



Outlook

Bendigo-Ophir Mine-comment from adjacent landowner

From Sandra Calder [REDACTED]
Date Tue 7/04/2026 1:17 PM
To Substantive <substantive@fasttrack.govt.nz>

File ref FTAA-2507-1089

Bullock Creek Limited : [REDACTED]

Bruce and Sandra Calder [REDACTED]

We are Bruce and Sandra Calder landowners that actually live on Thomsons Gorge road; a road which we believe will be the most impacted if the mine is consented.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment.

We are 100 % OPPOSED TO THE MINE because of catastrophic risks to the ENVIRONMENT, PEOPLE'S HEALTH AND the potential FINANCIAL BURDEN in the future for Central Otago.

We are semi-retired backcountry farmers who were drawn to this area 10 years ago. Being in our mid 60's then with a deep understanding of, and a huge respect for nature we were looking to invest in an area that gave us close access to the world we love whilst being handy to amenities.

Our location on Thomson Gorge road gives us driving access to State Highway 8 in 2 minutes, Tarras in 10 minutes, Cromwell in 20 minutes and Wanaka in 35 minutes. UNFORTUNATELY if the proposed mine is consented we would also be 2 minutes to the MINING CAMP, 10 minutes to the first OPEN CAST MINE and 20 minutes to the TOXIC TAILINGS DAM.

THE PROPOSED BENDIGO-OPHIR MINE IS NOT IN THE MIDDLE OF NOWHERE .

The pleasure of living in this location has allowed us to breathe fresh air, grow our own spray free vegetables, fruit, and raise our own meat for consumption. Irrigation enables us to grow and sell hay and baleage and finish lambs to supplement our pensions.

All this is possible because of THE ARDGOUR WATER SCHEME and its POTABLE water. The Exploration company Santana, who are now proposing to be miners, have said our scheme may have to relocate its borefield in the future ! The borefield is located at the confluence of The Lindis and The Clutha river. Our livelihood is at risk and those of thousands of others.

Thomsons Gorge and the surrounding Bendigo hills have seen us mustering sheep, riding horses, biking, tramping, hunting and exploring with our grandchildren. Many times we have reached a viewing point and taken the opportunity to "sit and just be".

The unique environment we have should be respected and protected. It must not become an industrial toxic dust bowl. At what point are we actually going to put the land in NEW ZEALAND first ?

We feel a responsibility to be aware of climate change, global warming and to not only enhance but protect our waterways. To contemplate siting an enormous TOXIC TAILINGS DAM high in a steep

catchment area that naturally drains down SHEPHERDS CREEK into THE LINDIS and eventually THE CLUTHA is an absolute insane, irresponsible plan and a totally AVOIDABLE RISK. In the event of human error or a natural disaster the economics and health consequences would be immeasurable.

Whilst we consider the RISK to our waterways, involving thousands of Central Otago people, paramount there are many other serious concerns :

- * Irreversible landscape damage. Rock formation landmarks, flora and fauna
- * Toxic dust travelling km's (Santana ESTIMATE the main wind is Nor'west therefore not a worry with mine dust for us. :There have never been actual monitors on the 5 adjacent properties to ours recording velocity, direction , risk)
- * Health risks. Carcinogenic links proved in proximity to mines in Australia(up to 10 km's away)
- * Minerals- high levels found in people's hair follicles km's away from Australian mines
- * Noise pollution blasting (Santana ESTIMATE the rustling of leaves equivalent)
- * Wildlife toxic tailings dam deaths; misplaced natural habitat.
- * Transporting toxic chemicals on public road ; high numbers / increased risk esp with StateHighway 8 turn off adjacent to the Lindis river,
- * Storage of toxic chemicals ; inadequate at ports at present and danger on site.
- * Light pollution -
- * Traffic increases ; Infrastructure inadequate
- * Clean Green image DESTROYED Bendigo area
- * Tourism vista's DESTROYED Bendigo area
- * Central Otago"s produce market reputation at RISK Wine cherries vegetables apples etc
- * Businesses : wedding, wineries, etc
- * RISK versus ECONOMIC return ?
.Who can predict what the ESTIMATED returns will be ? We know however the RISK IS NOT WORTH TAKING..

ALLOWING THE MINE TO BE CONSENTED WOULD BE POLLUTING NOW AND ATTEMPTING TO CLEAN UP LATER....

SANTANA - THE EXPLORATION COMPANY

Our first meeting with Santana was 31st October 2024 at our home.A flyer had been placed in the mailboxes of Thomsons Gorge residents.Santana had requested a meeting to discuss possible " options of roads " that could be used to access the proposed mining site.Two representatives arrived

with a work plan for the months ahead including a map identifying Thomsons Gorge was the designated access both to and from the mine.

This misleading communication has defined our relationship with them. We have been presented with the information they are happy to tell us as opposed to what we actually need to know. Their public image has always been projected that this project is a fait accompli and they have been always moving forward spending money on projects, with or without consent. We have been clear with Santana that we are 100 % against the mine because of our genuine concerns about the environmental dangers it presents.

The Cromwell District Council has been "hobbled" by The Fast Track limitations and we feel have failed us as ratepayers. It would have been courteous to warn us that Santana was going to takeover our road for months creating dust, noise, massively increased traffic, burying new cables, and removing established trees all enabling plans for Santana getting a head start on a project that has:

* NOT BEEN CONSENTED*

We consider ourselves to be resilient people having endured a variety of life's challenges thrown at us. This potential mine has seen us correspond our concerns and what we consider to be a very real RISK, to so many people's lives and incomes, with a number of Members of Parliament, the Otago Regional Council and the Cromwell District Council. It is a step we have never taken before..

The "what ifs" of the impact of this mine being consented has had a significant mental impact on us both for nearly 2 years. Home does not feel like home now; that is cruel. At this point our future here is in someone else's hands. We would never have considered investing our life's work in a Mining area.

If this mine is consented our life's work and its investment will be seriously devalued. We would feel justified in requesting that we are enabled to leave with a payment at pre-mining values for our property and additional compensation to assist with moving costs and some recognition of our loss of peace of mind about our future.

sincerely,
Bruce and Sandra Calder.