

Before the Independent Hearing Panel

In the Matter of the Resource Management Act 1991 (**RMA**)

And

In the Matter of an application to the Central Otago District Council and Otago Regional Council for resource consent to establish and operate a gold mining activity at 1346 – 1536 Teviot Road, Millers Flat

Reference RC230325 (Central Otago District Council)
RM23.819 (Otago Regional Council)

Summary Statement of Mike Moore on behalf Hawkeswood Mining Limited

Landscape

Dated 13 May 2024

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Introduction

1. My full name is Michael William Moore. I am a landscape architect. I hold BSc, Dip LA and MRRP qualifications, and am a Registered member of the New Zealand Institute of Landscape Architects as set out in paragraph 1 of my Evidence in Chief.
2. I confirm that I have continued to comply with the Code of Conduct for expert witnesses in preparing this summary statement.

Summary

3. My evidence addresses the effects of the proposed mining on landscape values and visual amenity.
4. The landscape context of the site has a 'working rural' character and the site has previously been modified by gold mining activities. The site and area is not recognised as an area of outstanding natural landscape (ONL) or Significant Amenity Landscape (SAL) in the CODP but falls into the category of 'other rural landscapes'. Rural character based on openness and generally modest impact of built form or natural landform modification contributes to landscape quality and amenity values in the area.
5. Landscape impacts of this operation will arise from vegetation and landform disturbance, gravel stockpiles, the presence of plant and machinery, bunds, and lighting. An important factor is that the proposed operation will be temporary, and that the effects will be for a limited, approximately 5-7-year timeframe. Once completed, the area (including the existing dump area) will be returned to pastureland with virtually no sign that it was mined.
6. Whilst the site area is large, it will not all be impacted at once, and the proposed progressive rehabilitation to pasture immediately following mining is a key mitigation measure. Bunds are proposed to provide screening and separation, as are colour treatments to mitigate the visual prominence of depot structures.

7. The proposed mining works will have a semi-industrial character and will impact the rural character of the site. The mitigation measures proposed will reduce these impacts to an extent, and the timeframe of the operation involved is limited to the medium term. The long term / legacy effects will be a return to pastoral farmland with the existing dump site also tidied up.
8. My assessment has considered the key public viewpoints surrounding, and finds that the nature and degree of effects of the proposed activity (whilst operational) on the landscape values will vary over the life of the project and will fall within the ranges of adverse / low to adverse / moderate-high. Following final rehabilitation I assess effects as neutral to positive / very low.
9. In terms of natural character effects on the Clutha River / Mata-Au, the proposed mining is largely beyond the river margin and will have no direct physical effects of any significance within the riverbed or margin. Whilst operational, there will be some temporary adverse experiential effects associated with noise and visibility that will vary with the proximity of the works over the life of the project. Following rehabilitation there will be no long-term adverse natural character effects.
10. The majority of property owners in the area surrounding the site have either signed written approvals or have not cited visual effects in submissions. I have however, assessed the visual effects of the proposed mining from the properties of two submitters in opposition, at 1334 Teviot Road and 67 Clutha Road. As outlined in my evidence I consider that the effects from both these properties will be adverse / low-moderate (minor) during stage 2 of the works and adverse / very low (less than minor during other stages.
11. My evidence addresses the CODC consultants reports and I consider that the updated, more detailed site plans address most of the issues raised. With regard to the suggestion of indigenous plantings alongside the Clutha River / Mata-Au, I agree that this would have positive effects.

Conclusions

12. My evidence refers to the further amendments to staging detail, size and location of bunds, and revised conditions of consent (addressed by Ms

Collie) relevant to landscape and visual effects. Based on my assessment and the revisions referred to above, my conclusion is that the proposal will result in an acceptable level of visual and landscape effects.

Mike Moore

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