



**21 AUG 2025**

The Expert Panel – Fast-track Approvals Act application  
Environmental Protection Authority  
Waterloo Quay  
Wellington

**Substantive Fast-track Approvals Act application – Waihi North**

To The Expert Panel

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on Waihi North, a substantive application under the Fast-track Approvals Act (the Act).

I am providing comments in my capacity as Minister for Economic Growth, focusing on whether this application is likely to have significant economic benefits under section 22(2)(a)(iv) of the Act, based on the information provided. I defer to you and other relevant Ministers to assess the remaining criteria.

***Waihi North, FTAA-2504-1046***

Oceana Gold New Zealand (OGNZL) is seeking authorisation for the Waihi North project. It will include mining activities and associated infrastructure beneath the Coromandel Forest Park. The proposal will expand the existing mining operations at Waihi and extend the life of the Waihi mines until at least 2040. Construction work is proposed to start in 2026.

The February 2024 economic assessment of the project estimates that it will attract at least \$1 billion in foreign direct investment (FDI), placing it among New Zealand's top infrastructure projects by funding. Over 18 years, it is expected to generate \$5.15 billion in export revenues, support an average of 858 jobs, and result in \$1.98 billion in operating and capital expenditure spread across the Hauraki district, Waikato, and the wider country.

The project has direct economic benefits supported by the applicant's economic assessment. The project will generate substantial economic benefits both at the regional and national level through the short- and long-term impacts on increased employment, total operational and capital expenditure, and the nationally significant FDI and capital investment that will be allocated in this project.

Another substantial economic benefit of this proposal is its contribution to exports, which aligns with the Government's current economic growth ambitions of doubling exports by 2040. The project would also progress goals set out in the Government's Minerals Strategy, which is part of the *Going For Growth* work programme.

Sincerely

Hon Nicola Willis  
**Minister for Economic Growth**