

Submission
Bendigo-Ophir Gold Project
[FTAA-2507-1089]

I have been invited to submit under section 53 of the Fast-track Approvals Act 2025

The organisation I represent: **Ardgour Family Trust (AFT)**

The Trust owns land that is within the proposed mine area and environmental off set, It also has interests in neighbouring land and hold water take consents from the Lindis and Clutha River.

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My Submission

The AFT has farmed the land known as Ardgour Station since the trust was established in 1994, before that it was owned and managed by family members since 1955. I personally started managing the property in 1984.

The AFT supports Santana Minerals Ltd application for mining consent.

We do have some concerns to the conditions that might or might not go with a consent to mine.

First some background, the history of Ardgour Station since 1990, The property was under a crown pastoral lease and during 1991 to 1998 it was negotiating a settlement to Freehold. During that period the Department of Conservation did an assessment of the Flora and Funa of the property and determined there was nothing of significance that should go into the conversation estate. They did retain 320ha of land with the settlement to create a link corridor to the North and South Dunstan Ranges.

Reading material released from Sustainable Tarras and the Environmental defence society you would think the property has exceptional environmental values. In all my years of farming I have never had any non-farming organization or government agency express how I farmed the land was enhancing the environmental outcomes of the property, they usually were very negative.

As for the paper road on the property which runs through the hart of the proposed mining site, I have never come across walkers and hikers accessing it until the proposed mine was in the media.

Why we support the proposed mine:

It gives the community an opportunity of some real wealth being generated that some of our existing high employer industries do not provide. Tourism, viticulture and horticulture provide some wealth for a very few but are predominantly minimum wage payers and very seasonal, so no stability of work force or really part of the community.

The mine on the other hand is offering significantly higher wages on average on a permanent basis, allowing people and their families to invest themselves into the community. The local supporting businesses are equally supported in this way.

Why we have concern about the consent conditions:

After the mine has finished or during operation or as variations to the consent are sort (as they always seem to happen on any development project) the integrity of the conditions needs to be maintained or enhanced as unrealised consequences are realised.

The bond needs to be set at levels that reflect the risk and held in a mechanism that will grow the bond for its very long life, something like a Kiwi Saver for the project.

The conditions need to factor in all subsidiaries of Santana Minerals Ltd and be tied to any exit strategy that may or could eventuate.

New Zealand has a poor history of bonding high risk environmental damaging industries. It usually ends up the tax or rate paying citizens of New Zealand that end up paying years later.

With this project it has a large environmental offset plans and mine site restoration in its plan.

It is very comprehensive and I commend Santana Minerals Ltd in their wide-ranging consultation on its development.

Our concern with this offset is that it will require on going management, so the benefits are not lost once the mining has concluded.

Who is going to take that roll on and how will it be funded, what is the ownership structure of this land going to be.

In summary:

This consent application has a lot of merit that we support.

The issue is the consent conditions and the monitoring of those conditions through the life of the mine and beyond and the consequences the regulatory authorities set for breaching the conditions.

We do not want to see massif regulation breaches with immunity that so many district councils seem to have with their failing sewerage systems.

These comments are made on 5/04/2026

By Bruce Jolly representing the Ardgour Family Trust