

Barrytown Minerals Project
Fast-track application

Expert Report of Glenn Adrian Banks on behalf of the
Coast Road Resilience Group

ECONOMIC BENEFITS ANALYSIS

28 September 2026

Introduction

1. My full name is Glenn Adrian Banks.
2. I am a professor of Geography. Since 2008 I have been working at the School of People, Environment and Planning within Massey University.
3. I have Honours and Master of Science degrees in Geography from the University of Canterbury, and a PhD in Geographical Sciences from the Australian National University, Canberra, Australia. I have worked as a researcher on, and consultant to the mining sector in the Pacific for over 35 years. Both my Masters and my PhD were on mineral development in Papua New Guinea. I have published more than 50 academic papers, chapters and books on aspects of large-scale mining in the Pacific and more generally. One of my co-authored papers (Ballard and Banks 2003 Resource Wars: The anthropology of large-scale mining, *Annual Review of Anthropology*) is the most cited social science paper on the mining sector. Initially my work focussed on the local socio-economic impacts and community development associated with large-scale mining.

4. In recent decades, alongside a continuing focus on the local and regional effects of large-scale mining in the Pacific, I have also been involved in policy work and discussions at the national and regional level, including leading a UNDP National Human Development report in Papua New Guinea that focussed on translating mineral wealth into sustainable human development¹, and providing advice on mineral policy in the Solomon Islands and Fiji.
5. I have also completed over 20 major consultancy reports for the mining industry in the Pacific on social and economic aspects of their operations, including social impact assessments, social baseline studies, social monitoring, business surveys, local economic analyses, risk assessments, inward migration plans, human rights and resettlement. This work has been carried out for, or in relation to, projects led by major multinational mining companies including Barrick Mining, Xstrata (Glencore) and Newcrest/ Newmont.
6. I am a recipient of the 2020 New Zealand Geographical Society Distinguished Geographer medal, the President of the Manawatū Branch of the New Zealand Geographical Society, and Committee member on the Manawatū branch of the Royal Society of New Zealand.

Code of conduct

7. I have read the Expert Witness Code of Conduct contained in the High Court Rules 2016 and agree to be bound by it.

Assessment of the Sense Partners Economic Report

8. I have reviewed the Economic impacts of Barrytown Minerals Project prepared by Sense Partners, dated 9 March 2026 (**Report**) which is provided in support of the Fast-track application for a mineral sands operation at Barrytown Flats (**Proposal**).

¹ Papua New Guinea National Human Development Report 2014: From Wealth to Wellbeing: Translating Resource Revenue into Sustainable Human Development. UNDP: Port Moresby and New York, <https://hdr.undp.org/content/papua-new-guinea-national-human-development-report-2014>

9. I have also reviewed the Evidence of J. Ballingall in relation to this report.
10. I offer the following observations with respect to the evidence in this Report.

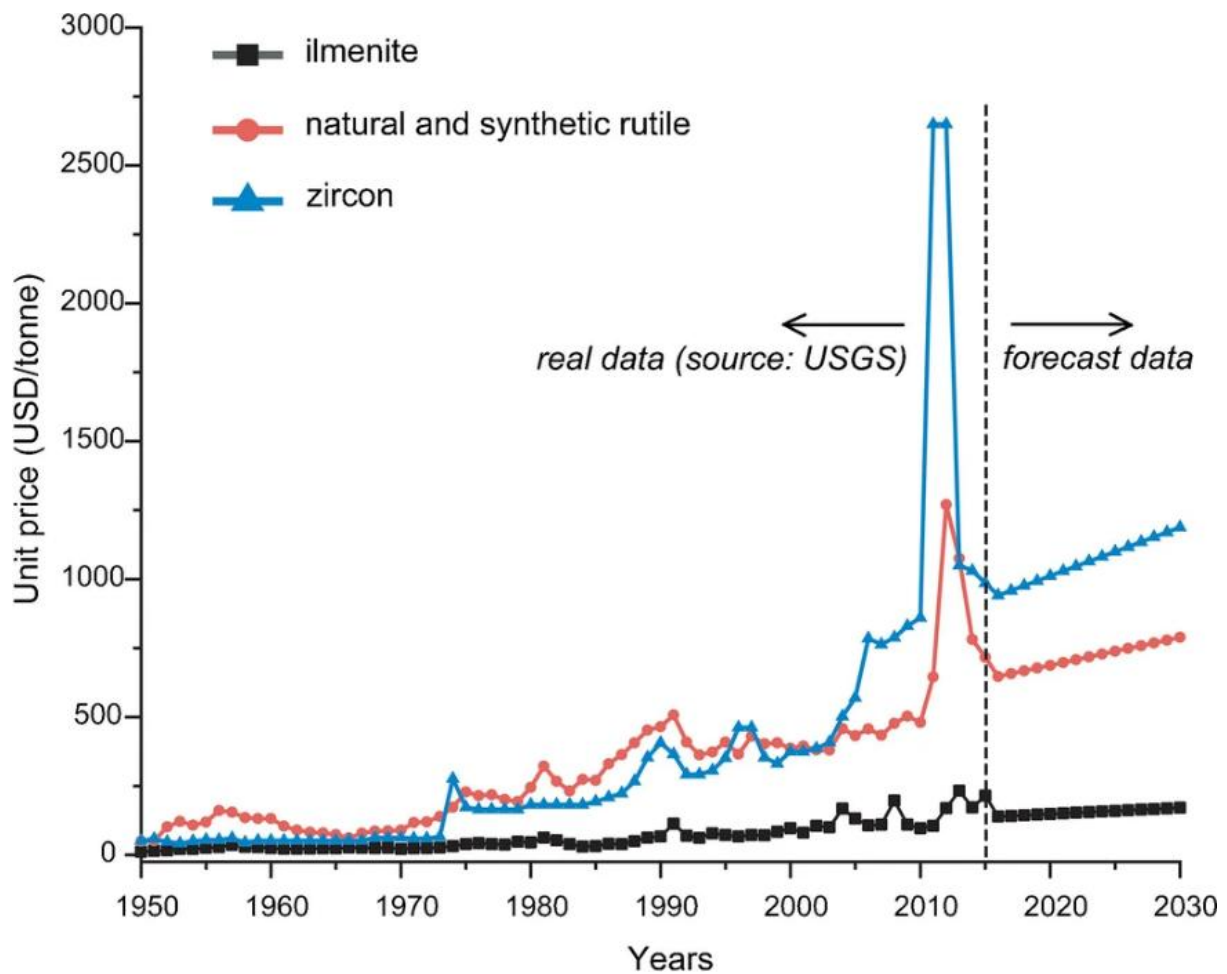
Context of the Economic benefit assessment

11. An assessment of the economic benefits in relation to this project needs to be done in the context of the Fast Track Approval Act. Section 3 of the Act states: The purpose of this Act is to facilitate the delivery of infrastructure and development projects with *significant regional or national benefits*.
12. The emphasis on the 'regional and national benefits' extends through Sections 81(4 and 5), and 85 (3) of the Act. In the context of the Proposal this means the focus of the assessment needs to be on the benefits that accrue to the West Coast region and New Zealand. Significant local benefits (i.e. within Grey District) are certainly welcome but should not figure in the decision-making of the Panel under the Act.
13. It has been argued in the context of both OceanaGold's Waihi North and Santana's Bendigo mining proposals under the FTA that the focus should be on 'net benefits' – in other words, consideration of the costs should be accounted for in this calculus.

Volatility of prices for extracted minerals

14. The "averages" used in the Report² can mask significant volatility - ilmenite and zircon, for example have displayed significant volatility historically (see below). Even just in the last two years, publicly reported Chinese ilmenite prices have bounced around from US\$377/tonne in September 2024 to US\$224/tonne in August 2026, which amounts to a 40% decline in 2 years.

² See, for example, discussion at paragraph 25 and following of the Report



Source: Subasinghe, C. S., Ratnayake, A. S., Roser, B., Sudesh, M., Wijewardhana, D. U., Attanayake, N., & Pitawala, J. (2022). Global distribution, genesis, exploitation, applications, production, and demand of industrial heavy minerals. *Arabian Journal of Geosciences*, 15(20), 1616 (28 pages)
<https://doi.org/10.1007/s12517-022-10874-0>

15. This is critical to the economic assessment of the project in terms of the annual variability and the whole of life estimate.

Sensitivity testing

16. It is unclear from the publicly available documents what sensitivity testing, if any, has been undertaken by the applicant in respect to the effects of commodity price variations and other assumptions on the economics of the proposal. Without accounting for such variability, the value of the analysis is

diminished because it does not take into account variations in the economic returns to various stakeholders, including local and national government.

17. Such sensitivity testing may cover the assumptions used regarding:
 - a. future commodity prices,
 - b. exchange rates,
 - c. production volumes,
 - d. operating costs, and
 - e. project longevity.
18. For example, such an analysis:
 - a. Would account for what happens to revenue and profits (or losses) - indeed even mine life - if ilmenite prices fall a further 20%.
 - b. Would test how operating cost increases (labour, fuel, etc) impact on profitability, taxes paid and mine life.
 - c. Would allow the Panel to understand how the projected 'averages' in The Report could potentially vary year by year (and the likelihood of this occurring) under different scenarios.
 - d. Would provide a more realistic picture of the potential variability of the returns from the operation, and their distribution among stakeholders (shareholders, government etc).
 - e. Would allow the Panel to better see a more realistic set of estimates of the effects of the operation through time on the local and national economy.
19. With mining this is critical because historically the sector globally has at times experienced huge variability in the returns to governments (through taxes, dividends and royalties) and to a lesser extent to local economies (through wages and business expenditures).
20. By way of example, OceanaGold (New Zealand's largest gold producer) paid no corporate taxes on hundreds of millions of dollars of gold exports in 2021 and 2023 due to a range of these factors.

Fair share

21. A broader question relates to the 'fair share' of the value of the resource: are the (possibly questionable) returns to New Zealand, through jobs, and taxes and business generated a 'fair share' of the value of the resource in this case? The Report provides limited information on the local, regional and national breakdown, making it difficult to assess where the distribution of any revenues might lie.

22. Based on a broad back of the envelope assessment, using the values set forward in the Report, the annual figures are:

Export revenue NZ\$230million	Local(?) costs	NZ\$89million
	Taxes and royalties	NZ\$45 million
	Total	NZ\$134million

23. These are different again when the economic benefit of the Proposal is considered on its own over the reduced life of the Proposal of 14 years, as discussed in the Statement of Evidence of John Balingall (Appendix L1A):

Export revenue NZ\$200.2 million	Local(?) costs	NZ\$66.9 million
	Taxes and royalties	NZ\$39.8 million
	Total	NZ\$106.7million

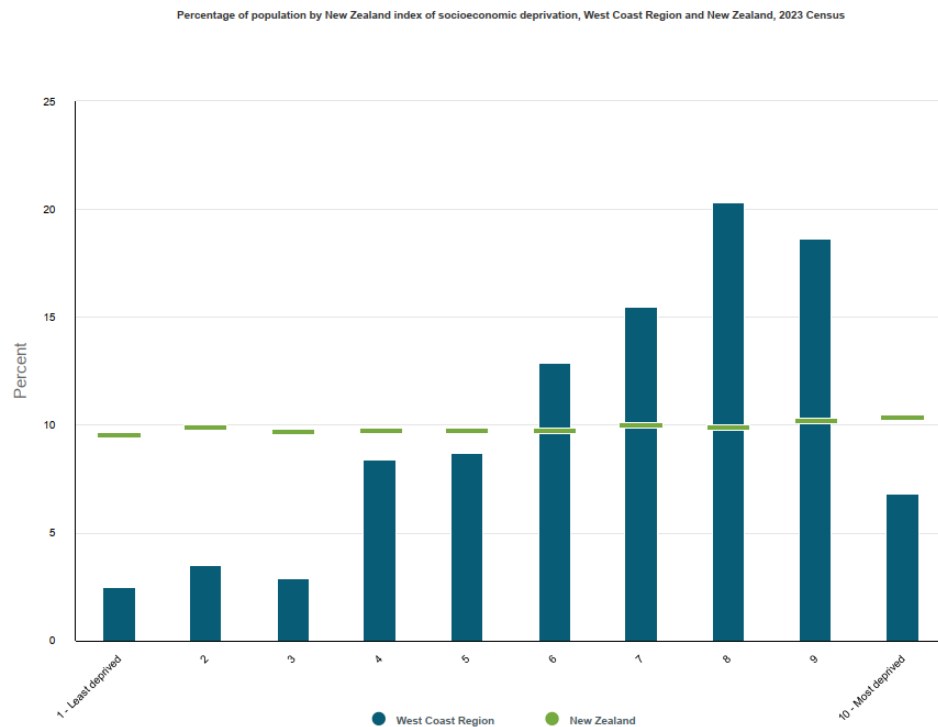
24. Hence even under these somewhat uncertain and possibly highly optimistic (heroic) assumptions:

- a. 53.3% from the Proposal (or 58% from the entire Project, including already consented works) would provide a benefit to New Zealand. But the Report provides no firm analysis of the extent to which the resulting revenues, profits and economic rents will be retained within the Grey District, the West Coast or New Zealand; and
- b. 46.7% from the Proposal (or 42% from the entire Project, including already consented works) of the value of the resource going to the company shareholders, at least some of whom are offshore.

Economic Impacts and Community Wellbeing

25. The Report assumes that increased GDP, exports, wages and government revenues will translate into improved community wellbeing. However, the historical experience of the West Coast suggests that this relationship is not straightforward. Despite more than a century of significant resource extraction, parts of the West Coast continue to experience comparatively high levels of socioeconomic deprivation. This indicates that growth in economic activity does not necessarily result in broadly shared community benefits and raises questions about who receives the benefits of resource development and how those benefits are distributed.
26. The Report does not provide evidence that the projected GDP, employment and export gains associated with this project will provide regional benefits. The West Coast has been one of New Zealand's principal mining regions for more than a century. Mining brings jobs and revenues. And yet parts of the region continue to experience high levels of deprivation. Given that more than a century of mining activity on the West Coast has not obviously translated into consistently high levels of economic and social wellbeing across the region, the Report is not offering evidence of how this Proposal will achieve a different outcome to earlier mining.
27. The point is that economic contributions to GDP do not necessarily translate into regional, community-wide, benefits. Below is a graphic of the socioeconomic deprivation index for the West Coast (from the Statistics New Zealand Website, using 2023 Census Results). The numbers along the horizontal axis show levels of socio-economic deprivation. A value of 1 represents neighbourhoods that are among the least deprived in New Zealand, while a value of 10 represents neighbourhoods that are among the most deprived. The index combines information on factors such as income, employment, housing, access to transport and communications, and household circumstances.

28. West Coast is consistently well below that share of the population that are least deprived (values 1-3) and well over the share of the population that reside in areas with high levels of socio-economic deprivation (values 6-9).



Graph: Percentage of population by New Zealand index of socioeconomic deprivation, West Coast region and New Zealand, 2023 Census

No information on net economic benefits

29. The Report sets out the applicant's evidence with respect to the gross economic benefits of the project (direct employment (135 FTEs), export earnings, GDP contribution etc). Subject to there being little discussion of the volatility of commodities pricing and sensitivity testing, these are plausible estimates of gross economic activity.
30. However, the Report does not address **net** benefits at all. This leaves a gap in the analysis as it does not discuss costs such as:
- environmental costs,
 - landscape effects,
 - recreational impacts,

- d. cultural values,
 - e. alternative land uses (other than grazing), or
 - f. distributional effects (who gets the benefits).
31. The costs associated with environmental matters include those required to assess radioactivity levels and then address any effects in perpetuity if radioactive waste needs to be safely disposed of or stored.
32. Costs to the locality through damage to the public roads from mine haulage, which would need to be covered either by central Government (through National Land Transport funding) or by the local government, is also not discussed.
33. The effects on tourism are certainly under-researched and potentially underplayed in the Report. It concludes that tourism impacts are not material but does not provide empirical evidence, modelling, or visitor research supporting this conclusion. There are methodologies which could be employed to provide a more accurate estimate of the impact on tourism, which currently appears to be an assertion rather than based on evidence.

Errors in Report

34. The numbers and calculation at paragraph 13 (page 3) appear to be wrong: "Direct Mining Jobs" in the West Coast region of 6,826 is not feasible and is not derived from the Infometrics data. Based on my knowledge, the figure should be around 750 direct mining jobs on the West Coast (around 5% of total employment in the region).
35. Given these apparent errors, confidence in the other numerical assumptions that the Report is based on would be improved if key calculations and data were made explicit and transparent.

36. The Report is unclear as to what specific royalty regime has been assumed for the Barrytown Minerals Project and where this assumption originates from. It does not appear to be the standard one under the Crown Minerals Act of 2% or 10% of Accounting profits for a Tier 1 mining project.

Conclusions

37. Overall, the Report does not provide a sufficient basis to assess the regional and national significance of the project over its projected life. The lack of a sensitivity analysis of the economics of the project, the lack of transparent data and modelling showing the breakdown of economic benefits between local, regional and national levels (remembering that the FTA criteria is only concerned with regional and national level benefits), the lack of an assessment of the overall *net* benefit, and the lack of evidence that the purported economic impacts or flows will increase community socio-economic wellbeing mean that the Report is an insufficient basis on which to make an assessment of the significance of the Project's economic contribution.



Signed

Date 25 September 2026