prior to a rainfall event. One stakeholder was concerned about how, if not managed appropriately, dust might impact the effectiveness of their existing solar power system.

In response to these concerns it is noted that air quality associated with Waihi operations has been monitored and managed since the early 1980s. In respect of the project, OGNZL is proposing to monitor and manage air quality in accordance with an Air Quality Management Plan (as is the process for existing operations). Section 6.13 of this report summarises the air quality assessments undertaken by Beca (Beca 2025b & 2025c). There are a range of air quality management measures proposed to be implemented across the life of the project as necessary to meet the requirements of this plan, including:

- > Watering haul roads where required to manage dust;
- > Vehicle and equipment maintenance programmes;
- > Dust collectors and filters on drill rigs;
- > Keeping stockpiles low, so the wind is less likely to spread dust;
- > Optimal blasting techniques, using quality blasting compounds and blast-hole stemming;
- > Progressive rehabilitation, and the planting of pasture to cover long-term stockpiles;
- > Establishing conservative speed limits around the site and sealing high-use roads; and
- > Washing vehicles before leaving the site to travel on public roads.

Further to the above, OGNZL has an established complaints procedure in place designed to address concerns promptly and effectively as they arise, which will be continued for the



WNP. A central feature of this process is the 0800 freephone Community Engagement Line, which is available 24/7.

#### **5.7.4 Biodiversity**

Many stakeholders have highlighted the significance and sensitivity of the Wharekirauponga area and its ecology. The Wharekirauponga area is home to several native and endemic species (including Archey's Frog), and it is important to stakeholders that measures are taken as part of the project to improve outcomes for biodiversity.

The protection and enhancement of wetlands was also raised by stakeholders as an important consideration for the project.

In response to these concerns OGNZL has commissioned several ecological experts to address the effects of the project on biodiversity values, including four technical reports that specifically address native frogs.

OGNZL has carefully designed the WNP to have the smallest practicable surface expression within the Coromandel Forest Park to minimise any impacts on the ecology of the area, as well as managing activities such as blasting and dewatering to ensure biodiversity is maintained. OGNZL is dedicated to maintaining operations in a responsible manner and has applied an effects management hierarchy to ensure that any adverse effects associated with the project are as small as is practicable, and any residual effects are compensated for or offset. Section 6.6 of this report provides a summary of the ecological mitigation measures proposed by OGNZL (which are also reflected in the proposed conditions).

Further to this, as has been discussed throughout this report, a key project commitment is to create a sustainable initiative that will lead to a biodiversity net gain throughout the life of the project and beyond. The Waihi North Biodiversity Project, as described in Section 2.14 of this report, is large enough that a variety of biodiversity benefits will accrue for a range of species and habitats typical of the Waihi Ecological District and southern Coromandel generally.

#### **5.7.5 Economics and Employment**

Most stakeholders acknowledged that gold mining in Waihi has been a continued source of employment and prosperity for the local, regional, and national economies. It was also generally accepted that the increased production and additional economic activity from the WNP has the potential to make a meaningful contribution to local employment and allow local businesses further time to plan for the mine's eventual closure.



The preference of stakeholders was for these economic and employment benefits to be distributed locally wherever possible through local procurement and employment. OGNZL has committed to ensure that agreements with project contractors include specifications to hire general labour from the local area wherever possible, and to maximise local workforce participation through training and skills development.

In addition, OGNZL has also begun developing a Skills Development and Training Action Plan for the WNP, in collaboration with local secondary and tertiary education providers, industry training organisations, and other relevant groups. As part of this initiative, the OGNZL has already commenced a driver licensing programme, hosted career days, provided first aid training for local college students, expanded the Waihi Gold Mine Education Trust's scholarship programme to include school leavers entering the trades, and is in the process of refreshing the site's internship and apprenticeship programmes.

#### **5.7.6 Helicopter Activities**

An increase in proposed helicopter activities for the project was raised as a concern by several stakeholders. These concerns focused on the potential impact of frequent helicopter flights on people's amenity, particularly in terms of noise disruption. Additionally, it was noted that the general nuisance of increased helicopter activity, regardless of noise, was seen as an interference with stakeholders' daily lives and the potential overall enjoyment of their property.

In response to these concerns, a third helipad has been proposed as part of the project, in addition to the two existing sites that OGNZL currently has access to in the Waihi area. If approved, this will provide more flexibility in helicopter routing and enable more frequent alternation of flight paths, offering periods of respite for affected areas and reducing the frequency of concentrated helicopter activities.

Further to this, helicopter activity for the project will, wherever practicable, adhere to the "Fly Neighbourly" guidelines published by the Helicopter Association International and recommended by the New Zealand Helicopter Association. These guidelines are designed to minimise noise and disturbance to local communities. OGNZL is committed to working closely with the helicopter contractor to ensure that flights are generally conducted in accordance with these guidelines, with the aim of minimising any impact on the amenity and daily lives of nearby stakeholders.

The effects of helicopter noise are considered in detail in Section 6.10.4 of this report.



### **5.7.7 Landscape, Natural Character and Visual**

Some stakeholders expressed concerns about how the proposed project may modify the existing environment and natural character of the project locality. This was largely in relation to the Willows SFA, GOP, TSF3, and NRS.

Some neighbouring residents raised a specific concern that the project will substantially change their existing outlook and impact their ability to enjoy their property. Feedback was given that, where possible, rehabilitation of disturbed areas should be done progressively as areas became available and not left to the end of the project.

The potential effects of the WNP on the landscape, visual amenity, and natural character values of the surrounding environment have been assessed by Boffa Miskell (2025e) and are addressed in Section 6.7 of this report. Given the predominantly underground nature of the project, there are only a limited number of project elements that may result in visual effects. However, in response to concerns raised by stakeholders about how surface components of the project may alter the landform and be visible from surrounding areas, OGNZL has made efforts to locate these components thoughtfully; including siting surface facilities in areas that are protected by existing landforms, or by retaining other existing visual screening.

OGNZL has also committed to managing the potential landscape, natural character, and visual effects of the project by ensuring that rehabilitation occurs progressively.

### **5.7.8 Noise**

Stakeholders cited noise as a potential amenity impact that needed to be managed if the project was to go ahead, particularly noise associated with any proposed 24 hour operations. For most stakeholders in close proximity to the various elements of the project, noise is an issue that they believe will change their existing context and impact on the enjoyment of their property.

Stakeholders noted the importance of respite from noise and suggested designing the project in a way that allowed for periods of low / no activity, particularly at night. This concept was of particular importance for stakeholders who currently spend large periods of time in their home (i.e. work from home or are retired).

The actual and potential noise effects associated with the WNP have been assessed by Marshall Day (2025) and are addressed in Section 6.10 of this report. Since modern mining began in Waihi in 1987, a variety of controls have been put in place to minimise the impact of noise associated with mining operations. OGNZL will continue to manage its activities to comply with the strict noise limits proposed for the WNP, including managing its activities through a Noise Management Plan.



As documented in Section 7 of this report, a range of noise management measures will be implemented throughout the life of the project, as needed, to meet the requirements of a Noise Management Plan. These measures will include:

- > Localised screening, including shrouds for drills;
- > Acoustic cladding around potentially noisy plant or machinery;
- > Select equipment with lower noise generation potential where practicable;
- > Noise mitigation, such as mufflers, fitted to equipment;
- > Regular checks and maintenance of equipment;
- > The construction of noise screening, such as noise bunds, closed board fencing, or acoustic noise walls (if necessary);
- > Limiting the height of temporary stockpiles; and
- > Careful management of activities undertaken at night.

Further to the above, OGNZL has an established complaints procedure in place designed to address concerns promptly and effectively as they arise, which will be continued for the WNP. A central feature of this process is the 0800 freephone Community Engagement Line, which is available 24/7.

#### **5.7.9 Property Value**

One of the key concerns raised throughout consultation process is the potential for the WNP to devalue property due to perceptions of adverse mining effects. This includes the following:

- > The feeling of ‘being trapped’ due to not being able to ‘stop’ the project or sell their property for market value; and
- > The loss of any additional value through improvements to their property (reluctance to commit to any future plans they had for upgrade, or subdivision, of their property due to the uncertainty of the proposed project).

OGNZL has committed to implementing a “Top Up” management measure to mitigate any potential impact of mining activities on property values. This initiative has been successfully applied by OGNZL and its predecessors in the past, and involves the company making up the difference between a ‘fair price’ offered by a purchaser, and a ‘fair market value’ sought by a vendor (within specific criteria); ensuring that they get market value from any sale of land impacted by mining activities.





Although not directly related to property value concerns, OGNZL is also proposing a one-off ex gratia payment to landowners whose property is located directly above the tunnel between the Willows Road Site and the existing Waihi Processing Plant. This practice has been commonly applied to the company's other mining activities beneath the residential areas of Waihi, and involves providing the property owner with a one off lump sum payment equal to 5% of their property's agreed market value at the time.

#### **5.7.10 Property Damage**

For property owners directly above the proposed Willows Access Tunnel and Wharekirauponga Access Tunnel, and those located adjacent to the proposed GOP, there were concerns raised around the potential for mining activity to damage their property. The perceived cause of the potential damage was associated with vibration from blasting, as well as perceived risk of surface instability associated with dewatering and subsidence.

In response to these concerns, the proposed conditions relating to vibration are comparable to those of OGNZL's other Waihi mining operations in proximity to residential areas, which will ensure that vibration levels are well below the level at which property damage could occur.

In addition, OGNZL has a 'We Break, We Pay' procedure in place to assist owners if they believe their property may have been damaged. As part of this process, if it is determined that property damage is attributable to OGNZL activities, the company will remedy the damage at no cost to the landowner.

#### **5.7.11 Recreation**

Wharekirauponga is regarded as an important recreational area, known for its popularity as a pig hunting spot and its appeal to those seeking remote tramping experiences. Stakeholders viewed the construction of the vent evasé, increased exploration activity, and the associated noise from their operation, along with the potential vibrations from underground blasting, as threats to the enjoyment of the area

The Waihi Mountain Bike Track and Blackhill Motocross Track, located on or near the proposed GOP, were also identified as important recreational facilities for the Waihi community. Stakeholders expressed a strong desire for these tracks to be preserved, replaced, or enhanced as part of the WNP. In response, OGNZL has actioned the following in support of the continued provision of these valued community recreational facilities:

- > A Memorandum of Understanding has been established with Blackhill Moto-X Club, for the provision of an alternative access to the Moto-X Track; and



- > A Memorandum of Understanding with the Waihi Mountain Bike Club has been agreed in principle which provides access to alternative OGNZL owned land and to re-establish a mountain bike trail (and funding to support this).

Further, OGNZL recently made a \$150,000 donation to the Waihi Community Forum in support of their Pump Track project at Morgan Park. The pump track is a key part of a larger planned outdoor recreation hub in the area. OGNZL continues to support the initiative through ongoing funding for the Waihi Community Forum Coordinator.

In terms of potential effects on recreational activities within the Coromandel Forest Park, the underground nature of the project limits the potential of these impacts. However, in response to the concerns raised, OGNZL has proposed a multi-criteria analysis approach to selecting the suitable drilling and vent evasé locations. This approach includes a requirement to consider the proximity of the proposed sites to the Te Wharekirauponga Track, with a positive weighting given to suitable sites further away from the track.

An assessment of the potential effects of the WNP on recreational values is provided in Greenaway (2025) and is addressed in Section 6.12 of this report.

#### **5.7.12 Rehabilitation and Closure**

The importance of appropriate rehabilitation and closure planning was a common theme raised by stakeholders throughout the consultation undertaken to date. This theme not only covered ensuring that localised impacts on the environment were mitigated in the long-term through rehabilitation and remediation activities, but also the importance of ensuring adequate resources were allocated for mine closure and ongoing maintenance of the closed sites. Guaranteeing the ongoing integrity of the existing and proposed TSF was of particular importance to stakeholders.

All OGNZL New Zealand operations have closure plans in place, which are reviewed annually. The WNP will be integrated into the existing Waihi plan. Additionally, OGNZL has proposed a consent condition that commits the company to conduct a socio-economic impact assessment at least five years before closure, to help guide the closure planning process.

Bonds are integral to responsible closure, and ensure that approved rehabilitation plans are carried out, even in the unlikely event the company is no longer around to complete the work. As with the present Waihi operations, rehabilitation activities will take place progressively throughout the life of the project. The bond amount will be reviewed annually and adjusted to reflect new areas of operation, completed rehabilitation, and changes due to factors like inflation.



When closure is achieved, ownership of the areas of OGNZL land affected by mining will pass to Martha Trust, which will be funded by an additional bond. The trustees on the Martha Trust include regional and district council appointees, with provision for iwi to also nominate trustees, and their responsibility will be to monitor and maintain that land in a safe and stable condition in perpetuity using funds provided for that purpose by OGNZL.

#### **5.7.13 Tailings Storage**

Some stakeholders raised concerns with how tailings storage facilities are built, maintained, and managed. Specifically, concerns were raised relating to the geological setting of New Zealand and any potential risks to the facilities structural integrity should a significant earthquake occur. Some concerns were also raised with the use of cyanide in the processing of gold and silver, and the potential toxicity of the tailings storage facilities as a result of this process.

In response, the proposed TSF3 has been designed in accordance with the New Zealand Dam Safety Guidelines, published by the New Zealand Society on Large Dams (NZSOLD), which are based on international best practices. Once constructed, monitoring of water quality, structural integrity, and other operational aspects will be ongoing for TSF3. As part of this process, a Dam Safety Management Plan will be implemented, as is the case for the existing tailing storage facilities. This plan involves monitoring and surveillance of performance data, which is interpreted and assessed by the design engineer. Annual reports on the safety and integrity of TSF3 will also be produced, all of which will be reviewed by an independent peer review panel, to ensure the continued performance and safety of TSF3.

#### **5.7.14 Traffic**

All of the residents on Willows Road and Highland Road expressed concerns regarding an increase in mine-related vehicle activity in the area. In particular, they were concerned about the potential amenity and safety impacts associated with an increased volume of a traffic, as well as the inconvenience associated with any works required to improve the road and intersection. Two property owners on Willows Road also cited the impact of increased traffic on their ability to cross livestock over the road.

An assessment of effects on the transportation network arising from the WNP is provided in Stantec (2025) and is addressed in Section 6.18 of this report. OGNZL is proposing to monitor and manage traffic through a comprehensive Traffic Management Plan. This plan will cover the construction programme for the project, anticipated traffic volumes and routes, driver protocols, potential effects on farm operations, interactions with school bus routes and timetables, monitoring activities (including road pavement), and communication arrangements.



A key component of this plan and ensuring the safe accommodation of the expected traffic volumes for the project, is the development of an expanded car park within the existing Martha Mine area. This car park will function as a staging facility for a “park and ride” system, enabling staff to be transported to and from the Willows site by bus, thereby reducing the number of private vehicles on the road.

#### 5.7.15 Vibration

Residents in close proximity to the proposed project, particularly those adjacent to the GOP, TSF3 and NRS borrow areas, or directly above the tunnels associated with the project, raised vibration from blasting as one of their concerns.

The effect that most concerned people was the potential for vibration to damage their property. Also noted was the amenity effect associated with vibration. The effects of vibration on livestock and agriculture were also raised as a particular concern for some residents, specifically, what the impact of vibration might be on dairy cows (fears it could cause them to ‘go dry’) and horses (fears blast vibration might startle the animal causing it to injure itself).

An assessment of the actual and potential effects from blasting and vibration associated with the WNP is provided in Heilig (2025) and is addressed in Section 6.11 of this report. Section 7 of this report also provides a summary of the measures proposed by OGNZL to manage the actual and potential effects of blasting and vibration on amenity values and property. **Part D** of this report includes proposed conditions for the project, which include comprehensive blasting and vibration conditions which will protect the amenity of the OGNZL also proposes to extend the following existing vibration management measures to apply to the WNP:

- > Provision of a blast warning system via a device that provides an audible alarm immediately before a blast, provided by OGNZL to stakeholders within residential areas near operations (if requested by stakeholders);
- > Daily notifications to stakeholders within residential operational project areas if blast activity is planned for that day, provided via email, SMS text, or phone call (if requested by stakeholders);
- > Ensuring blasting times, and vibration monitoring results within the Waihi residential area, are published on the company’s website;
- > The Amenity Effects Programme which aims to offset any potential reduction in residential amenity from vibration and establishes an arrangement between OGNZL and



residents identified as experiencing these effects (despite the mining operations being conducted within consent compliance limits); and

- > Provision of the existing complaints procedure, including the 0800 freephone Community Engagement Line.

#### **5.7.16 Water**

This theme includes waterways, water quality, groundwater, water take, water treatment, and water discharge. It was seen as essential that as part of the project steps should be taken to protect and enhance waterways and waterbodies. How water treatment and discharge was proposed to be managed was seen by stakeholders as essential to this.

The impact of mining on groundwater and aquifers was also highlighted as a specific concern by several stakeholders, particularly regarding how dewatering to enable mining beneath the Coromandel Forest Park could affect the flora and fauna at the surface.

Some residents adjacent to the proposed operation also feared that mining activity could cause their deep water bores to 'dry up', which would have implications related to water access and supply.

In response to these concerns, an extensive programme of water monitoring and management has been proposed as part of the project, which will operate throughout the life of mine, and beyond. This programme has been informed by leading experts engaged by OGNZL.

The project has also been designed in a way that ensures all water that is impacted by mining is captured and treated, with a priority to first divert clean water where practicable.

Regarding concerns about the potential for mining activity to cause private water access bores to "dry up," the technical assessments indicate that this is unlikely. However, to address these concerns, conditions have been proposed for the project requiring OGNZL to provide alternative water access if it is determined that a bore has been impacted by mining activities.

