



New Zealand Wine
Altogether Unique.



7 April 2026

The Panel
Bendigo-Ophir Gold Project Fast Track Application
c/o Central Otago Winegrowers Association

By email

Support for Central Otago Winegrowers Association – Santana Minerals, Bendigo-Ophir Gold Project application (Fast Track Approvals Act 2024)

New Zealand Winegrowers (**NZW**) writes in support of Central Otago Winegrowers Association's (**COWA**) participation in the Fast Track approvals process relating to Santana Minerals Bendigo-Ophir Gold Project Application.

Central Otago is New Zealand's third largest wine region and plays an important role in supporting New Zealand's global reputation for producing premium, sustainable wines. It is one of New Zealand's most distinctive and internationally respected wine regions renowned for producing premium cool-climate wines with a strong sense of place and is the home of some of New Zealand's most prominent brands. Central Otago's continental climate, varied soils and dramatic landscapes contribute to the production of distinctive wine that is unique to the region. This regional distinctiveness adds to the strength of the national wine brand.

Wine tourism plays an important role in strengthening the domestic and global reputation of New Zealand wine by connecting consumers directly with people, places and practices behind its premium wine. Central Otago is New Zealand's most scenic wine region and is fundamental to New Zealand's wine tourism offering. The region's dramatic landscapes, small-scale premium producers, and strong emphasis on authenticity and sustainability underpin a wine tourism offering that attracts both domestic and international visitors seeking high-quality, place-based experiences. Cellar doors, vineyard restaurants, accommodation, and curated wine experiences are closely integrated with the region's broader tourism economy, reinforcing Central Otago's position as one of New Zealand's most iconic wine destinations.

As with all New Zealand wine regions, Central Otago's reputation is built on quality, sustainability and distinctive regional character, underpinned by long-term investment in vineyards, people and brand development. It is imperative that this reputation is not undermined.

NZW understands that COWA has significant concerns about the Project and the impact it may have on the Central Otago wine region. Given the region's importance to the New Zealand wine industry,

NZW urges the Panel to carefully consider the comments made by COWA and ensure that the Central Otago wine industry is not unduly impacted by the Project.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'P. Gregan', with a large, stylized initial 'P'.

Philip Gregan
Chief Executive Officer