

File ref: FTAA-2507-1089

8 December 2025

Penny Nelson
Director General of Conservation
Department of Conservation
C/- Fast-track team
By Email: fast-track@doc.govt.nz

Tēnā koe

Request for advice and reports under the Fast-track Approvals Act 2024

Matakanui Gold Limited has lodged a substantive application under the Fast-track Approvals Act 2024 (the Act) on 23 April 2025. The Bendigo-Ophir Gold Project application relates to the establishment and operation of an open pit and underground gold mine on Bendigo and Ardgour Stations in Central Otago.

The EPA has decided that the application is complete and in scope under section 46 of the Act and provided the application to the panel convener. The substantive application seeks an approval for five concessions under section 42(4)(e), conservation covenant under section 42(4)(g), wildlife approval under section 42(4)(h), and a complex freshwater fisheries activity approval under section of the Act.

Under section of 51 of the Act, the panel convener has now directed the EPA to obtain from the Director-General of Conservation the following reports:

- In respect of the concessions on land that is vested in the Crown under **section 42(4)(e)** of the Act, a report prepared by the Director-General of Conservation in accordance with **clause 4 of Schedule 6** of the Act;
- In respect of the conservation covenant under **section 42(4)(g)** of the Act, a report prepared by the Director-General of Conservation in accordance with **clause 43 of Schedule 6** of the Act;
- In respect of the wildlife approval under **section 42(4)(h)** of the Act, a report prepared by the Director-General of Conservation in accordance with **clause 3 of Schedule 7** of the Act;

- In respect of the complex freshwater fisheries activity approval under **section 42(4)(j)** of the Act, a report prepared by the Director-General of Conservation in accordance with **clause 4 of Schedule 9** of the Act

The panel convener has also directed the EPA to obtain advice from the Department of Conservation in respect of the following:

- Pursuant to section 51(1) of the Act, the Director-General of Conservation is to file a report advising how the weighting of matters set out in Schedule 7, clause 3 of the Act should be approached, having regard to relevant senior court decisions.
- Pursuant to section 51(2)(c) of the Act, if the Director-General of Conservation does not agree with, or wishes to amplify, the expert and planning assessment lodged in support of the wildlife approval, it must file a report in accordance with Schedule 7, clause 3.
- For the avoidance of doubt, the Director-General of Conservation may confirm and append advice previously given in response to a panel convener's directions under s 51(1) on another project and does not need to provide an assessment of the approval pursuant to s 51(2)(c) if it concurs with the expert and planning assessments filed by the applicant.
- The Director-General of Conservation is to respond to the draft conditions, including any management plan attached to the application, recommending track-changed amendments (if any).

Any advice or report received will be provided by the EPA to the persons listed in section 51(5).

The panel convener has issued a Minute dated 8 December which outlines the panel convener's directions in more detail. The Minute is attached as **Appendix 1** to this letter.

The Department of Conservation must provide the reports within 10 working day **after** the panel invites comments on the application in accordance with section 51(4)(a) of the Act.

If you have any questions, please contact Daya Thomson, Application Lead by email at info@fasttrack.govt.nz.

Nāku noa, nā



Daya Thomson
Application Lead, Fast-track Applications