

BEFORE AN EXPERT CONSENTING PANEL

IN THE MATTER of the Fast-track Approvals Act 2024 (**FTAA**)

AND

IN THE MATTER of an application by Matakanui Gold Limited to establish, operate, rehabilitate and ultimately close an open pit and underground gold mining operations known as the Bendigo-Ophir Gold Project (**Application**)

BRIEF OF EVIDENCE of ROY JOHNSTON

Safety Engineer
Dated: 23 April 2026

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This brief is provided by Roy Johnston on behalf of New Zealand Transport Agency Waka Kotahi (**NZTA**) for the Bendigo-Ophir Gold Project application under the Fast-track Approvals Act 2024 (**FTAA**).
- 1.2 This statement relates to safety engineering matters arising from the Application, particularly concerning transport infrastructure requirements.

2. QUALIFICATIONS AND EXPERIENCE

- 2.1 My full name is Roy David Johnston.
- 2.2 I am a Principal Safety Engineer, System & Safety Performance, System Design where my purpose is to provide technical transport and safety advice both regionally and nationally. My focus areas are Otago/Southland and supporting the wider South Island safety team at the NZ Transport Agency Waka Kotahi (*NZTA*).
- 2.3 I hold a BCom Accounting (2000), and Diploma of Civil Engineering (Level 6) and NZCE (Civil).
- 2.4 I joined Transit in 2006 as a Project/Safety Engineer. In 2008 when the NZTA was created I moved into a safety engineer role. From 2010 – 2019 I was a Senior Safety Engineer, 2019 Principal Safety Engineer and from late 2019 to late 2025 I was the Team lead – Safety Engineers, South Island. Following a restructure I have moved back to a technical role as Principal Safety Engineer.
- 2.5 Across my time at NZTA I have been involved as the transport and safety subject matter expert (SME) in numerous capital projects, safety programmes and land use development proposals providing support to the environmental planning team. At a regional level this has included contributing to programme development, safety outcomes and acceptance of designs prior to construction to ensure transport and safety outcomes are achieved. I have also assisted with the development of national safety programmes such as the Road to Zero and Safe Infrastructure Programme. As part of this work, I have supported regional safety teams to develop scopes, resolve design issues and manage transport and safety concerns.

3. CODE OF CONDUCT

3.1 I have read the Environment Court Practice Note 2023 – Code of Conduct for Expert Witnesses (**Code**) and have complied with the Code in the preparation of this statement. I agree to follow the Code of Conduct. I confirm that the opinions I express are within my area of expertise and are my own, except where I state that I am relying on the work or evidence of others, which I have specified. I have not omitted to consider any material facts known to me that might alter or detract from the opinions which I express below.

4. SUMMARY COMMENTS ON APPLICANT'S EVIDENCE

4.1 I have seen the updated transportation response from the applicant's transport advisor, Stantec New Zealand dated 17 April 2026, issued in response to Minute 14.

4.2 I note the transport response indicates general agreement between the applicant, CODC and NZTA on the SH8 / Ardgour Rd intersection upgrade which would be a right turn bay.

4.3 There appears to be disagreement about when the upgrade should occur. It is the NZTA strong preference that the intersection be upgraded prior to the mine development starting onsite. As from a safety perspective this will enable the NZTA to manage the increased safety risk that will occur from increased usage during the construction phase.

4.4 The option put forward in paragraph 29 of the traffic response would only work for NZTA if the intersection upgrade were to occur when the mine construction commences. Any delay in commencing the upgrade work during the mine construction would mean that the intersection would not be covered by temporary traffic management as suggested in paragraph 29.

4.5 I do not support mine construction proceeding ahead of the intersection upgrade as the NZTA may not be able to approve suitable temporary traffic management to cover the period between when the mine construction commences and the intersection upgrade occurs.

- 4.6 It should also be noted that for the intersection upgrade work NZTA will only allow construction of the right turn bay during the construction season which normally runs from September to end of March each summer.
- 4.7 Regarding the SH8A Red Bridge and the SH8 Lindis River Bridge discussed in paragraph 10 – 24, NZTA agrees with the evidence presented and has concluded that neither bridge will require upgrading as a result of the mine development.
- 4.8 I support the proposed changes to condition 45 relating to timing of undertaking agreed actions. I also recognise that agreeing actions after the safety audit is a normal step in the safety audit decision process.
- 4.9 Therefore, in summary I believe that the intersection upgrade should occur prior to construction of the mine commencing to ensure the safety risk is managed appropriately. If it is not possible to upgrade the intersection prior to construction of the mine commencing, then it should occur at the very start of the mine construction so temporary traffic management can be in place to manage traffic safely through the site.

DATED the 23rd day of April 2026

Roy Johnston

Principal Safety Engineer, NZTA