

Reefton Gold Ltd

Proposed Auld Creek Mine

Preliminary Assessment of Landscape Effects

26 March 2026

Introduction

Wayfinder Planning & Strategy Ltd (Wayfinder) has been engaged by Reefton Gold Ltd (RG) to prepare a preliminary assessment of landscape effects to support a fast-track application for a proposed underground mine at Auld Creek, Reefton, in Buller District on the West Coast.

Overall, the landscape effects assessment concludes that the proposal will result in predominantly very low to low adverse landscape effects, with some components particularly the processing facility and lower haul road or transport mechanism having the potential to generate localised low to low-moderate effects depending on final design and mitigation. The mine portal, upper haul road, and spoil deposition areas are generally well contained by landform and vegetation, and visibility is limited to a small number of receptors. With the implementation of mitigation measures such as vegetative screening, recessive design treatments, operational controls, and comprehensive progressive rehabilitation, residual effects can be appropriately managed. In policy terms, the proposal is consistent with the relevant objectives and policies of the West Coast Regional Land and Water Plan, the Buller District Plan, and the proposed Te Tai Poutini District Plan, all of which enable mineral extraction activities provided adverse effects on natural character, cultural values, water quality, and amenity are avoided, remedied, or mitigated and robust rehabilitation is achieved.

Therefore, it is considered that the landscape effects of the proposal are **low** to **low-moderate**, which can be considered to be **minor**.

Methodology

A site and locality visit was undertaken via helicopter on 28 January 2026. This included viewing the proposed location of the mine portal, haul roads, processing site and spoil deposition site. The primary public access roads were also visited by vehicle which included identification of potentially affected residential dwellings.

The assessment to inform this report was undertaken using knowledge gained during the site visit, in addition to online tools such as Google Maps, Google Street View and the Council online GIS portal.



Proposal

The Auld Creek Project is a proposed underground gold/antimony mining development near Reefton on the West Coast. The project spans land administered by mana whenua (including Ngāi Tahu Forestry), public conservation land (Victoria Forest Park), and private farmland. Key elements of the project include:

- ▶ Mining method; A two-phase underground operation using narrow vein mining to minimise surface disturbance:
 - Phase one involves a 3mx3m portal on conservation land to access high grade material; Development of the adit and associated infrastructure on a platform area of approximately 50 m by 50 m; Upgrade and use of a 4WD track on conservation land as a run of mine (ROM) haul road; Establishment and operation of a temporary waste rock stack and haul road on Ngāi Tahu Forestry land;
 - phase two uses a 1.2 km twin incline/decline tunnel from Ngāi Tahu Forestry land.
- ▶ Surface facilities: 13.5Ha processing and operations area on private and iwi land, including crushing, flotation, gravity gold recovery, tailings filtration, dry stack tailings, workshops, offices, haul roads and water treatment infrastructure.
- ▶ Access and roading: Realignment of Soldiers-Big River Road, upgrades to Quigleys Road and SH7 intersections, and minor upgrades to Department of Conservation tracks for internal access.
- ▶ Environmental management: Comprehensive monitoring (water, dust, noise, vibration, wildlife, weather) and progressive rehabilitation, with commitments to stabilisation, revegetation, and restoration of landforms and waterways.
- ▶ Timeline: Exploration (2020-2025), assessments (2025-2026), construction (2027-2028), production from late 2028, followed by 6-8 years of operation and 2-5 years of rehabilitation.

Full details of the project are contained in the Project Description.

Preliminary Landscape Context

Physical

Reefton is a small historic town on the West Coast of New Zealand's South Island, known for its mining heritage. It is located a similar distance (approximately 80km) from both Greymouth and Westport. Victoria Forest Park is a large conservation area (206,000Ha) to the south and east of Reefton extending 40km north into the Upper Buller Gorge.

The area immediately south of Reefton on the western margins of Victoria Forest Park, is steep, highly dissected hill country forming the lower flanks of the Victoria Range. The landform is characterised by pronounced relief, with narrow ridgelines and deeply incised valleys reflecting ongoing tectonic uplift and prolonged fluvial erosion. Elevations rise sharply from valley floors to enclosing ridges, creating a strongly articulated topographic pattern. The underlying geology comprises folded and faulted metasedimentary rock, which exerts a clear influence on ridge orientation, valley alignment, and the overall structural grain of the landscape.

The area closer to the proposal site is dissected by a network of small tributary streams, including Devils Creek, Auld Creek and Soldiers Creek, which drain steep catchments toward the wider Inangahua River system. These watercourses occupy confined, V-shaped valleys with moderate to steep gradients and coarse alluvial substrates derived from surrounding hill slopes. Hydrological processes are dynamic, with high rainfall typical of the West Coast climate contributing to rapid runoff, periodic high flows, and active channel formation. Alluvial terraces and depositional features may occur where gradients lessen, while colluvial processes and localised erosion are evident on steeper slopes.



Vegetation cover is predominantly indigenous forest contiguous within Victoria Forest Park, with beech-dominated canopy communities on slopes and ridgelines and a dense understorey typical of moist, temperate West Coast environments. Valley floors and lower slopes may include areas of regenerating scrub or modified pasture associated with farming land use. Soils on steeper terrain are generally shallow and erosion-prone where disturbed, while deeper alluvial soils occur in valley bottoms. The area expresses a strong natural character shaped by topography, indigenous vegetation, and active geomorphic processes, with intermittent evidence of historic mining activity contributing to its contemporary physical pattern.

Perceptual

The area exhibits a strong sense of naturalness derived from its steep landform, extensive indigenous forest cover, and limited modification. Enclosure created by narrow valleys and forested ridgelines reduces outward visibility and reinforces a sense of immersion within a predominantly natural environment. The dominance of indigenous forest and the legibility of landform processes contribute to a landscape that is perceived as cohesive and largely unfragmented.

The perceptual character is further shaped by the experiential qualities of the creek systems, including Devils Creek, Auld Creek and Soldiers Creek, which introduce movement, sound, and textural variation within the valley floors. The interplay of light and shadow across densely forested slopes, combined with frequent West Coast cloud cover and rainfall, produces a dynamic and sometimes moody visual atmosphere. Seasonal and weather-related changes including mist, low cloud, and high river flows can heighten the drama and perceived remoteness of the landscape. These qualities contribute to a strong experiential dimension, where natural processes engage all the senses.

The combination of intact indigenous vegetation, expressive landform, limited contemporary development, and historic associations contributes to a landscape perceived as remote, rugged, and regionally distinctive within the West Coast context. Overall, the site demonstrates a high degree of perceived naturalness, experiential richness, and coherence, with human influences generally read as secondary to the dominant biophysical framework.

Associative

The site south of Reefton lies within a broader cultural landscape that holds significance for mana whenua, reflecting longstanding relationships with the land, waterways, and forest resources of the Inangahua and Buller catchments. The creeks and surrounding bush form part of traditional travel routes and mahinga kai landscapes, where rivers and tributaries provided food resources and access through otherwise rugged terrain. The forested ranges and watercourses are understood not only as physical features but as interconnected living systems with whakapapa relationships, contributing to a cultural landscape shaped by ancestral occupation, use, and stewardship. Detailed identification and consideration of tangata whenua values (including specific wāhi tapu or sites of significance) require direct engagement.

The landscape also has strong historical associations arising from its location within one of Aotearoa New Zealand's most notable gold mining districts. Reefton is recognised for its nineteenth-century quartz reef mining heritage and as the first town in the Southern Hemisphere to receive a public electricity supply. The surrounding hill country adjoining Victoria Forest Park contains remnants of historic workings, water races, and access routes that reflect intensive extractive activity during the colonial period. These features contribute an additional layer of meaning, associating the landscape with early European settlement, industrial development, and the economic history of the West Coast.

More broadly, the area contributes to the regional identity of the West Coast as a place characterised by rugged terrain, dense indigenous forest, and relative remoteness. The proximity of protected conservation land reinforces associations with outdoor recreation, self-reliance, and experiential engagement with natural environments. Together, the Māori cultural associations, gold mining heritage, and strong regional identity narratives create a landscape with layered



associative values, where contemporary perceptions are informed by both deep-time cultural relationships and more recent historical experience.

Proposal Site

The land at the proposal site and its surroundings is a mix of conservation land (Victoria Forest Park), Ngāi Tahu land and other privately owned rural properties. Access in the area is primarily via Soldiers-Big River Road and Grey Road (State Highway 7). Auld Creek is broadly east of the proposal and flows north before turning east to join the Inangahua River at Blacks point. Soldiers Creek is southwest of the proposal and flows northwest to join Devil's Creek and continues northwest before joining the Inangahua River west of Reefton.

Preliminary Planning Context

West Coast Regional Land and Water Plan

This Plan emphasises the careful balance between enabling the sustainable use, development, and protection of the West Coast's land and water resources while safeguarding the natural and human use values they support. It outlines objectives to ensure that activities do not adversely affect the ecological health, cultural significance, and natural character of water bodies, including lakes and rivers, while recognising the importance of continued resource use by local communities. Special attention is given to protecting habitats of threatened species, significant indigenous vegetation and fauna, and cultural values of the Poutini Ngāi Tahu iwi, as well as maintaining public access and historic heritage.

Buller District Plan

The Buller District Plan provides for continued access to and development of gold resources, recognising mining as an important contributor to the district's economy and to the identity of many historic mining settlements. However, because much prospective gold-bearing land is located within sensitive landscapes, conservation areas, or near significant waterways, the Plan requires mining activities to manage adverse effects on water quality, soil integrity, ecosystems, and outstanding natural features. Emphasis is placed on managing sedimentation and contamination of rivers and wetlands, protecting riparian margins, and ensuring that mining does not compromise the natural character of the coast or key ecological areas.

To balance mineral development with long-term environmental outcomes, the Plan requires robust rehabilitation of mined land and coordinated management with the West Coast Regional Council, especially where water resources are affected. Mining proposals must also consider cultural and historic values, including the protection of waahi tapu and ensuring appropriate responses to accidental discoveries. Overall, gold mining is enabled where effects are well-managed, rehabilitation is achievable, and the activity does not undermine sensitive environments or future community wellbeing.

Te Tai Poutini District Plan

General Rural Zone (subject to appeal)

The rural zone framework supports mineral prospecting, exploration, and extraction, provided adverse effects are avoided, remedied, or mitigated. Mining activities must include rehabilitation of land post-extraction and coordinate with the West Coast Regional Council, particularly regarding water and soil conservation.

Policies require that mining does not conflict with primary production or rural character, and buffers must be maintained to manage reverse sensitivity with nearby land uses. Environmental management plans should address dust, noise, vibration, traffic, and ecological impacts, with progressive remediation during operations. Overall, the



approach balances mineral resource development with protection of rural amenity, productive land, and environmental values.

Open space zone (Conservation land) (subject to appeal)

The Open Space and Recreation Zones (OSRZ) framework provides for a variety of land uses while maintaining the natural, cultural, and recreational values of open space areas. Within the OSZ – Open Space Zone, activities such as mineral extraction, prospecting, and exploration are permitted where adverse effects on open space, recreation, and environmental values can be managed. Sites must be rehabilitated following extraction to enable future uses, and areas with significant ecological, cultural, or scheduled values must be protected.

Mineral activities in these zones are required to maintain indigenous biodiversity, safeguard natural values, and avoid impacts on community health and wellbeing. Ancillary uses that support these activities, such as infrastructure and limited buildings, are allowed provided they are compatible with the character and function of the open space. Overall, the OSRZ approach balances mineral resource development with the preservation of natural, cultural, and recreational values, ensuring that extraction is carefully managed and rehabilitated to sustain the multiple functions of open space areas.

Landscape Effects

The effects of the mine portal are expected to be low to very low. From the initial site visit and assessment, the mine portal is not located in an area of historic or cultural significance or to impact on identified features. There is likely to be very limited to no visibility of the mine portal as it sits within dense mature vegetation away from publicly accessible locations and other sensitive receptors such as residential dwellings.

The effects of the ROM upper haul road, to transport material to the stockpile is expected to be low. There is an existing vehicle track that will require some surface upgrade but is not anticipated to increase in width or require removal of significant amounts of vegetation. Visibility of the underground mine and ROM haul road is likely to be very low due to the retention of the surrounding mature vegetation. The effects of the stockpile are temporary and contained within the Ngāi Tahu Forestry land.

Recreation in the area includes walking and mountain bike tracks, with the most likely impacted feature being the Globe Hill Track that connects Reefton to the Globe Progress Mine site. This track will likely pass through the operations and may have restricted access or other impacts. This may also apply to the Reefton lookout road and site. Recreation users on the track will experience the haul road close-up as the track and road cross. However, this effect is no greater than a track crossing a public road, although likely to have a controlled crossing rather than open access. Other recreation in the Victoria Forest Park will continue during the activity. If current recreation access remains open during operations overall the effect on recreation is likely to be very low. Post mine closure and rehabilitation, there may be an opportunity to further enhance recreation as former mining features are integrated into the forest park.

The effects of the lower haul road or other transport mechanism to move material from the ROM storage to the processing site could potentially range from low to moderate depending on the mechanism. The effects are primarily visual and seen from the Devil's Creek valley to the west. However, due to the hill landforms much of the visibility is reduced. A haul road is likely to be low to low-moderate, an overhead solution is potentially low-moderate to moderate.

The processing operation is a substantial facility. The scale and nature of the operation is likely to result in some degree of landscape effects on the surrounding area, however due to the very small number of dwellings (the preliminary site visit has identified 2 nearby) the effects are likely to be in the lower range of very low to moderate.



The deposition of spoil on the Tai Poutini Polytechnic site is likely to result in low effects overall, as the area is large and the volume being deposited will be over a long timeframe. This is unlikely to result in a significant change to the landform. Effects on small highly modified wetlands are likely to be low as the natural character values are very limited due to them being primarily in exotic pasture grass with a lack of indigenous vegetation.

Mitigation and Management Measures

Temporary or permanent vegetative or artificial screening of the processing site is likely to be the primary mitigation measure to manage landscape effects. To a lesser degree similar screening may be required for the spoil deposition.

The lower haul road road-based solution may be mitigated using screening vegetation to reduce the overall visibility of vehicle movements. Other measures design to manage non- landscape effects may also serve to mitigate the visual impacts, for example timing of vehicle movements, number of movements per day, dust and noise controls etc.

The lower haul road overhead transport solution may be mitigated by choosing recessive colours for the infrastructure and considering orientation and placement of the infrastructure to minimise views from key viewpoint locations.

Enhancement of the natural character of the wetlands and other rivers within the project boundaries should be designed into the operations in order to be recreated, retained or enhanced as part of post-mining rehabilitation.

Conclusion

The proposed underground gold mine south of Reefton is anticipated to be a low impact activity within a landscape characterised by steep, forested hill country on the margins of Victoria Forest Park, with areas of low to high natural character, high perceptual cohesion, and layered cultural and historic associations. The receiving environment is a mix of highly natural and highly modified, the proposal is largely contained by landform and mature indigenous vegetation, with limited residential receptors and restricted public visibility. The mine portal and upper haul road are expected to result in very low to low landscape effects due to their relatively small footprint, location within dense vegetation and minimal visual catchment. Recreation effects, including at the Globe Hill Track, are also anticipated to be low overall, provided access is appropriately managed.

The processing facility and lower haul road or alternative transport mechanism represents the most visually influential components of the proposal, with potential effects ranging from low to low-moderate depending on detailed design and the nature of the transport solution. However, the topography and opportunities for screening substantially reduce wider landscape effects. Spoil deposition is anticipated to result in low effects given the scale of the receiving environment and gradual implementation over time. Subject to mitigation measures including vegetative screening, recessive design treatment, operational controls, and comprehensive progressive rehabilitation, overall landscape effects are assessed as predominantly very low to low, with limited potential for localised low-moderate effects. With rehabilitation and enhancement of wetlands and riparian margins, the proposal can be accommodated without resulting in significant adverse landscape effects.

Therefore, it is considered that the landscape effects of the proposal are **low** to **low-moderate**, which can be considered to be **minor**.

Shannon Bray
Registered Fellow Landscape Architect

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Landscape Architect



Rua Gold

**Proposed Mine
Reefton**

24 March 2026

INTRODUCTION

RUA GOLD

RUA GOLD is an exploration company, strategically focused on New Zealand. With decades of expertise, our team has successfully taken major discoveries into producing world-class mines across multiple continents.

RUA GOLD is a minerals company at the forefront of the mining industry, specializing in gold exploration and discovery. With permits which have rich history dating back to the gold rush era, RUA GOLD has successfully combined traditional prospecting practices with modern technologies to uncover and capitalize on valuable gold deposits.

Our commitment to responsible and sustainable exploration is evident in our professional planning and execution, ensuring minimal environmental impact. RUA GOLD has a skilled team of professionals who possess extensive knowledge and experience in geology, geochemistry, and geophysical exploration technology.



PURPOSE OF THIS DOCUMENT

The information in this document provides an overview of the proposal.

It provides details of the phases of the project, the majors aspects of the operation and their potential effects.

The high-level overview enables a greater understanding of the project and supports engagement with the project by the various interest groups and other parties.

PURPOSE OF THE CONSULTATION

The Auld Creek Mine is a proposed mining development located near the historic gold-mining town of Reefton, situated in the West Coast Region of New Zealand’s South Island.

The area has a rich history of gold production, with Reefton itself being one of the first places in New Zealand where gold was discovered, spurring significant early mining activity.

This project aims to revive gold and antimony extraction operations in the region using modern and sustainable mining practises.

LOCATION

Reefton is located in the Buller District on the West Coast of New Zealand's South Island, about 80 km northeast of Greymouth and 60 km southwest of Murchison, along State Highway 7.

The **Inangahua River** rises in the Victoria Range, flows generally northwest through the Buller District, and joins the Buller River near Reefton after passing through a narrow valley and several small settlements.

Soldiers Creek, Devils Creek and Auld Creek are small, fast-flowing tributaries near Reefton that drain steep, forested terrain and join the Inangahua River.

State Highway 7 runs east–west across the northern South Island from Waipara to Greymouth, passing through inland valleys and river gorges via towns such as Hanmer Springs, Murchison, and Reefton.

Quigleys Road (Primary site access route) is a local rural road near Reefton that provides access to surrounding farmland, bush areas, and nearby tributaries of the Inangahua River.

Soldiers - Big River Road (Diversion to separate mine traffic from local road) is a winding rural route that connects Reefton with the Big River area, following valleys and forested terrain alongside small creeks such as Soldiers Creek.

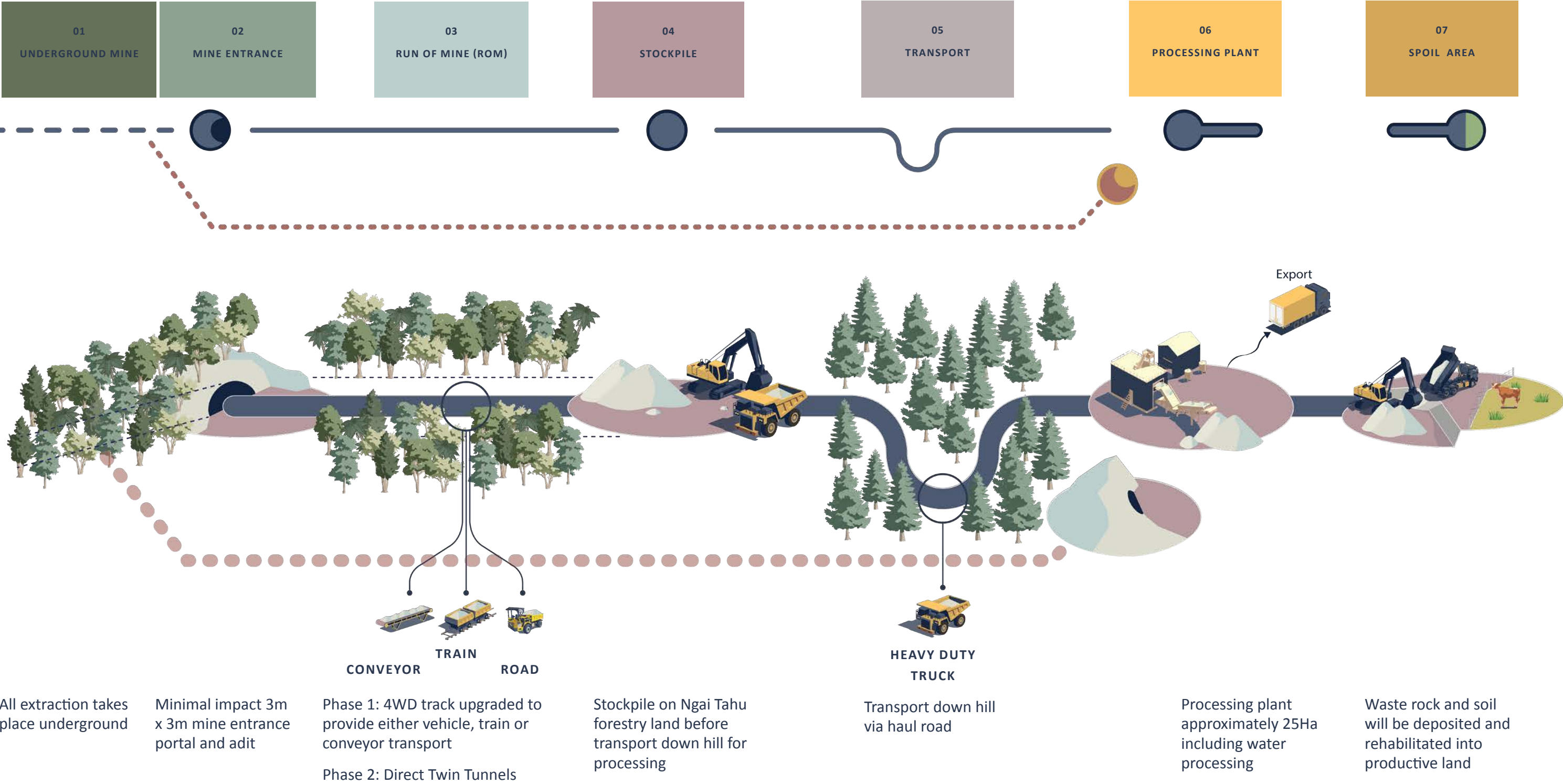
Victoria Forest Park (Department of Conservation) is New Zealand's largest forest park, covering over 200,000 hectares of largely untouched beech and podocarp forest, providing habitat for native birds like kiwi and kaka, and featuring remote backcountry areas popular for tramping, hunting, and mountain biking.

Ngāi Tahu are recognised as mana whenua (tribal authority) for the broader West Coast region including Reefton, with their ancestors and hapū such as Poutini Ngāi Tahu occupying much of Te Tai Poutini to gather taonga like pounamu (greenstone) and maintaining seasonal travel and food-gathering routes across the region.



PROJECT OVERVIEW

PROCESS



TIMELINE



01 UNDERGROUND MINE

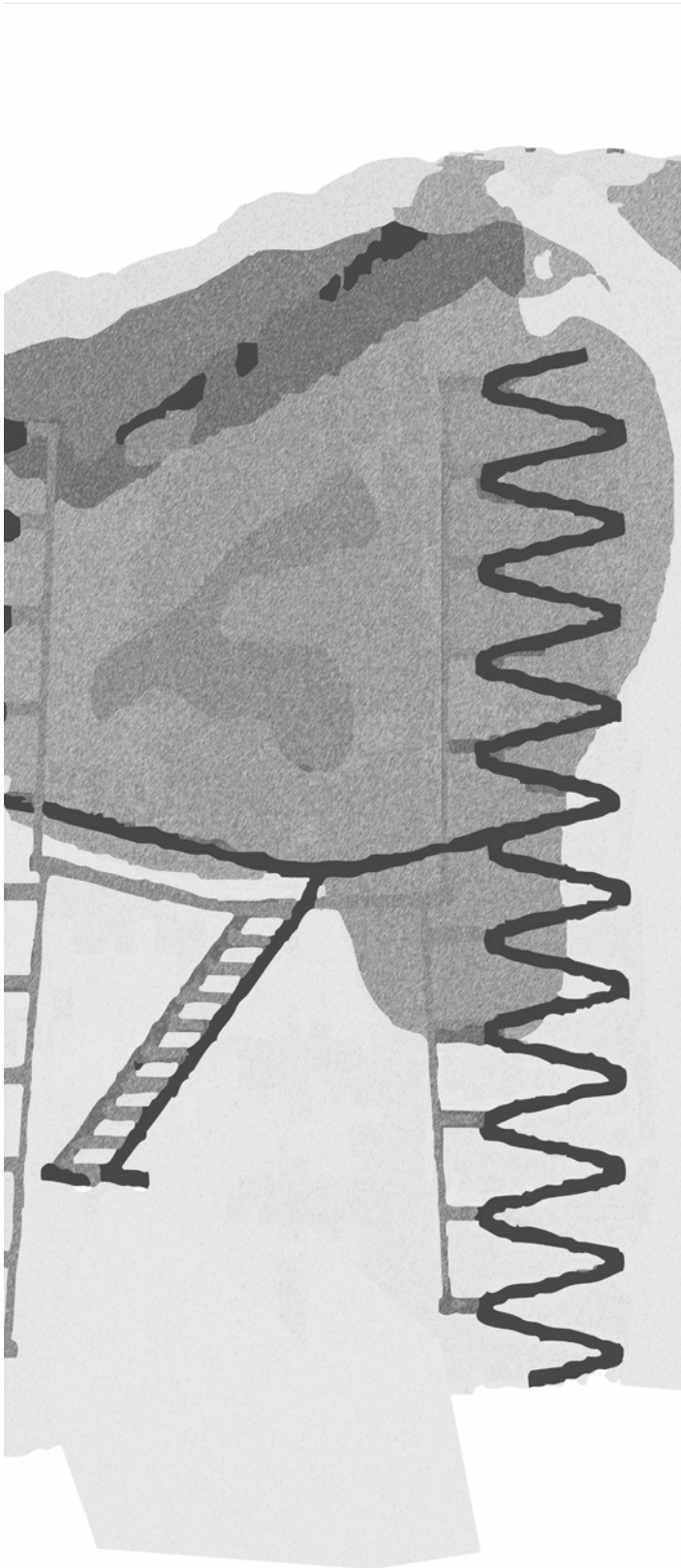
MINE OPERATION



The Auld Creek Gold Mine is proposed to use safe and modern underground mining methods to extract economic ore from the deposit. These methods have been selected due to the characteristics of the known deposit and geotechnical considerations.

The intention is to focus on light touch surface foot print, narrow vein mining techniques with mine access at the top and bottom of the deposit.

Tunnels are created below ground so that most activity happens out of sight, reducing the scale of surface change. Mining machinery operates inside these underground spaces to extract gold-bearing rock while keeping the landform above as intact as possible.



MINING METHODS

Phase 1

Disturbance at the mine entrance will be minimal.

A number of small surface expressions for the mine are planned including the entrance portal, ventilation and supporting infrastructure.

Phase 2

Underground mining will be via a 1.2km twin incline/decline tunnel.

The underground mining must operate within a highly regulated safety regime overseen by WorkSafe, which provides detailed guidance on essential systems such as ventilation, electrical safety, fire and explosion management, and principal hazard controls.

These requirements shape how an underground mine is designed from the outset, ensuring that worker safety, environmental protection, and cultural values remain central.

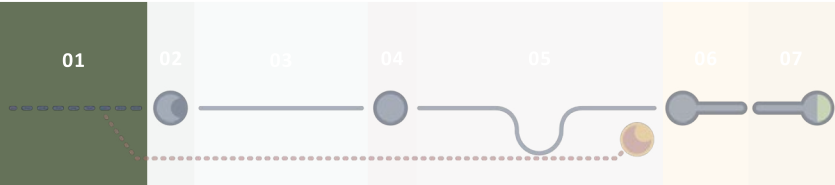
POTENTIAL EFFECTS

Technical experts will also consider whether underground vibrations influence groundwater flows, aquifers, or subterranean habitats such as cave invertebrates or bat roosting niches.

Geotechnical and hydrogeological assessments will be important for understanding stability, settlement risks, and changes to groundwater chemistry.

Noise and vibration specialists typically assess how drilling and blasting propagate through rock and whether these effects are perceptible at the surface.

Ecologists may be involved if the mine intersects with underground habitat systems, and planners will look at whether the activity affects recreational values, public access, or nearby conservation areas, even if those effects are indirect.



02 MINE ENTRANCE

PORTAL AND ADIT



Disturbance at the mine entrance will be minimal.

The mine portal is not located in an area of historic or cultural significance.

It is not anticipated to impact on identified features. There is likely to be very limited to no visibility of the mine portal as it sits within dense mature vegetation away from publicly accessible locations and other sensitive viewpoints such as residential dwellings.

A number of small surface expressions for the mine portal, ventilation and supporting infrastructure.

The portal is the single visible entrance where the underground mine meets the hillside. It is a carefully managed point of access where vehicles and staff move in and out. Its design aims to sit neatly within the existing landform so that the surrounding landscape values with the area remain respected.

Phase one requires a potal and adit (tunnel) on DOC land. This will be 3m wide x 3m high. Temporary surface infrastructure includes equipment laydown and storage areas, and sheds/offices for workers. This will require a platform of approximately 50m x50m.

After extraction is complete geotechnical stabilisation works will secure the rock mass and enable safe ongoing mining from the underground portal access.



POTENTIAL EFFECTS

- Landscape architects will examine its visibility, how it sits within the landform, and how its lighting and structures influence natural character.
- Noise engineers usually assess vehicle movements and machinery presence at the portal.
- Stormwater and erosion specialists evaluate how runoff is captured and controlled to protect nearby waterways, soil stability, and aquatic health.
- Heritage specialists may check whether the portal encroaches on archaeological features, historic mining remnants, or early settler infrastructure.
- Ecologists will look at vegetation clearance, edge effects, and fauna disturbance — especially birds and bats that may be sensitive to lighting, vehicle activity, or noise.
- Work will be needed to understand the species present in Victoria Forest Park that may be affected.



03 RUN OF MINE

TRANSPORT TO ROM STOCKPILE



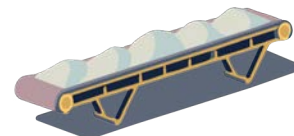
The run of mine operation on the upper haul road could be one of three options:

- Conveyor
- small truck
- carts

There is an existing vehicle track that will require some surface upgrade but is not anticipated to increase in width or require removal of significant amounts of vegetation.

All three options are anticipated to be relatively low impact because they don't require substantial modification of the existing 4WD track.

TRANSPORTATION OPTIONS

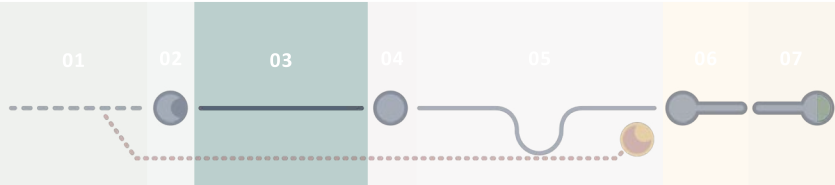
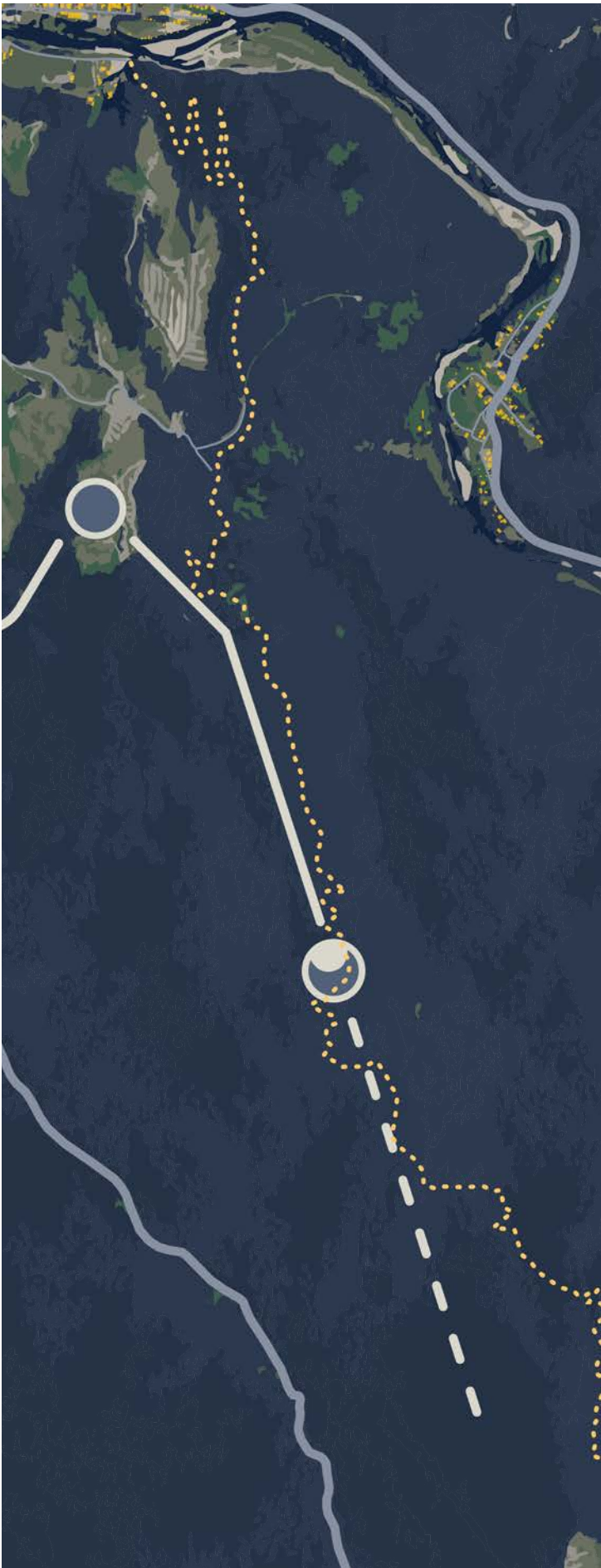


RECREATION



Recreation in the area includes walking and mountain bike tracks, with the most likely impacted feature being the Globe Hill Track that connects Reefton to the Globe Progress Mine site.

The existing bike track will be diverted and reinstated via an alternative route. it is likely the existing bike track will be used for internal movement of waste rock and ore.



04 STOCKPILE

RUN OF MINE STOCKPILE



The stockpile will be relatively contained but may result in some visual effects from vehicle movements and material being manged.

The stockpile is a controlled, temporary holding area for the rock taken from the underground workings. It is shaped and screened to reduce its visibility in the wider landscape and managed to protect nearby waterways and culturally significant places.

Material doesn’t stay here long — it is simply staged before transport to the processing plant.



MONITORING & REPORTING

For mana whenua, ongoing monitoring is an essential expression of kaitiakitanga, ensuring that the mauri of the whenua and the wellbeing of the underground environment are actively protected throughout the life of the mine.

In Aotearoa, monitoring and reporting are not optional or informal practices—they are legally required components of operating an underground mine. The following monitoring activities will be required:

- water quality
- noise and vibration
- dust
- meteorological and weather stations
- wildlife stations
- groundwater/geotechnical piezometers

Although the exact conditions would be set through regional and district planning processes, underground mines in Aotearoa typically need to monitor groundwater levels and quality, surface water flows and clarity, sedimentation effects, discharge quality, dust, noise, vibration, rehabilitation progress, and the condition of adjacent ecological or culturally important sites.

These expectations align with the broader compliance framework WorkSafe and MBIE describe in outlining hazard management systems and minimum performance standards for mines operating under New Zealand law.

POTENTIAL EFFECTS

For the stockpile area, the focus begins with understanding how the location affects the cultural landscape and whether it sits comfortably within mana whenua aspirations for the area.

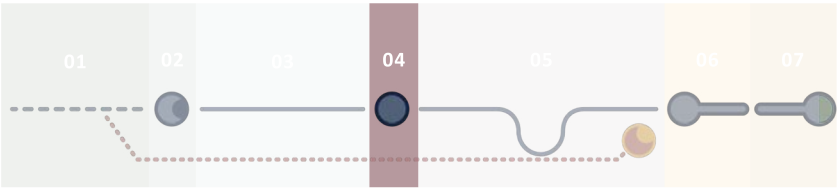
Landscape experts will analyse how the form and height of the stockpile influence views, naturalness, and landscape coherence.

Dust experts assess particulate emissions and their interaction with sensitive receptors such as marae, dwellings, ecological areas, and waterways.

Ecologists consider the footprint, potential habitat loss, and the integrity of nearby freshwater systems.

Water quality and stormwater specialists will examine leachate risks, sediment runoff, and containment design.

If the stockpile is close to older mining landscapes or historic features, heritage advisors may be involved to ensure protection or interpretation of those values.



05 TRANSPORT

TRANSPORT TO PROCESSING PLANT



From the stockpile, the rock is moved down the hill using a defined haul route. Transport of the mined material down the hill could be via larger transporter trucks or using a cableway.

Option 1: Trucks will use a new roadway down the hill.

Option 2: The cableway will be highly visible as it will extend above the tree canopy.

This transport path is designed to minimise landscape disturbance and avoid areas of cultural importance identified through mana whenua engagement. Traffic is managed so that dust, noise, and visual effects remain low for neighbouring communities.

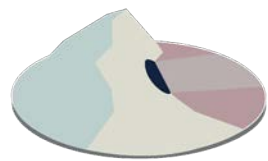


TRANSPORTATION: PHASE 1

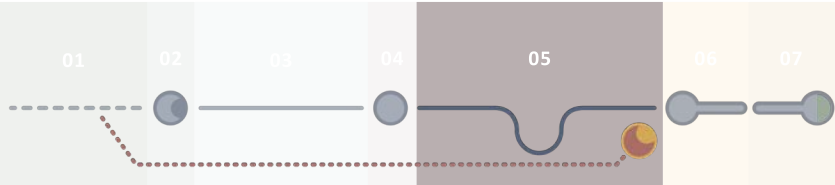


Transport down hill via haul road

TRANSPORTATION: PHASE 2



Access to and mining of remaining deposit is via a 1.2km underground twin decline tunnel.



POTENTIAL EFFECTS



Where the route intersects public tracks, roads, or recreation areas, social and recreation experts assess how transport affects people’s use and experience of the place.



The effects of the haul road or other transport mechanism to move material from the ROM storage to the processing site could potentially range from low to moderate depending on the design.

The effects are primarily visual and seen from the Devil’s Creek valley to the west. However, due to the hill landforms much of the visibility is reduced.

Dust, noise and vibration specialists will consider how truck movements influence the surrounding environment, with attention to ecology such as lizards, birds, and freshwater habitats.

Drainage engineers usually evaluate how the route manages stormwater, while landscape planners review how cut-and-fill earthworks alter the slope and landform character.

06 PROCESSING PLANT

ROCK PROCESSING AND METAL EXTRACTION



At the processing plant, the gold-bearing rock is crushed and treated so the gold can be separated.

This facility is designed to sit within an already modified part of the landscape, reducing new disturbance. Water, noise, and energy use are carefully monitored so the operation respects cultural values and the health of the surrounding environment.

The preferred plant site is at the end of Soldiers Road which would require the purchase of two farms to allow for the construction of a processing plant and waste storage facility.

Initial build of a 200,000 - 250,000 tonne per annum plant, with redundancy and flexibility considered in design to facilitate an expansion as mining development expands and exploration potential unfolds. Structures will include:

- three-stage crushing, with fine ore-bin storage and emergency reclaim;
- a single-stage ball mill, with flotation cell treating cyclone overflow, producing an antimony/gold concentrate
- separate gravity circuit to treat ball-mill discharge and flotation tails products to produce gravity gold Doré;
- concentrate dewatering using a thickener and a filter to produce a transportable concentrate; and
- appropriate tailings-handling facilities (including detoxification of cyanates) depending on plant location and underground paste fill requirements;



POTENTIAL EFFECTS



The processing operation is a substantial facility. The scale and nature of the operation is likely to result in some degree of landscape effects on the surrounding area, however due to the very small number of dwellings (the preliminary site visit has identified 2 nearby) the effects are likely to be in the lower range of very low to moderate.

Noise and air quality experts will review plant emissions, operational noise, and odour.

Water engineers and freshwater ecologists evaluate the processing water cycle, discharge systems, and potential contaminants.

Landscape architects examine plant scale, building form, lighting, and screening. Hazardous substances experts advise on containment, emergency response, and regulatory requirements.

Social impact practitioners may also assess community concerns, perceptions, and the visibility of the plant from public viewpoints or recreation spaces.

PROCESSING SITE FEATURES

Site entry to the north on Soldiers-Big River Road realignment.

Waste Rock Stack (WRS) and dry stack Tilings Storage Facility (TSF)

The tailings and processing waste facility is proposed to be located next to processing facility and use a dry stack methodology and integrate waste rock storage.

Water Treatment

Process and tailings filtration

Warehouse, offices, change rooms

Workshop, fuel, heavy vehicle parking

Portal area



07 SPOIL DISPOSAL

OVERBURDEN AREA



Rua gold is working out arrangements for use of the Tai Poutini polytechnic site adjacent to the processing plant. This area will be used to dispose of the processed rock.

The deposition of spoil on the Tai Poutini Polytechnic site is appropriate as the area is large and the volume being deposited will be over a long timeframe. This is unlikely to result in a significant change to the landform.

The overburden spoil area is where surplus material (rock and soil) with no gold is placed. It is shaped to follow natural landforms and replanted so that it blends back into the environment over time.

Mana whenua and ecological advice guide how this area is restored, ensuring the whenua can return to a healthy and meaningful landscape.



POTENTIAL EFFECTS

For the spoil area, cultural landscape specialists consider how the proposed landform relates to the ancestral landscape, including opportunities for shaping, revegetation, and long-term restoration that aligns with mana whenua aspirations.

Ecologists will examine soil types, stability, potential for natural regeneration, and the design of indigenous planting to restore ecological function.

Geotechnical and hydrological experts analyse stability, drainage, seepage behaviour, and long-term resilience.

Landscape specialists focus on how the reshaped landform blends with natural patterns and reduces visual prominence.

Freshwater scientists look at sediment pathways, wetland opportunities, and the condition of receiving environments.

If the area overlaps with older mining landscapes or known archaeological sites, heritage assessments may be required.

EXPORT OF CONCENTRATE

The products will be transported away from the site via Quigleys Road and State Highway 7.

Gold recovery from the gravity circuit plus flotation concentrate would be in the range of approximately 90 - 93%. Antimony recoveries using lead nitrate as an activator would be in the range of 70-95%.

REHABILITATION & CLOSURE

Rehabilitation is integral to the project. A detailed rehabilitatio plan will be prepared and implemented and cover the following objectives:

- restablish vegetation cover over all disturbed areas
- minimise maintenance after rehabilitation
- protect water and soil from erosion
- restore disturbed watercourses to a natural and stable condition
- visually integrate finished structures, landforms and vegetation into the surrounding landscape

