

Waihi North Fast Track Application

Steve and Brigid Cameron – [REDACTED]

We are writing to formally comment to the above-mentioned resource consent application,

To outline some of the concerns that we as a family feel we believe it is only fair to provide some background to our anxiousness.

The home we currently reside in has been in our family for forty-five years when the family relocated from a lifestyle block to the South of Waihi, here my parents raised a large family and laid down roots.

Over time as they do families forge their own new paths and now the baton passed for me to raise a family in the family homestead.

We have and until recent times enjoyed the peacefulness that rural living brings while situated at the end of a dead-end road, and we would often comment on how blessed we were to live just 6 kms from the centre of town enabling us to live rural life without any real neighbours but knowing town wasn't too far.

Our children all are fortunate enough to be growing up in this idyllic life and experience little life experiences.

It has been a roller coaster of emotions we are journeying along now with the uncertainty of what is to come, this in true kiwi style we have sometimes felt like .. *just suck it up and soldier on* and other times we feel the weight and anxiousness begin to sink into our subconscious when we allow it.

Both my husband and I are of note in the real estate industry and for many a year would often come home and say, "at least we are away from the mine", this has somewhat come back to haunt us. As we have seen the effects of this first-hand both financially for clients and emotionally.

During the process of the last few years, we have seen the weight of a big rolling machine in action the simple planting of a seed by the mine representatives and then the withdrawal, allowing the idea /seed to germinate.

EXPLOSIVES MAGAZINES

Explosives magazines that conform to New Zealand hazardous substances regulations would be located on site, south of the rock stack on company land. The explosives magazines would be locked and securely fenced, with access strictly controlled.

We felt the weight of this idea with the Explosive Magazine which is proposed to be sited a mere 700 metres from our family home, which we were told once by a surveyor wouldn't be an issue to us being as close although you wouldn't build a kindergarten or supermarket within that close proximity. This simple flippant throw away comment can play on ones emotions and wellbeing when you are raising a family.

Other than the obvious elephant in the room of the neighbouring farm becoming a hive of industry the latest and probably what may seem minuscule unsettling matter is how very quickly we are now being planted the seed of a helicopter site.

HELIPAD

We are proposing to establish a helipad with adjacent parking as part of the Willows Road site. The existing track to the proposed location of the helipad will also be upgraded and widened to facilitate vehicle access.

This quite simple three-line statement carries as we all know large ramifications which we have slowly become aware of with the movement of helicopters transporting mining staff and supplies in the area. This we know is very intrusive and to date has not even entailed large amounts of landing and taking off which is when noise / danger is at its highest.

The proposed site of this is approx. 900 metres away which as we know is a more palatable distance when on flat land less so when all uphill which is the contour from our home. The thought of the noise from this is very unsettling and to be fair quite stressful for my husband and I.

We appreciate that the learned panel of people considering the application do not require the same rhetoric that they will see from all parties stating their concerns, but we are unsure of the full process as this is unfortunately new to our family.

Therefore with regards to all aspects of the future and foreseeable mine operations, we would like you to consider for our family and future.

Dust and Air Quality

We will envisage noticeable increases in airborne dust, especially during windy or drier summer months or during blasting. My husband has asthma, so this does concern his respiratory health.

Noise and Vibration- from mining operations.

Blasting, truck movement, and machinery operation will no doubt lead to excessive noise and frequent ground vibrations, which will be disruptive, especially as we are being told that operations will be 24/7. This affects sleep, wellbeing.

We are well aware of the mines counter to this having been explained about monitoring of noise, of note the last mine monitor of noise I saw was parked at our road gate not even at the property, so these responses are somewhat insulting sometimes.

Water Issues

Changes in the area as far as stock piling and topsoil storage are concerning as we have recently installed a rainwater system collecting water from our roof which will be exposed to the increase in dust.

Property Values

Due to the mine's proximity and the resulting disturbances, caused by the changes it is obvious that this will affect our property value. This again was pointed out to us by a mine member of staff who quite quickly said "only if you sell" – a little callous we felt albeit even if this is true.

Noise Pollution – Helicopter operations

Having spent several years in Fox Glacier and my husband serving as a helicopter technician we are both familiar with the fact that helicopter operations are inherently noisy, and the proposed location is in close proximity to our home for us this is deeply unsettling. The noise from take-offs and landings could severely impact the peace and quiet currently enjoyed by us during helicopter operations.

Safety Concerns

The close, proximity of the proposed helicopter pad to our home raises serious safety issues. The risk of accidents or emergency landings to our home is worrying.

Privacy Invasion

The presence of a helicopter pad will lead to increased aerial activity over our home and line of sight, resulting in a loss of privacy for us. This will affect the enjoyment and use of our outdoor spaces and gardens.

Increased Traffic

The establishment of a helicopter landing pad will likely attract additional traffic to the area, including vehicles associated with helicopter operations and passengers.

Explosive Magazine

The primary concern is the potential for accidental explosions, which could cause serious injury or death, property damage, and environmental contamination. The proper storage and handling of explosives is paramount and mishandling can significantly increase the risk of accidents.

Storage and Handling and Security Risks.

The explosive area is situated on a deserted part of the mine farm where access could be easily obtained as we know inadequate security measures can make the site vulnerable especially, we believe access from HIGHLAND Rd.

Potential theft of explosives and the risk of unauthorised access can become a risk leading to increased potential around our property due to undesirable members of the community becoming attracted to the mine farm which we know is an attractive target.

Transport Risks.

The transportation of explosives to and from the magazine can pose a risk, especially as this is in our direct line of sight and close to our home.

Thank you for considering my submission.

Yours faithfully,

Brigid Cameron