



PART F.16

Matakanui Gold Limited
Bendigo-Ophir Gold Project

**PRE-APPLICATION
ENGAGEMENT REPORT**

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1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Matakanui Gold Limited (MGL) has undertaken an extensive and proactive engagement programme in the lead-up to lodging its Fast-Track Approvals Act 2024 (FTA) application. This work reflects MGL's commitment to openness, transparency, and long-term partnership with the Central Otago community. With some engagement dating back to 2017, the company has engaged across multiple platforms, including 56 community drop-in sessions in Cromwell, Tarras and surrounding communities, with over 380 attendees, as well as presentations to more than 25 local organisations and business groups. It has maintained direct consultation with affected landowners, tangata whenua (via Aukaha and Ka Rūnaka), environmental and industry groups, and key regulatory agencies.

Community sentiment has ranged from strong support to concern. In Cromwell, the overall response has been overwhelmingly positive, with high levels of interest in employment, business opportunities, and economic benefits. Approximately 1000 expressions of interest in jobs and supplier opportunities have been received. The Tarras community has demonstrated a more mixed tone, with enthusiasm from some and caution from others, particularly regarding environmental and landscape impacts. A pulse check survey of the business community showed that 70% of respondents felt positively about the project, including 57% who believe it will be good for business, while 13% were positive but expressed some reservations.

MGL recognises that with a project of this scale, concerns are expected. Concerns around housing availability, air quality, traffic volumes, noise, water, and tailings storage have all been raised. As part of its pathway to development, the company has commissioned detailed technical studies and developed management plans to mitigate impacts. Short-term worker accommodation will be provided to reduce pressure on the housing market, and commuter transport will be available to help distribute demand and beneficial impacts across a wider area. Dust and water quality are being addressed through monitoring, modelling, and robust management plans, and the proposed tailings facility is being designed to exceed national safety standards, with independent peer review.

Stakeholders have also sought reassurance around the economic contribution of the project. Independent analysis has estimated the BOGP will contribute approximately \$5.8 billion to New Zealand's GDP, with around \$1.8 billion expected to be returned to the government in taxes, royalties, PAYE and ACC payments. Over 60% of the project's economic benefit is expected to remain in New Zealand, not including the significant impact of wages, local procurement, and service contracts.

Engagement has also extended into community life, with MGL actively participating in local events, funding sponsorships, and supporting initiatives that contribute to regional wellbeing. The company has established a Community Liaison Group with inclusion of a wide range of interest groups. The company will also continue its drop-in sessions and hold public meetings after lodgement of the FTA application to ensure the public has every opportunity to stay informed, ask questions, and provide feedback. The engagement to date has helped shape the project in meaningful ways and provides a strong foundation for ongoing collaboration with the community as the project progresses.

2. ENGAGEMENT APPROACH

This report summarises the engagement that has been undertaken by Matakanui Gold Limited (MGL) in relation to the Bendigo-Ophir Gold Project (BOGP or the project) up until the Fast Track Application has been lodged with the Environmental Protection Agency. It is important to note that as a large amount of information will only be publicly available at lodgement, community engagement will be ongoing and increase post-application with planned public meetings and the continuation of drop-in sessions in the local and wider communities. This is to ensure that the community have a thorough understanding of the project, what is included in the application, and they have the opportunity to understand, and ask questions about the project.

The Project is largely located on private farmland and access agreements and binding agreements to purchase relevant parts of the land are in place with both of the station landowners, Bendigo Station and Ardgour Station. The Project also covers sections of roads where Central Otago District Council (CODC) as controlling authority is the owner. Communication is ongoing with both station owners, leaseholders, and CODC.

MGL believe it is important, and have made a commitment, to consult with all interested and affected parties, share information as it becomes available, and be transparent in their communication, to:

- Build long-term relationships with stakeholders and be good neighbours;
- Respect all stakeholders, valuing their opinions and feedback;
- Provide opportunities for information sharing and questions; and
- Incorporate stakeholder feedback and find solutions where possible.

3. REGULATORY AGENCIES

3.1 Central Otago District Council

The BOGP is located within the local authority of CODC who hold multiple roles in the FTA process as a consent authority, a relevant landowner, and a roading authority. Since 2017, MGL have engaged in regular meetings with CODC covering resource consent applications and reporting for exploration activities, project overview briefings, project updates, site visits, discussions on roading options, and to clarify and confirm consent requirements under the Central Otago District Plan (CODP).

Through these meetings, CODC has identified key matters of interest, including regional housing pressures and the capacity to review technical documentation within the timeframes prescribed by the Fast-track Approvals Act 2024 (FTA). CODC has also emphasised the importance of community engagement and has expressed support for the proactive and transparent approach adopted by MGL.

In addition to regular meetings, MGL has participated in a range of other engagement activities with CODC, including:

- A presentation at a formal Council meeting;
- A rules assessment workshop; and
- Discussions regarding early works and exploration activities.

To support informed input from CODC, MGL have worked to share reports with CODC as they are finalised to enable early peer review ahead of the application lodgement.

A draft rules assessment was provided to the CODC to give detail on what rules the project would be assessed against, whether it is met, and if not why or how it would be considered.

MGL provided formal written notification to CODC on Tuesday 27 May 2025 of the Company's intention to apply for all approvals necessary under the FTA for the construction, operation, maintenance and eventual closure of the BOGP. A response was received on 19 June confirming that in accordance with section 30(3) of the FTA that there are no existing consents to which sections 124C(1)(c) or 165ZI of the Resource Management Act 1991 would apply if the BOGP were to be applied for as a resource consent under the RMA.

On Monday 29 September an updated letter was sent to CODC and they were asked to re-confirm that in accordance with section 30(3) of the FTA that there are no existing consents to which sections 124C(1)(c) or 165ZI of the Resource Management Act 1991 would apply if the Bendigo-Ophir Gold Project were to be applied for as a resource consent under the RMA. CODC has since replied on 10 October 2025 confirming that to be the case.

MGL has been working with CODC and responding to their information requests. In response to this the following actions were completed and provided to CODC:

- A detailed project description;
- A rabbit survey of over 3000 ha was undertaken to be included in the mammalian pest survey report;
- An exterior lighting design memo;
- Heritage reports were provided to CODC;
- An updated economic report reflecting the 2025 Pre-Feasibility Study;
- Spatial data relating to heritage sites;
- Continued sharing of reports; and
- A table of CODC 26 requests with MGL's response.

Following this a request for further clarification on the economic memo of August 2025 was received. The updated version of the full Economic Report was received in October 2025 to address these points.

3.2 Otago Regional Council

The Otago Regional Council (ORC) is responsible for overseeing and administering specific conditions of the Fast Track Application consent. Resource consents will be required for the water take from the Bendigo Aquifer, construction of a new access road crossing Shepherds Creek, including any associated activities affecting water quality, land disturbance, water discharge and streambed modifications. Since 2023, MGL has engaged in ongoing consultation with ORC to ensure early and transparent communication regarding the project. These engagements have aimed to inform ORC of the project's scope, provide updates as new information becomes available, and discuss potential mitigation measures.

Consultation with the ORC has been ongoing throughout the project's formation. This has included meetings to provide project overviews and updates, site visits to familiarise ORC staff with the location,

scale, and potential visual effects, and a demonstration of MGL's GIS platform (Felt), to support spatial understanding. Discussions have also covered the consents required under the Otago Regional Plans.

During some of these engagements, ORC has raised concerns regarding the timeframes available for reviewing technical documentation under the FTA process. In response, MGL has proactively shared reports with the ORC as they have been finalised, enabling early peer review and facilitating informed input ahead of formal lodgement. ORC staff have also been for site familiarisation visits, supporting their ability to engage meaningfully with the material and provide timely feedback.

MGL provided formal written notification to ORC on Thursday 29 May 2025 of the Company's intention to apply for all approvals necessary under the FTA for the construction, operation, maintenance and eventual closure of the Bendigo-Ophir Gold Project. Written notice was provided by ORC, 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).

3.3 Department of Conservation

The Department of Conservation (DOC) is identified as both an administering agency and an adjacent landowner in relation to this project, due to the presence of public conservation land and reserves adjoining the project site. As such, DOC has a dual interest in the proposal—both in its statutory role under the FTA and as a neighbour to the proposed activity—warranting early and constructive engagement to identify and address any matters relating to access, approvals, and potential effects on conservation values. A number of concessions with DOC are being sought under this application that are needed to implement mitigation and offsetting measures, to maintain public access and enhance ecological outcomes.

The project team have been meeting with the regional DOC team since 2017 to obtain letters of authority for earthworks to enable exploration within the conservation covenant, and to ensure that the disturbance and rehabilitation is compliant, as well as providing information on the proposed project as the project moves forward.

Engagement with DOC has been ongoing and includes regular meetings with the regional DOC team to discuss project updates, site activity, and regulatory matters. A site meeting was held at the historic Bendigo homestead, and DOC representatives, including an ecologist, visited the site to monitor exploration disturbance and rehabilitation efforts. Communication has also included email correspondence providing updates on site reporting and current disturbance applications, as well as coordination to introduce technical experts to the project. A presentation was also delivered to DOC outlining the proposed resource drilling and overall project status.

To support informed input from DOC, from May 2025, as reports became finalised MGL began to share reports with DOC, this was to enable early peer review ahead of the application lodgement.

In June 2025, a pre-lodgement meeting was carried out to collaboratively address matters relevant to DOC's role as an administering agency under the FTA, to discuss alignment with FTA information requirements, potential approvals, and how potential effects and mitigation measures—particularly in relation to public conservation land and wildlife—may be addressed. From this, further meetings were

scheduled, and a lizard workshop has been booked in to discuss lizard management with DOC, MGL, and both organisations' consultants.

Subsequent meetings have been held with the dedicated DOC fast track team to provide information on the project, wildlife, terrestrial invertebrates, and lizards. Meetings have been scheduled to cover the subjects of conservation assessments, covenant, and concessions.

As the full substantive report was still being prepared, in August 2025 the working draft project description, approvals sought, and rules assessment was provided to DOC.

Further requests for information have been received and in response to this the following information has been provided:

- Spatial data (Disturbance aggregated footprint and aggregated footprint); and
- Updated project description with timeframes and breakdown on stages and maps.

MGL provided formal written notification to the DOC on Thursday 29 May 2025 of the Company's intention to apply for all approvals necessary under the FTA for the construction, operation, maintenance and eventual closure of the BOGP.

In September, DOC provided MGL with feedback on the proposed concessions and conditions that will be applied for. This feedback was worked through in a meeting with DOC on 10 October 2025. DOC identified several areas requiring further consideration, including the feasibility of the proposed walking track to the Come in Time Battery, aspects of heritage management and local infrastructure responsibilities. MGL has committed to ongoing engagement with DOC throughout the application process, recognising it as a key priority, and has proposed holding a dedicated Lizard Workshop once the application is submitted.

3.3.1 NZTA Waka Kotahi

MGL has engaged with NZTA Waka Kotahi to understand the potential impacts of the project to their roading network and if any upgrades would be required. Meetings and discussions were held around the three mine access route options coming off SH8, initial feedback was gained and potential upgrades discussed. A further meeting was held once the preferred route was selected and discussion held around the required upgrades to the SH8/Ardour intersection.

Stantec were engaged to assess the access route to the mine site, the traffic impacts of the project on the NZTA Waka Kotahi roading network, and to provide advice on any upgrades required to the roading network. From this assessment safety upgrades will be at the SH8/ Ardour intersection. As the design progresses, MGL will continue consultation with NZTA Waka Kotahi to ensure planned upgrades meet their safety requirements.

3.3.2 Heritage New Zealand

MGL has maintained a long standing and constructive relationship with Heritage New Zealand, developed through years of exploration activities, drilling applications and plans in the BOGP area. This has been important given there are a number of heritage sites within the area, most of which are associated with the region's rich historical mining legacy. MGL has engaged in multiple meetings, and a dedicated site visit with Heritage New Zealand to take a look at the heritage within the proposed footprint, look at disturbance and rehabilitation in relation to the drilling programme, and to provide

information on the scope and scale of the proposed project. These interactions have reinforced the shared commitment to preserving the cultural and historical significance of the area while enabling responsible and informed project progression.

MGL provided formal written notification to the Ministry for Culture and Heritage & Heritage New Zealand Pouhere Taonga HNZPT on Thursday 29 May 2025 of the Company's intention to apply for all approvals necessary under the FTA for the construction, operation, maintenance and eventual closure of the BOGP. A response was received on 29 May 2025 confirming that a pre-lodgement briefing with the Ministry for Culture and Heritage was not required.

3.3.3 Fish and Game

MGL initiated engagement with Fish & Game New Zealand (Fish & Game), recognising their role as a key stakeholder in the protection and management of freshwater environments. Fish & Game is a statutory organisation responsible for managing, maintaining, and enhancing sports fish and game bird resources in New Zealand, in the interests of anglers and hunters. Their work includes advocacy for the protection of water quality and aquatic habitats, which directly supports recreational fishing and hunting opportunities.

As part of the pre-application consultation process, MGL contacted Fish & Game to discuss the proposed project. An introductory meeting was held, during which Fish & Game highlighted their areas of interest, particularly in relation to potential downstream water quality impacts and the overall fishing experience on Lake Dunstan.

In response to these concerns, a follow-up meeting was organised, involving MGL's surface water and groundwater consultant. This provided Fish & Game with the opportunity to engage directly with a technical expert, allowing for more detailed discussion and clarification around potential surface water effects associated with the project.

MGL continue to engage with Fish & Game as the project progresses, to ensure any issues raised are considered and appropriately addressed.

3.3.4 Land Information New Zealand

MGL has engaged with Land Information New Zealand (LINZ) to discuss land tenure and access matters relating to the BOGP. Engagement has been ongoing since 2017 in relation to exploration activities and an access arrangement was signed in 2019 to allow for exploration access.

Engagement with LINZ is ongoing in relation to a 15m section of the proposed Ardour Rise access route that traverses land administered by LINZ (Run 238N).

MGL is seeking LINZ's approval for the BOGP to undertake works on the LINZ-administered section. The project team has written to LINZ requesting approval, in its capacity as land administrator, for this section of Ardour Rise to be upgraded.

3.4 Ministry for the Environment

MGL provided formal written notification to the Ministry for the Environment on Wednesday 28 May 2025, advising of the Company's intention to apply for all approvals required under the FTA for the construction, operation, maintenance, and eventual closure of the BOGP. A response was received on 4

June 2025 acknowledging the correspondence and confirming its role as the relevant administering agency.

As part of this engagement, the Ministry was offered a pre-lodgement briefing to outline the project scope, key environmental considerations, and the approvals being sought under the FTA process.

4. CONSULTATION WITH TANGATA WHENUA

MGL has engaged with Iwi through Aukaha since inception of the BOGP prior to the amalgamation of several mineral exploration permits into MEP60311 in 2018. Aukaha is a mana whenua-owned organisation that delivers services across the takiwā of their Papatipu Rūnaka shareholders.

The Crown Minerals Act (CMA) and regulations set out that Tier 1 exploration and mining permit holders are required to submit an Iwi Engagement Report each year with their Annual Summary Reports (ASR). MGL has met and continues to meet this requirement for MEP60311 permit. Each year the draft of the Iwi engagement report is shared with Aukaha on behalf of Iwi, providing them a reasonable opportunity to comment on the draft report before its submission. This is a requirement under section 33C(2A) of the CMA. The final report is then filed including any comments provided by Iwi on the draft report in accordance with section 33C(2B) of the CMA.

Subsequent to a field visit on site with mana whenua and Aukaha representatives in 2017, a Cultural Values Statement (CVS - **Attachment 1**) with an associated map and protocols for accidental discovery were issued in Feb 2018, for the exploration being undertaken on the freehold Bendigo Stations and Ardour Stations.

This CVS also recommended an MOU (Memorandum of Understanding) be entered into “to provide a process for consultation throughout the development of the project. In November 2018 Aukaha acknowledged that Iwi would like to enter into an MOU. In July 2019 a draft MOE (Memorandum of Engagement) was presented. In March 2020 a Protocol of Engagement (POE) reached final draft.

Subsequently on February 2021, Iwi communicated to MGL that they would prefer not to formalise the Protocol of Engagement, but “prefer to agree in the spirit of trust and co-operation that both parties (Kā Rūnaka and Matakanui Gold Ltd) keep the lines of communication open on the progression of the exploration projects”. MGL accepted this decision and Iwi engagement since that time has been undertaken in general accordance with the POE, by keeping lines of communication open.

In 2023, engagement with Iwi stepped up as technical reports on the scale of the project were published. In May 2023 a formal letter of engagement was signed by both parties. In August 2023 Company management met with Aukaha staff in their Ōtepoti Dunedin office to present the July 2023 corporate presentation that outlined the history, discovery and pathway to permitting. In person meetings were supplemented by virtual meetings. In March 2024, a further meeting in Aukaha’s office was held to understand Aukaha’s availability over the following weeks to visit site while the ecological and hydrological fieldwork was underway. This led to a site visit by Aukaha managers and consultants in April 2024 including ecologists from MGL and Aukaha.

At the same time, engagement with nominated senior members of four runanga resulted in the drafting of a Process Agreement in August 2024 between MGL and the Seven Papatipu Rūnanga, of Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu that have interests in the project: Te Rūnaka o Moeraki, Kāti Huirapa Rūnaka ki Puketeraki, Te

Rūnaka o Ōtākou, Hokonui Rūnanga, Te Rūnaka o Awarua, Te Rūnaka o Awarua and Waihōpai Rūnaka, collectively known as Kā Runaka. Ka Rūnaka parties together share mana whenua status over the Ōtākou-Otago and Murihiku-Southland regions reflecting their intergenerational connections to this whenua.

The Process Agreement enabled the establishment of a steering committee (komiti) consisting of representatives of the four rūnaka of Mata-au/Clutha: Te Rūnaka o Moeraki, Kāti Huirapa Rūnaka ki Puketeraki, Te Rūnaka o Ōtākou, Hokonui Rūnanga. The komiti had oversight of Aukaha and other consultants engaged by Kā Runaka to review MGL's technical reports. Aukaha was to maintain briefings to its counterparty Te Ao Mārama, a mana whenua owned consultancy of Murihiku-Southland.

Korero with the komiti included provision of all preliminary technical reports for review and discussions around the consent application and the Fast Track Approval process. A shared platform was created to enable easy access to relevant technical documents, and communication remains active and collaborative.

In August 2025 the majority of the Board of Santana Minerals Limited met with representatives of Kā Rūnaka at Tamatea Marae near Ōtepoti-Dunedin for a mana-to-mana hui. This meeting covered cultural context, environmental and cultural interests, heritage and legacy, cultural mapping, history working with mining companies and the importance of relationship building and the approach taken when assessing projects. It also covered the partnership opportunities and reinforced MGL's intention to be transparent, build understanding and acknowledge the importance of a strong relationship.

Subsequent to the hui, Kā Rūnaka has re-iterated its connection with the whenua, subsequent alienation due to actions enabled by the Crown and, through such legislation such as the Ngāi Tahu Claims Settlement Act 1998 (NTCSA), recognition by the Crown of the importance of the broader area to Kā Rūnaka through the statutory acknowledgements of the Mata-au (Clutha River) and of Wairere (Lake Dunstan). Furthermore, Kā Rūnaka believe the parts of the MGL's application under the FTA it has reviewed fail to acknowledge Kā Rūnaka and their interests. MGL hold the position that they have made an extensive effort over many years for meaningful engagement and that constructive discussions with Kā Rūnaka remain ongoing.

MGL engaged Aukaha to prepare a Cultural Impact Assessment (CIA) that:

- Provides mana whenua with an overview of the project and environmental context;
- Enables Aukaha to assess the key information from the application and the proposed restoration or remediation plans and to provide technical advice to inform assessment of the project by mana whenua;
- Identifies mana whenua associations, history, and values associated with the area;
- Identifies key issues and cultural impacts of the project; and
- Provides recommendations to address the effects and cultural impacts of the project, where that is possible.

The unendorsed, draft report was not to be seen as Kā Rūnaka approval of this project, but as a basis for ongoing engagement and discussion between Matakanui and Kā Rūnaka in the context of this Project.

5. KEY CONSULTATION EVENTS AND FORUMS

5.1 Community email inbox and contact line

MGL offers a community inbox and a community engagement contact number for community members and interested parties to ask questions, provide feedback, or seek further information on the project. This ensures that there is a direct and accessible communication between the public and the project team. This ‘get in touch’ information is promoted on their website, newsletters, and external community advertisements.

5.2 Community Group Presentations

The MGL Team has presented to various events and organisations in the local area. These presentations provide an overview of the proposed project and also allow the opportunity for attendees to ask questions, both in a group setting and through one-on-one conversation.

Presentations were delivered to the following groups, businesses, and government agencies:

- Wanaka Rotary Club
- Alexandra Rotary Club
- Cromwell Rotary Club
- Central Otago REAP
- Cromwell Lions Club (2)
- Business South BA5 Cromwell (2)
- Forsyth Barr/ Wanaka Chamber of Business BA5
- Vintage Car Club Cromwell
- Cromwell College Teachers
- Cromwell Sports Club
- Wanaka Chamber of Business Breakfast
- Cromwell Bayley’s Real Estate
- Cromwell ITM
- Cromwell Mountain Bike Club
- Cromwell Community Board
- Cromwell Business Network – breakfast
- Goldenview Lifestyle Village – Cromwell
- Otago Conservation Board
- NZ Conservation Authority
- Client Construction Group – Central Otago
- Heritage New Zealand
- Herenga ā Nuku Aotearoa, the Outdoor Access Commission

- Fish and Game New Zealand
- Pembroke Group – Wanaka
- Queenstown Business Chamber of Commerce
- Central Otago Property Valuers
- Institute of Quarrying (Otago/Southland)
- Survey and Spatial NZ (Central Otago branch)

Presentations offered to:

- NZ Game Council

5.3 Business South Pulse Check Survey

In December 2024, Business South on behalf of MGL carried out a pulse check survey of the business community. The survey seeks to understand the sentiment, concerns and aspirations of the business community in relation to the proposed mine. To gather views on the BOGP the question was asked ‘How do you feel about the proposed gold mine?’, and the following responses were received.

- **57%:** Positive for businesses
- **13%:** Positive but with concerns
- **15%:** Need more information
- **12%:** Do not support the mine
- **2%:** Heard of it but feel unaffected

The comments received were generally supportive, noting the economic benefits and job creation, revitalisation of local communities, opportunities for local suppliers and services, and the project’s alignment with the region’s historical mining heritage.

However, some respondents expressed concerns about potential environmental impacts, including effects on water quality, biodiversity, and landscape. Others highlighted the importance of a genuine social licence, calling for meaningful community engagement and transparency. Additional concerns included fears that economic gains may go offshore with limited local reinvestment, the perception that the fast-track process bypasses due diligence and public input, and potential strain on infrastructure such as housing, infrastructure, and the local workforce.

Comments emphasised the importance of investing in local infrastructure and services, using local contractors and workforce, ensuring environmental safeguards and long-term rehabilitation plans, and maintaining open, respectful dialogue with the community.

5.4 Community Drop-in Sessions

In September 2024, MGL began holding community drop-in sessions in both Cromwell and Tarras, and from July 2025 this expanded to include the surrounding communities of Alexandra, Luggate, and Ophir. These sessions provide an open forum for local residents and interested parties to learn about the project directly from MGL representatives, ask questions, raise concerns, and register their interest in future opportunities associated with the project.

To date, 18 sessions have been held in Tarras, attracting 62 attendees, and 31 sessions have been held in Cromwell, with participation from more than 250 people. Drop-in sessions have also been held in other nearby towns in the region; Alexandra, Omakau, Luggate, and Ophir. 7 of these sessions have been held with 61 attendees.

The most frequent topics raised during discussions included:

- Interest in future employment opportunities;
- Local service providers and suppliers seeking opportunities to work with the mine;
- Accommodation availability to support the workforce;
- Impacts on Thomson Gorge Road that passes through the project area; and
- Environmental impacts such as dust, water, and light.

Section 7 of this application provides a full summary of feedback received in relation to specific topics.

Community Feedback

Many attendees shared positive views about the project's potential benefits, noting its alignment with the region's history and future economic prospects. Common themes included enthusiasm for local job creation, revitalisation of the community, and recognition of gold mining as an important part of the region's history and identity, and excitement to return to those roots. Several people highlighted the opportunities the project could create for families to return or remain in the area, while others viewed it as a valuable investment in local industry and infrastructure. Overall, feedback reflected a general sense of optimism about the project's contribution to both the regional and national economy.

MGL employees manned information tents at local shows, providing opportunity for those that live outside of the Cromwell and Tarras area to gather information and ask questions.

The following events were attended:

- Alexandra Blossom Festival 2024 – over 15,000 people attended the Saturday in the Park event, the Santana tent had a good flow of people, with two attendees voicing concerns to the project.
- Central Otago A&P Show (Omakau) 2025 – unknown event attendance however the Santana tent was popular, 4 attendees raised strong concern about the project.
- Wanaka A&P Show 2025 – the show attracted 40,000 visitors and the tent had a constant flow of people. The majority were positive and supportive with two voicing opposition to the project.
- Wheels at Wanaka 2025 – the event attracted over 65,000 attendees and the Santana tent was busy with a constant flow of people, with only a very small number raising strong concerns about the project.
- Alexandra Blossom Festival 2025 – more than 15,500 attended the festival, with the MGL tent receiving a constant flow of interest. Three of the attendees voiced opposition to the project.

The overall sentiment of the Cromwell community is very positive, the project has received around 1000 enquiries about potential job opportunities, supplier opportunities and opportunities for businesses. There is some concern about housing and the lack of available accommodation options in the region.

The overall sentiment of the Tarras community is mixed, with some attendees eager to be involved in the mining operations, while some attendees have expressed concerns around the environmental impact of the project, including the impacts on water, a tailings dam failure, landscape, noise, dust, light, and accommodation. These concerns are addressed in section 8.

5.5 Meetings and Individual Consultation

Regular meetings were offered to affected residents and community groups identified as such by MGL. Initial letter drops were delivered and if no response was received, follow-up letters were delivered along the proposed main access route to the site, requesting a meeting to discuss the proposed project. These meetings provided a platform to discuss the proposed project, the preferred access route, ask questions, and gather feedback. From these initial meetings, ongoing communication has been had with nearby landowners, this has included in person meetings, and emails addressing questions, concerns, construction activities, requests, and timeline information.

Meetings have been held, some ongoing, with the following community, environmental and industry groups:

- Sustainable Tarras;
- Central Otago Winegrowers Association;
- Environmental Defence Society;
- Wai Wanaka;
- Tarras Farm Limited Partnership;
- Otago Goldfields Heritage Trust;
- Thomson Gorge Road Residents;
- Bendigo Loop Residents adjacent to Matilda Rise;
- Bendigo Station; and
- Ardour Station owners and lessees.

5.6 Site Tours

Site tours were offered to nearby landowners, interested parties, education providers, and requested from a number of recreation groups. Tours could include information on the geology and progress to date, a drive up to the project site to view the location of the proposed layout and infrastructure areas, historical mining information, and information on the discovery areas. These tours took between 1.5hrs to 3 hrs and provided time to ask and answer questions, raise concerns, and to gather information and understanding of the project. Tour size ranged from one-on-one tours to 142 attendees on one tour.

Government officials and Parliamentary visits have included:

- MP Joseph Mooney for Southland and MP Stuart Smith for Kaikoura (At time, Spokesperson for energy & resources) (Site visit, project update) – March 2023;
- National MP Barbara Kruger for Taranaki-King Country (At time, Spokesperson for Conservation) (Site visit, project update) – August 2023;

- Central Otago District Council – Former Mayor, Tim Cadogan with current CE Peter Kelly – November 2023;
- ACT MP Simon Court and MP Todd Stephenson (Site visit, project update) – November 2023;
- Minister Shane Jones, MP Miles Anderson for Waitaki, Bruce Parkes (GM) MBIE (Site visit, project update) – March 2024; and
- Central Otago District Council – Mayor Tamah Alley and CE Peter Kelly – December 2024.

Note: Parliamentary/Ministerial/Government support staff were also in attendance.

Community members attending drop-in sessions and public events have expressed interest in the possibility of mine site tours once operations commence. Several individuals have also indicated a willingness to support or lead such tours, should the opportunity arise.

5.6.1 Community Liaison Group

MGL has established a Community Liaison Group (CLG) for the BOGP to foster open communication, trust, and collaboration between the project team, local residents, and key stakeholders. The CLG provides a forum to discuss project progress, raise and address community concerns, and ensure diverse perspectives are represented throughout the development process.

The group comprises local community representatives, businesses, special interest groups, and MGL personnel. Of the 10 groups initially invited to participate, seven accepted. All invitations remain open. The first meeting was held on 23 September 2025, with quarterly meetings scheduled thereafter.

The CLG is chaired by MGL's General Manager and supported by the Senior Advisor – Communications and Government Relations as secretary. Meetings are conducted respectfully and focus on sharing project updates, gathering feedback, and identifying opportunities to enhance community wellbeing.

The establishment of the CLG demonstrates MGL's commitment to maintaining genuine dialogue, building trust, and ensuring the BOGP delivers long-term benefits for the region and its communities.

First meeting

The first meeting was held on Tuesday 23rd September 2025, and discussion focused on ensuring transparency and independence within the CLG, fostering meaningful two-way engagement, and managing information responsibly. Members also highlighted the importance of clear and consistent public messaging, addressing community wellbeing issues such as housing affordability, and ensuring the Project delivers lasting benefits for local tourism and the wider community. The group scheduled the next meeting for December 2025.

6. ENGAGEMENT CHANNELS

6.1.1

6.1.2 Santana Minerals Website

The Santana Minerals website provides information on the company, the project team and the BOGP: www.santanaminerals.com

The website was updated in July 2024 to be focused solely on the BOGP.

The website has the information posters that are available at drop-in sessions, and an interactive map allows visitors to the website to navigate around the area and see the location of the proposed footprint and the elements included in that footprint. Frequently asked questions are addressed and as information becomes available the website is updated to include this. The website also provides a form to take expressions of interest in working with Santana Minerals, as this makes up a large amount of the enquiries that are received, with around 1000 expressions of interest received to date.

6.1.3 The Prospectors Post – Community Newsletter

‘The Prospectors Post’ is the community newsletter that began in August 2024 and is emailed to subscribers monthly, as well as being available on the Santana Minerals website. The newsletter provides information and updates on the project, advertises drop-in sessions, explores the history of mining in the region, addresses frequently asked questions and introduces members of the Santana team. It provides this information in a conversational, concise, and easy to read format.

The newsletter goes out to about 1300 subscribers, and is available at drop-in sessions, on the Santana Minerals website, and at community events where the team are holding information sessions.

6.1.4 The Central App, The Cromwell Bulletin, and The Central News Advertising

Weekly advertising is run in ‘The Central App’, the ‘Cromwell Bulletin’, and ‘The Central News’. The advertising spots are used to communicate local drop-in sessions, engagement events at local shows and festivals, and to direct readers to the Santana Minerals website for project information.

6.1.5 Santana Community Update spot on Radio Central

Beginning October 2023 CEO Damian Spring has a monthly radio interview with local radio station Radio Central. This 15-minute live radio interview slot provides an opportunity to discuss what is currently happening with the project, any updates, advertise engagement sessions, discuss concerns and opportunities, and keep the community informed. From August 2025, this has expanded to a weekly time slot where the wider MGL team can talk to the project and activities as the project develops.

6.1.6 Community Sponsorship, Scholarships and Social Investment

MGL recognises that strong community relationships are essential to the success of our project. As part of the commitment to supporting the regions in which MGL live and operate, MGL has actively invested in the local community through sponsorships, scholarships, and other initiatives.

To date, this has provided funding and support to a range of local organisations, events, and educational pathways, fostering opportunities for growth and development. Many of these initiatives are ongoing, ensuring long-term benefits for the community.

The engagement efforts reflect MGL's commitment to being a responsible and valued partner, contributing not just to economic development but also to the social and educational wellbeing of the region.

Community Events

- Otago Goldfields Heritage Trust – World Gold Panning Championships 2026 – Principal Sponsor;
- Light up Winter Cromwell 2024 – Bronze sponsor;
- Light up Winter Cromwell 2025 – Bronze sponsor;
- Cromwell Street Party & Fireworks 2024 – Silver sponsor;
- Cromwell Street Party & Fireworks 2025 – Gold sponsor;
- Waiata Theatre Productions – Hunchback of Notre Dame (Clyde) – Cast member sponsor; and
- Fine Thyme Theatre – Nothing to Fear (Cromwell) - Bronze sponsor.

Community Education

- Two annual scholarships for Cromwell College – vocational and tertiary 2024 & 2025;
- Two annual scholarships for Dunstan High School – vocational and tertiary 2025;
- Tarras School – IT equipment and high vis vests for student safety;
- Wakatipu High School – Adventure Race Team – Business Sponsor;
- Cromwell Youth Trust – Donation towards operational costs; and
- Work It Well/Cromwell Community House – Mental Health awareness tradie breakfast.

Community Sporting Groups

- Santana Minerals Central Otago Football League – Principal Sponsor;
- Bannockburn Bowling Club – Sponsorship towards new jackets for the team;
- Central Otago Motorsport Group – Street race sponsor;
- Cromwell Races – Race sponsor;
- Cromwell Swimming Club – Spring carnival lane sponsor;
- Cromwell Bowling Club – Business sponsor – upkeep of facility;
- Cromwell Bowling Club – Lilas Benzoni 3 Bowls Triples tournament sponsor;
- Cromwell Junior Rugby Club – Donation for fundraiser gala, team to head to Australia;
- Cromwell Bowling Club – Gold sponsor of Women's tournament;
- Cromwell Kids Fun Club – Donation towards operating costs;
- Clyde Bowling Club – Gold sponsor for Xmas tournament; and
- Goldfields Primary School Duathlon – Gold sponsor.

Community Fundraising

- Friends of Tarras School Golf Day – Platinum sponsor for Tarras Primary School;
- Tarras Community AED – donation toward purchase;
- Cromwell Lions Golden Golf Charity Tournament – Hole sponsor for Cromwell Scout Group;
- Business South Community Golf Day – Hole sponsor for Dunstan Hospital; and
- Manuharekia Valley – Community Hub, Omakau – Donation towards new building.

7. SUMMARY OF STAKEHOLDER CONCERNS AND FEEDBACK

7.1 Accommodation

During community engagement, concerns were raised regarding existing housing pressures within the region and the potential for the project to intensify these pressures through an influx of workers. Community members questioned whether housing to support the workforce would be provided through the company renting or purchasing homes and expressed concerns about the impact on housing availability and affordability, particularly for seasonal workers in the viticulture and horticulture sectors. It was noted that workers employed in mining, often on higher incomes, could inadvertently drive up rental prices and reduce housing accessibility for others in lower-income roles.

In response, MGL has committed to providing short-term accommodation for the construction workforce during the initial years of the project, which will assist in easing demand on the existing housing market. Additionally, transport options will be made available to enable commuting from a wider geographical area, these areas could include Cromwell, Luggate, Wānaka, Hāwea, Queenstown, Clyde, Alexandra, and Ōmakau. This approach is intended to distribute accommodation options more broadly across the region.

MGL has also received expressions of interest from locally based individuals who currently undertake fly-in-fly-out (FIFO) or drive-in-drive-out (DIDO) work at other mine sites. The company intends to prioritise recruitment from within the local community, particularly targeting those already residing in the region but working outside of it, to further reduce pressure on local housing and support regional economic retention.

7.2 Air Quality

Air quality, particularly in relation to dust generation from the mine site and associated access roads, was identified as a key concern by stakeholders, including residents along the proposed access route and in the communities of Tarras and Ōmakau. Concerns were raised regarding the potential for dust to contain contaminants that could settle on crops, potentially affecting agricultural production and associated businesses. One drop-in session attendee specifically expressed concern that dust could travel over the Dunstan Mountains and impact air quality in Ōmakau.

As part of MGL baseline studies, dust monitoring programmes (which are ongoing) and a modelling exercise were undertaken to assess the extent and dispersion of dust emissions from the proposed mine. Monitoring data indicates that under the highest likely wind conditions, dust from the mine is unlikely to travel more than 250–300 metres downwind. Modelling suggests that finer dust particles may reach

distances of up to 600 metres. The nearest residence to the mine site is approximately 3 kilometres away—well beyond the range at which dust is predicted to travel.

An Air Quality Management Plan (AQMP) has been developed to minimise dust generation at the source and ensure compliance with air quality standards at the site boundary. Measures proposed in the AQMP include regular watering of haul roads, the installation of misting systems where appropriate, ongoing haul road maintenance, vegetation of stockpiles, progressive rehabilitation and revegetation, and the implementation of speed limits within the site. MGL also intends to apply company-imposed speed restrictions on public access roads for company and contractor vehicles to further minimise dust impacts on nearby communities. Furthermore, MGL will seal Thomson Gorge Road from Ardour Road to the turnoff to the mine site.

7.3 Ecology

Throughout the community engagement process, a number of stakeholders raised concerns regarding the potential ecological impacts of the Project. The primary issues expressed related to the potential disturbance of native flora and fauna within the project footprint, the risk of downstream effects on freshwater habitats and aquatic species, and the ability of rehabilitation and closure plans to restore biodiversity values following mining.

MGL commissioned an extensive suite of ecological and environmental investigations covering terrestrial, avian, herpetofauna, and freshwater ecosystems. These studies established a detailed baseline understanding of existing ecological values, identified the likely impact pathways, and informed the development of specific measures to avoid, remedy, mitigate, or compensate for potential effects. The results of these studies directly influenced the design and planning of the project. For example, there is a significant amount of ecological work that will be undertaken before bulk mining works can begin, such as lizard relocation. Sensitive habitats and key vegetation communities have been avoided where practicable, with mine infrastructure and road routes relocated to areas of lower ecological value. In addition, comprehensive dust, erosion, and water-management controls have been embedded into the Environmental Management Plans to protect downstream watercourses and aquatic environments.

MGL has also committed to progressive rehabilitation throughout the life of the project to minimise the extent of disturbed land at any one time. As part of the overall mitigation and enhancement strategy, two predator- and pest-exclusion ecological areas will be established, together covering approximately 66 hectares. These fenced areas will protect remnant native vegetation and provide secure habitat for indigenous species, resulting in a measurable uplift in local biodiversity and ecological resilience.

At closure, significant portions of the site will be rehabilitated into a mosaic of wetlands, drylands, and engineered rock stacks designed to replicate natural landforms and provide diverse ecological habitats. The closure and restoration strategy has been developed in consultation with ecological experts.

Expert studies found that the ecological value of the Shepherds and Rise and Shine Creeks and associated tributaries varied from moderate to high in the upper reaches to moderate to low in the lower reaches. Furthermore, no fish, koura and kakahi are present in Shepherds Creek or Rise and Shine Creek. Shepherds Creek is considered representative of a fishless low gradient Dunstan mountains small perennial stream. In Rise and Shine Creek the macroinvertebrate fauna was relatively sparse. By comparison, Bendigo Creek and its tributary Clearwater Creek, that are outside the project footprint, have diverse high-quality macroinvertebrate communities that reflect the higher quality habitat in these streams.

As part of the residual effects management package for the establishment and operation of the BOGP, ecological restoration will be undertaken across parts of Ardgour Station, called the Ardgour Restoration Area. The Ardgour Restoration Area (Figure 1) is made up on approximately 1,263 ha and lies northeast of the mine footprint. The objective of this area is to enhance both woody ecosystems and sustain indigenous dominated herbfield (cusionfield) ecosystems.

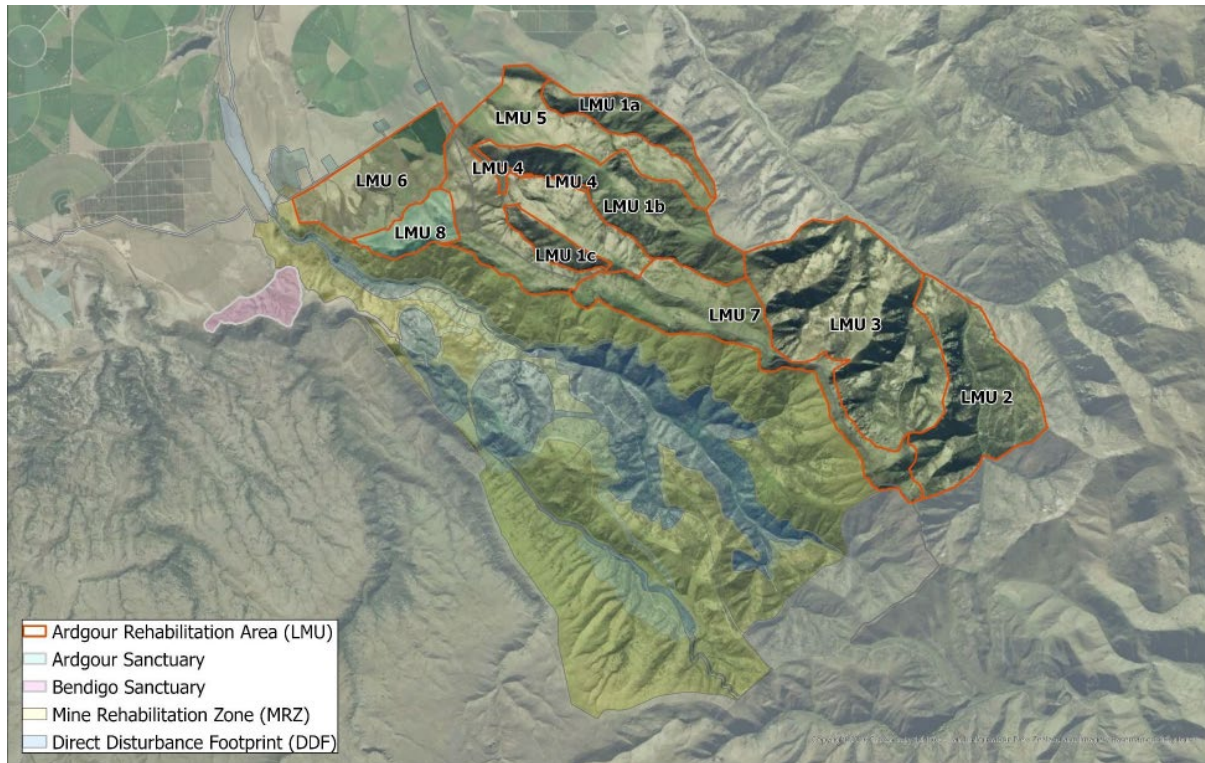


Figure 1 The Ardgour Restoration Area (within orange lines)

7.4 Employment & Economic

From drop-in sessions, local events, walk-ins, emails, and phone calls, MGL has heard from many local individuals and members of the business community who are looking forward to the economic benefits the project is expected to bring to the region, including the positive flow-on effects to local businesses, and opportunities for young people in local towns. There is strong community interest in the opportunities the project presents for employment, training and development, local procurement, and increased economic activity across Central Otago.

While this support has been clear, some stakeholders expressed concern that, as Santana Minerals is an Australian-based parent company, the economic benefits of the project may not be fully realised within New Zealand. In response, it is noted that over 60% of the gross profits generated from the gold extracted are expected to remain in New Zealand through channels such as dividends to New Zealand shareholders (who currently hold a 40% stake in the company), as well as through the payment of taxes, and royalties. This figure does not include the significant additional economic activity generated through local wages, procurement of goods and services, and general local expenditure.

Expenditure of current activities within NZ has been an average of \$2 million per month during the 12 months to the end of August 2025, with over 50 employees and contractors working on the project locally, to date, MGL has spent over \$60 million.

An independent assessment of the economic impacts of the BOGP, undertaken by economist Benje Patterson, estimates the project will contribute approximately \$5.8 billion to New Zealand's GDP. Of this, around \$1.8 billion is expected to be delivered directly to the government through corporate taxes, royalties, PAYE, and ACC contributions.

The project has already generated strong interest, with a large number of expressions of interest received from individuals seeking employment opportunities, as well as from local businesses offering to supply goods and services. The project is expected to employ an average of 351 people, with an employment peak of 506 people in Year 1 as construction activities are completed, and operations begin. Sourcing hundreds of workers will be a complex recruitment exercise, but the Inland Otago job market has previously demonstrated it can absorb such an employment lift. Workers have been attracted to Inland Otago to fill more than 18,000 new jobs over the past decade.

7.5 Energy requirements

Some stakeholders raised concerns regarding the power requirements of the proposed Bendigo-Ophir Gold Project—particularly in relation to the capacity and resilience of the existing electricity network in the area. Specific apprehensions included the perceived fragility of the local grid and the possibility that increased demand could lead to rising costs for local consumers or negatively affect network reliability.

In response to these concerns, Aurora Energy, the local electricity distribution provider, confirmed that they have no reason to believe that the connection of the proposed mine will cause any issues related to the reliability or performance of the electricity system. The proposed mine will be fed from its own substation connected directly to Aurora Energy's 66kV sub transmission network, and Aurora Energy do not believe this will have any adverse effect on the supply voltage (or earthing) for customers connected to the Lindis Crossing substation.

Furthermore, the project is expected to offer a positive opportunity to address existing resilience risks in the local network by providing the momentum and investment needed to support upgrades that benefit the wider region, including investigating the possibility of a new grid exit point at Bendigo on the 220kV ROX-TWZ-A transmission lines that are within 1km of the project's planned transformer.

7.6 Heritage

Some members of the local community expressed concern regarding the potential loss of archaeological features and heritage values within the proposed project area. This feedback highlighted the significance of the site's historic gold mining history, and the desire to ensure that such values are acknowledged and protected where possible.

The Bendigo-Ophir Gold Project is located within a broader landscape known for its rich archaeological and historical significance. However, detailed assessments have confirmed that areas with the highest concentration of heritage features at the Bendigo Reefs lie outside the proposed project footprint and will not be affected by the planned works.

To guide the appropriate management of archaeological resources, an Archaeological Management Plan (AMP) has been prepared.

This plan outlines protocols to ensure that:

- All archaeological features within the project area are documented to recognised best practice standards prior to any disturbance or removal;
- Identified heritage features that are to be retained and protected will be clearly marked in the field, and buffers will be established to avoid unintentional disturbance; and
- Site works will be conducted in accordance with relevant statutory requirements, including any authority processes under the Heritage New Zealand Pouhere Taonga Act 2014.

MGL is committed to preserving and recording the cultural heritage of the area and ensuring that the development proceeds with respect for the region's historical legacy.

7.7 Light

Concerns were raised by nearby residents and community groups regarding the potential effects of night lighting associated with 24-hour operations, particularly in relation to light spill and the potential degradation of the area's valued dark sky qualities, which contribute to both local amenity and visitor experience.

An exterior lighting assessment has been undertaken, drawing on best practice guidance, including Dark Sky lighting principles. These principles have informed the design of the project's exterior lighting strategy.

Mitigation measures incorporated into the design include:

- Use of low-output lighting to minimise excessive illumination;
- Installation of sensors and controls to reduce unnecessary lighting during periods of low activity;
- Use of optically controlled light fittings to direct light precisely where needed and avoid upward spill;
- Exclusive use of LED light sources, chosen for their energy efficiency and controllability; and
- Application of task-specific lighting levels, ensuring that only the required strength of light is used in each operational area.

The project is committed to minimising light spill and off-site lighting effects wherever reasonably practicable, while ensuring health and safety standards are fully met.

7.8 Noise and Vibration

Residents on the access roads and nearby Bendigo Loop Road have expressed concern over the potential noise and vibration effects from the mine operations and blasting. One resident specifically noted that the tranquil and peaceful setting of the area had been a key factor in choosing to live there. They expressed concern that the proposed 24-hour operations could impact the existing rural amenity and character of their property.

MGL has carefully considered the potential for noise and vibration impacts in the design of the project. The proposed location of the processing plant within a valley setting helps to naturally mitigate both noise and dust emissions.

Noise modelling demonstrated that the large distances between primary noise sources and sensitive receivers, combined with the natural screening effects provided by the terrain, means that activity noise

levels will easily comply with the CODP permitted activity noise limits of 55 dB LA10 (daytime) and 40 dB LA10 (night-time) at the nearest residential dwellings.

On site blasting activities are also expected to comply with the CODP permitted activity standards. The mine activities are a number of kilometres from the nearest residence.

Blasting will be at set times during the day between 10am and 9pm. A system will be implemented to inform the public with reasonable notice (e.g. day before) that a blast is scheduled and at what time. However, there will be flexibility to change that time should circumstances require it (e.g. lightning delays) with the notification system able to update the public of any change.

7.9 Property Values

Residents of Thomson Gorge Road expressed concern about the potential decline in property values and the challenges associated with selling their properties at market value.

While effects on property values are not considered an environmental effect under the Resource Management Act, MGL acknowledges that perceived changes in value may be of concern to affected landowners. The project's environmental assessments indicate that off-site amenity effects — including noise, dust, and visual effects — will remain within accepted limits. On this basis, it is not anticipated that the BOGP will generate adverse effects that could influence surrounding property values.

Improvements to the Thomson Gorge Road by widening, creating stormwater drains, sealing and their driveway access improvements should go some way to mitigate direct concerns.

Conversely, increased economic activity and local employment opportunities associated with the project may generate additional demand for nearby housing, potentially placing upward pressure on property values in the surrounding area.

7.10 Recreation

Thomson Gorge Road is a public road that runs through sections of the proposed Project area and currently provides access to recreation areas and a through-route across the Dunstan Mountains. Feedback received from individuals and recreational groups, including mountain bikers, horse riders, dirt bike riders, and hunters, identified concern regarding potential loss of access and restrictions on recreational activities as a result of the Project.

A section of Thomson Gorge Road will require temporary closure for the duration of mining activities. The Project's rehabilitation plan includes the reinstatement of a route for cyclists, walkers, and horse riders that follows, or is located as close as practicable to, the existing Thomson Gorge Road alignment. An alternative public road will be constructed along the Ardgour Rise to enable access across the Dunstan Mountains, and retained following mine closure, allowing for a loop route for recreational users. Ardgour Rise will incorporate vantage points providing views of the mine site, supporting the visitor experience during operations and post-closure.

The Come In Time stamper battery will remain accessible but by a longer walking route accessible via the Bendigo Historic Reserve. This will require a longer time commitment, but also a new recreation experience. In talking with recreation groups including 4WD clubs, horse riders, a mountain bike club, and hunters, there were no major concerns about the road being redirected along the Ardgour Rise so long as their normal recreation activities could still occur and ideally there were less gates (TGR has 27 gates to open and close currently). They also requested that provisions be made around things like rock

placement for getting on and off horses, and that no restrictions be made around carrying firearms for those that want to access the DOC hunting blocks.

7.11 Rehabilitation and Closure

Ensuring that there is an appropriate plan for closure was a common theme that came up in drop-in sessions, as well as in discussions with local community groups. Questions were raised asking what the site will look like at closure, assurances around water quality and tailings storage facility resilience, and what happens if the company were to collapse. Rehabilitation and closure are in front of mind during the design phase, and from day one soil will be carefully removed and stored for future use.

Mine rehabilitation and closure plans have been developed and are part of this application (**Part B**). These plans set out how MGL will ensure the disturbed areas are rehabilitated to stable and benign environments.

Financial bonds will be lodged and reviewed annually to ensure rehabilitation and closure requirements are able to be met at any point within the next 12-month period accounting for the current state, predicted work, inflation and completed rehabilitation.

7.12 Temporary Construction Camp

Concerns were raised by local residents, particularly those living along Thomson Gorge Road, regarding the proposed temporary construction camp.

Key concerns included:

- The potential for drug and alcohol misuse by camp residents;
- The possibility of anti-social behaviour; and
- An anticipated increase in traffic volumes and vehicle speeds on Thomson Gorge Road.
- Whilst such incidents are rare across the Australasian mining industry as a whole, MGL takes these concerns seriously and incorporate measures into the planning of the construction camp to proactively address them. These include:
 - A robust Drug and Alcohol Policy that applies to all employees, contractors, and site visitors. This includes regular testing protocols to ensure compliance and a safe working environment;
 - The implementation of company-imposed speed restrictions on designated access routes, including Thomson Gorge Road, to mitigate the risk of speeding and improve safety for local road user; and
 - The development of a Construction Camp Management Policy, which will clearly outline rules around alcohol consumption, visitor access, and acceptable behaviour within the camp.

These measures aim to provide assurance to the community that the construction camp will be well-managed, respectful of the surrounding environment, and aligned with the expectations of local residents and stakeholders.

7.13 Tailings Storage Facility (TSF)

Residents down the valley from the project site raised concerns about the integrity of the tailings storage facility (TSF) and its ability to stand up to a significant seismic event such as an Alpine Fault rupture. They were also concerned about seepage from the facility and the impact on their water supply.

In response to these concerns, MGL confirms that the TSF has been designed and will be constructed in accordance with the New Zealand Dam Safety Guidelines. The facility will be engineered to safely contain tailings under extreme seismic conditions, including the capacity to withstand a 1 in 10,000-year earthquake scenario. This is significantly more conservative than the Alpine Fault magnitude 8 (AF8) scenario, which represents a 1 in 300-year event. The TSF will also be reinforced by an engineered landform (ELF) made of large volumes of rockfill, providing further structural resilience. Detailed engineering designs will be independently peer reviewed as part of the building consent application for the TSF. The embankment designers have concluded that there is no credible mechanism of failure of the TSF with the significant buttress effect of the engineered land form (ELF) against the downstream of the embankment.

The chosen site within a schist-dominated valley presents key geotechnical advantages. The schist bedrock has much lower permeability than the alluvial gravels found closer to river flats, enhancing containment of tailings and water. The TSF and ELF will include an integrated drainage system within their foundations to intercept and manage any seepage. Water captured in this system will be directed to a seepage sump at the downstream toe of the ELF, where it will be collected for reuse in processing or pumped back to the TSF.

Surface water management has also been carefully considered. Stormwater runoff from certain areas will be directed to a silt pond designed to accommodate a 10-year, 72-hour storm event. This system allows sediment to settle before water is either reused on-site or discharged to Shepherds Creek, subject to meeting strict discharge quality thresholds. Other areas such as the TSF impoundment or open pits, will retain this storm water and reuse through the process plant thus offsetting the need to draw from the Bendigo aquifer water bore. Additionally, clean water will be diverted around the TSF and ELF using constructed water races, ensuring the maintenance of flow in Shepherds Creek. Riparian planting will be established alongside these channels to support ecological values and further stabilise the landscape.

7.14 Tourism and impact on winegrowers

Concerns were raised, particularly from the Central Otago Winegrowers Association membership and Sustainable Tarras, about the potential impact on the tourism industry, which is intertwined with the wine industry. Stakeholders expressed apprehension that the introduction of mining activity could alter the perception of the area as a tourism and wine destination, potentially affecting visitor numbers, brand reputation, and the overall experience for tourists.

Concerns centred on potential visual impacts, dust, noise, and traffic, which are addressed within other sections of this report. The importance of maintaining the aesthetic and environmental values that underpin the wine tourism offering was highlighted, along with a desire for transparency around how such effects would be managed or mitigated.

Initial discussions have begun to create a mine and wine experience with potential for tours of the mine followed by tours of vineyards. Strict health and safety requirements will need to be considered to facilitate visitors within an operating mine, but precedents exist elsewhere in New Zealand.

The new Ardgour Rise Road alignment will create visitor experience opportunities during the mines operation and endure post mine closure.

7.15 Traffic

Residents along the proposed access route, particularly Thomson Gorge Road, raised several concerns regarding the potential impacts of increased traffic associated with the project. These included the expected increase in vehicle movements—particularly heavy vehicles—the rationale for selecting Thomson Gorge Road as the preferred route, and safety risks arising from higher traffic volumes. Dust generation from the unsealed road surface was also a concern, particularly in relation to impacts on residents, recreational users of the area, and their businesses. One resident expressed concern about the potential effect on their bed and breakfast business, while a farming operation noted the challenge of safely accessing their cattle yards in light of increased traffic flows. Concerns were also raised around the construction phase of road upgrades, associated disruption and how resident access would be maintained.

In response to these concerns, MGL confirms that access to properties will be maintained throughout road construction. Where necessary for safety, contractors will provide traffic escorts to ensure safe and reliable access for residents. These arrangements will be coordinated directly with affected property owners as part of the contractor's project start-up process and a detailed traffic management plan has been developed. The upgrades to the road will provide enduring safety improvements for all road users.

Currently, traffic volumes on Thomson Gorge Road range from fewer than 100 vehicle movements per day (vpd) to approximately 300 vpd. During the peak construction period, the project is expected to generate approximately 400 vpd, reducing to around 250 vpd during operations. To manage this increased activity and mitigate potential effects, a range of transport-related improvements are proposed. These include safety upgrades at the SH8/Ardgour Road intersection, upgrading sections of Thomson Gorge Road, and implementing a new alternative road route via Ardgour Station.

A resident from the Luggate community commented that the increase in traffic over the 'red bridge' would require upgrades to be carried out at the bridge. As part of the overall mitigation of housing, traffic and workers' fatigue management, transport will be provided to mine workers to take them to and from towns within an hour's drive, this will help to reduce the number of light vehicles that travel to and from the site. There has been the suggestion from drop-in sessions that it would be useful if these busses were also available to the wider community as there is a lack of public transport options in the areas, and many people commute for work. MGL has been in communication with a transport provider who is interested in looking at an option to incorporate this as a wider benefit to the community.

To further address safety and amenity concerns, MGL has requested CODC implement a reduced speed limit for Thomson Gorge Road and will enforce a company policy for its own vehicles regulating vehicle speeds along the route. These measures, combined with road improvements and clear communication with affected residents, aim to ensure that traffic-related effects are well managed throughout the life of the project.

7.16 Visual and Landscape

Stakeholder feedback has highlighted concerns regarding the potential visibility of the proposed mine and associated infrastructure from a range of public and recreational viewpoints. These included local roads, as well as recreational trails, elevated lookouts, and aerial perspectives used by tourism operators. The potential for visual impacts on visitor experience, and local amenity was a common theme—particularly in the context of Central Otago's open and expansive landscape, which is highly valued by residents and tourists alike.

The project is located within an area identified in the CODP as an Outstanding Natural Landscape (ONL). This designation acknowledges the region's distinctive landforms, natural character, and aesthetic value, and places a high threshold on the management of visual change and landscape integrity.

Matakanui Gold Limited (MGL) has prioritised landscape-responsive design throughout the project planning process. Key measures to minimise visual impact include:

- **Minimisation of Project Footprint:** The overall disturbance area has been refined through detailed design work, focusing on reducing the extent of earthworks and infrastructure placement wherever possible.
- **Pit Redesign:** The orientation and geometry of the open pit has been reconfigured, reducing the visibility of the pit highwall from key public viewpoints.
- **Engineered Landforms:** Engineered landforms have been designed in a way where slopes and profiles have been shaped to reflect the natural contours of the surrounding landscape. This approach reduces stark contrasts and aids in long-term visual rehabilitation.
- **Building Design and Colour Treatments:** All proposed buildings and above-ground structures will comply with the CODP colour standards, using muted, recessive tones that blend with the natural Central Otago palette, such as schist greys and earthy browns.

These visual mitigation strategies have been informed by landscape and visual assessment expertise and will continue to be refined as the project progresses through detailed design. Progressive rehabilitation, including planting of locally appropriate species and restoration of landforms, will further assist in reducing long-term landscape effects and supporting reintegration of the site with its surrounding environment.

MGL remains committed to managing landscape and visual effects in a manner that is sympathetic to the unique character of the region.

7.17 Water

Water remains a key area of concern for some stakeholders, particularly those living downstream of the Project area and residents who draw water from the Bendigo Aquifer. One local resident noted that their bore currently produces exceptionally pure water and expressed a strong desire to ensure this is not adversely affected by mining activities.

MGL has undertaken extensive baseline water monitoring and developed a comprehensive Water Management Plan informed by expert hydrological and technical assessments. These test pumping results have been reviewed by a hydrology expert and advice has been received that this is a viable option for our water needs within full compliance of the regional plan.

To protect surface and groundwater quality, diversion drains will be constructed around the site to ensure clean water remains separated from mine-impacted water. All mine-impacted water will remain within a closed water circuit, pumped back to the process plant for reuse. Water from the Engineered Landform (ELF) and Tailings Storage Facility (TSF) will be recirculated to the processing plant. Clean water will only be discharged once confirmed to meet compliance standards. Ongoing compliance monitoring of groundwater will take place and surface water will need to stay within the environmental limits.

Attachment 1: Cultural Values Statement

Cultural Values Statement: Matakanui Gold Ltd

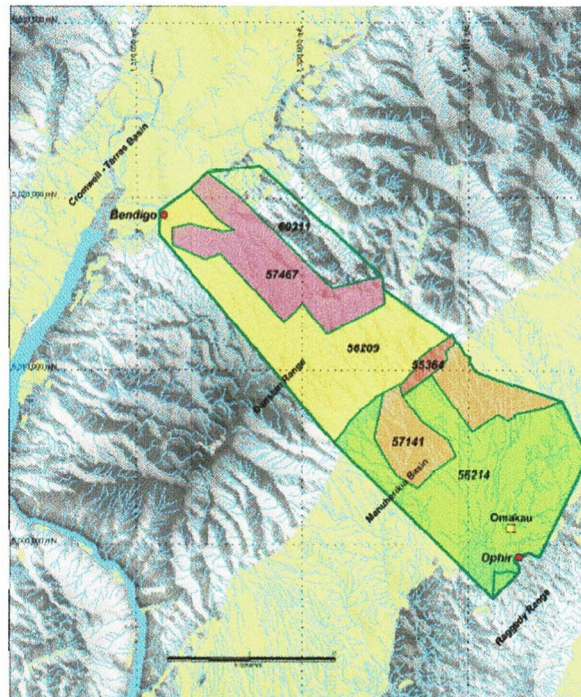
Introduction

Matakanui Gold Ltd has the following Exploration and Prospecting Permits which forms the Bendigo-Ophir Project

- EP 55364
- EP 56209
- EP 57141
- EP 57467
- EP 60311
- PP 56214

Exploration Permit (EP) allows for literature review, drilling, bulk sampling and mine feasibility studies.

Prospecting Permit (PP) allows for literature research, geological mapping, hand sampling or aerial surveys.



The above mining permits cover land between Ophir and Cromwell across the Dunstan Mountains (Matakinui)

This cultural values statement includes all exploration/prospecting permits for the Bendigo-Ophir Project.

The area proposed for exploration/prospecting is private land of which Matakanui Gold Ltd are in the process of gaining access permission from the land owners.

Existing farm tracks will be used for access and if further mining goes ahead, tracks will be required to be upgraded.

Thomsons Creek flows within the boundary of the Bendigo-Ophir Project.

Iwi Association with Central Otago

The Central Otago area was accessed by a network of ara tawhito (travel routes) that connected the coastal settlements with the inland lakes, Te Koroka (Dart River), and with Tai Poutini (West Coast). In particular, the whole of the Mata-au (Clutha River) was part of a mahinga kai trail that led inland and was used by Otago hapu including Kati Kuri, Ngati Ruahikihiki, Ngati Huirapa and Ngai Tuahuriri. The river was used as a highway into the interior, and provided many resources to sustain travellers on that journey.

The river was a significant indigenous fishery, providing tuna (eels), kanakana (lamprey) and kokopu in the area over which Te Wairere (Lake Dunstan) now lies. Manu (birds), including moa, were taken from areas adjoining the river.

The waterway was also very important in the transportation of pounamu from inland areas down to settlements on the coast, from where it was traded north and south. Because of its location at the confluence of Mata-au and Kawarau Rivers, Te Wairere (Lake Dunstan) was an important staging post on journeys inland and down-river. A tauranga waka and nohanga sited at the junction of the two rivers acted as such a staging post. As a result of this history of use and occupation there are a number of wahi taonga (including rock shelters and archaeological sites) in the area, some of which are now under the waters of Lake Dunstan.

Recent archaeological work undertaken as part of the construction of the Roxburgh Gorge Trail has led to the discovery of a woven harakeke (flax) textile in a rock shelter. This discovery highlights the importance of rock shelters along the Mata-au (Clutha River) as kāika nohoaka (seasonal campsites).



In conclusion, wahi tapu and wahi taonga sites within the District are important as places that hold the memories and traditions of the tupuna who moved through and occupied the Central Otago area.

Mahika Kai and Seasonal Resource Use

Mahika kai (Mahinga kai) is one of the cornerstones of Kāi Tahu cultural identity. Mahika kai is a term that literally means “food workings” and refers to the places where food was gathered or produced. The term also embodies the traditions, customs and collection methods,¹ and the gathering of natural resources for cultural use,² including raranga (weaving) and rongoā (traditional medicines).

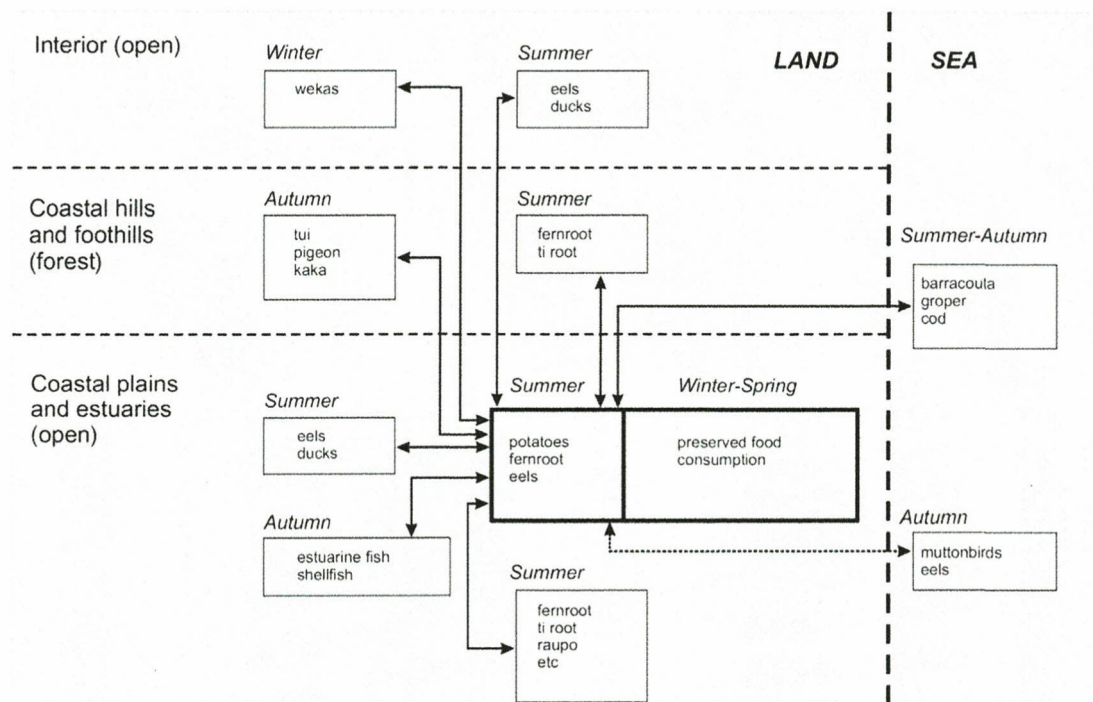
The seasonal migrations to important food gathering areas were historically an important aspect of southern Māori culture and this still survives through to the present day.³ Mahika kai resources were a principal component of the traditional economy, facilitated the communication of matauranga Māori (traditional knowledge) between generations, and provided a means by which Tangata Whenua upheld their mana within their takiwā.⁴

1 KTKO Consultancy Ltd and Tahu Potiki (2011)

2 Ngāi Tahu Claims Settlement Act 1998, s.167.

3 KTKO Consultancy Ltd and Tahu Potiki (2011)

4 Lenihan (2009)



Seasonality chart, Anderson (1983:43, 1995:117)

Cental Otago as a Wahi Tupuna/Cultural Landscape

Kai Tahu defines a Wahi Tūpuna as a geographic area that includes cultural and natural resources associated with an historic event, activity, tradition or tupuna. It is necessary to recognise the significance of cultural landscapes in terms of the integrity of the sites of significance they contain.

The term Wahi Tūpuna is increasingly being used in resource management. It is important to understand this concept in the context of the distinctive seasonal lifestyle that Kāi Tahu that evolved in the south.⁵

There are sites used by Kāi Tahu spread throughout Otago. These places did not function in isolation from one another but were part of a wider cultural setting and pattern of seasonal resource use.⁶ The sites of significance that contribute to cultural landscapes in Otago include:

Tuhituhi Neherā (rock art): Sites that are testament not only to the presence of the tūpuna in the catchment but also their occupation for sufficient time to record their history and presence in the form of rock art.

Wāhi Kohātu: Rocky outcrops provided excellent shelters and were intensively occupied by Māori from the moa-hunter period into early European settlement.

Kāika Nohoaka: Kāi Tahu ki Otago were based largely on the coast in permanent settlements, and ranged inland on a seasonal basis. Iwi history shows, through place names and whakapapa, continuous occupation of a network of seasonal settlements (kāika nohoaka), which were distributed along the main river systems from the source lakes to the sea.

Umu-tī: Earth ovens for cooking Tī-kōuka (cabbage tree) are found in a diversity of areas, including old stream banks and ancient river terraces, on low spurs or ridges, and in association with other features, such as kāika nohoaka.

Wāhi Ingoa (Place Names): The journeying of ancient waka (canoes) to Te Waipounamu is recalled by place names.

⁵ Tipa, G (2008)

⁶ Kāi Tahu ki Otago (2005)

Ara Tawhito (Travel routes): A network of routes crossed the region that linked permanent villages and seasonal campsites, and provided access to a range of mahika kai resources and inland stone resources, including pounamu and silcrete.

Dunstan Mountains / Matakinui

Matakinui is the Māori name for the Dunstan Mountains, and is known to be used by Māori as a trail across the ranges.

Matakinui⁷ is recorded as a mahika kai site located along the Mata-au (Clutha River) where weka and tikumu were gathered. The location of Matakinui on the Ngāi Tahu 1880 maps and the foods described there, indicates that it is the Dunstan Mountains.

⁸That Mountain Range is a significant physical and cultural marker – The peak is known as Haehaeata

Values

- Mauka
- Archaeological Values
- Archaeological Feature (Leaning Rock – Haehaeata)
- Wāhi ikoa and associated stories
- Mahika Kai

Threats

- Activities affecting the ridgeline including buildings and structures, network utilities; activities on the upper slopes
- Activities affecting natural character
- New roads or additions/alterations to existing roads; vehicle tracks and driveways
- Earthworks.

See map attached

Thomsons Saddle⁹

The people came from Moeraki to Makarora in the spring and remained, during the ensuing summer and winter – catching large quantities of eels during the summer and drying them in the winter, which with fernroot formed their staple food. The fernroot was prepared by chewing the greenroot to a pulp which was then left to become sour. When the Māoris left, they floated down the Lake and Mata-au (Clutha River) to Lindis on koradi rafts which they then abandoned and made a short cut across the ranges, by what is since known as the Māori Pass (Thompson Pass in the Dunstan Range)

⁷ Taiaroa 1880:144_9; Roberts 1910:8; Beattie (MPO) 1944:29; Herries Beattie Map.

⁸ Wāhi Tupuna in Central Otago – Central Otago District Plan

⁹ Anderson, A. (1986) Te Puaoho's last raid: the march from Golden Bay to Southland in 1936 and defeat at Tuturau, Dunedin, NZ: Otago Heritage Books, pp.19-20.

Archaeological

An Archaeological Assessment has been prepared by NZ Heritage Properties-Naomi Woods; and a Historic Resources Report prepared by Shar Briden and Matt Schmidt.

From records accessed by Aukaha, there are approximately six recorded Māori archaeological sites within the boundary of all the mining permits. Matakanui Gold Ltd are aware of all sites. It is understood that five of these sites are in areas of no interest at this stage.

G41/338	Hut/Rock Shelter
G41/199	Rock Shelter
G41/229	Rock Shelter
G41/632	Large Oval Shaped Raised Rim Pit
G41/202	Rock Shelter
G41/53	Findspot

Matakanui Gold Ltd have agreed that site - G41/632: large oval shaped raised rim pit – is to be avoided.

Vegetation

The area proposed for prospecting/exploration is land used for farming and is mainly grassed.



Taramea / Aciphylla squarrosa and Aciphylla colensoi / Spaniard

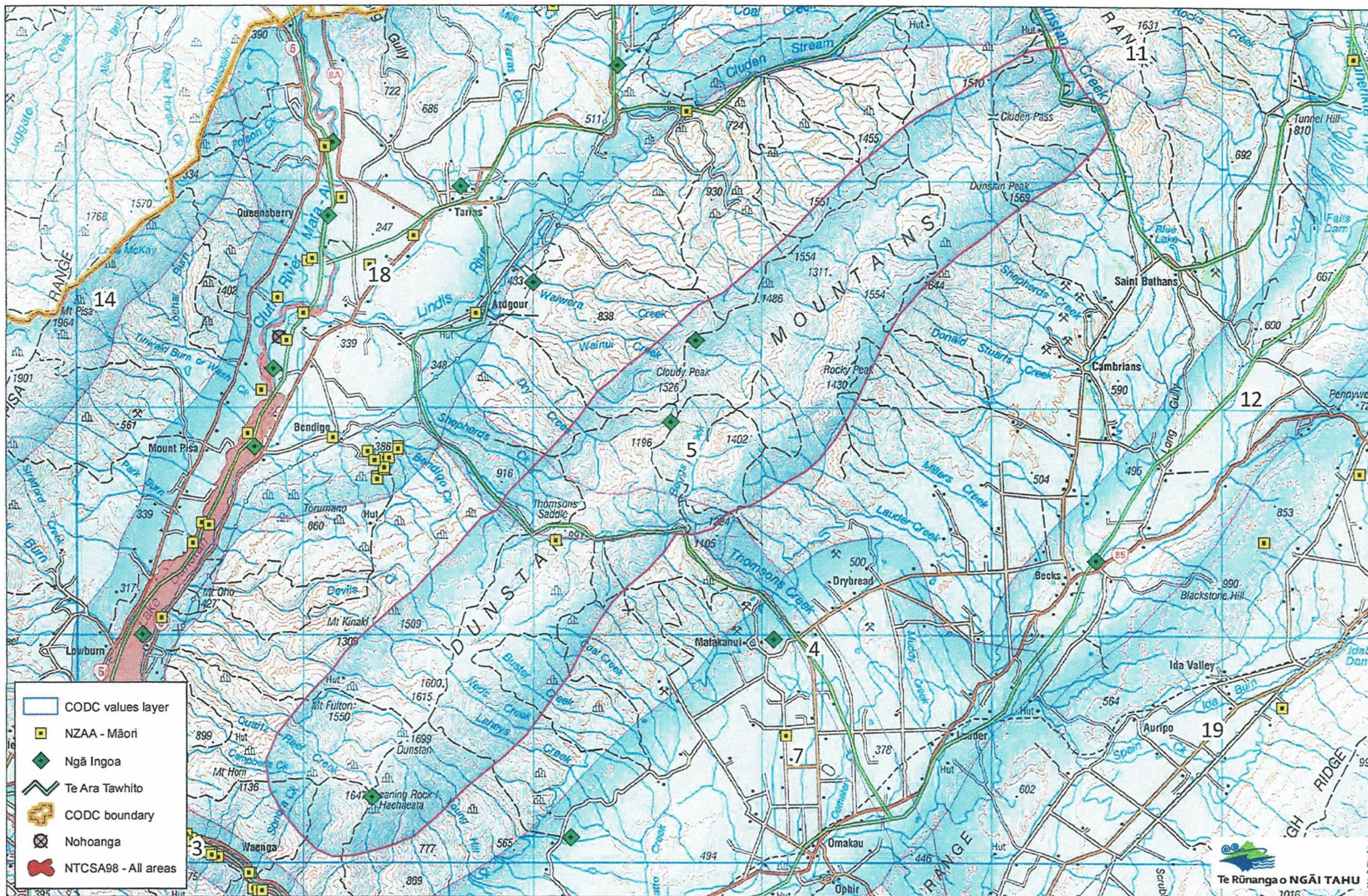
Taramea: This plant is present within the Matakui and was used by Māori in the past as a scent, primarily for Chief's clothing.

The plants have a tuft of spear-like leaves, each up to 1 m long, and a large flower-stalk up to 2 m high, the head of which is covered with long sharp spikes.

Recommendation

Ngā Rūnanga recommend the following be adhered to with regard to all mining permits held by Matakanui Gold Ltd:-

- Areas where Taramea are present should be avoided.
- That the Heritage New Zealand Pouhere Taonga Archaeological Discovery Protocol (attached) should be adhered to.
- That the recorded archaeological site G41/632: large oval shaped raised rim pit – should be avoided.
- That those recommendations be adhered to, as per report prepared by Shar Briden and Matt Schmidt; April 2012, Revised July 2012.
- That an MOU (Memorandum of Understanding) between Matakanui Gold Ltd and Ngā Rūnanga be established to provide a process for consultation throughout the development of this Project.



Area: 5 - Dunstan Mountains (Matakanui)

Values: Mauka, Archaeological values, Archaeological feature (Leaning Rock-Haehaetea), Wāhi ikoa and associated stories, Mahika kai

