

BEFORE CENTRAL OTAGO DISTRICT COUNCIL

and OTAGO REGIONAL COUNCIL

IN THE MATTER of the Resource Management Act 1991

AND

IN THE MATTER of Hawkeswood Mining Limited application
for permits to operate an alluvial goldmine

**STATEMENT OF TONY DONS ON BEHALF OF
MILLERS FLAT WATER COMPANY LIMITED**

DATED 6 May 2024

**MILLERS FLAT WATER COMPANY LIMITED
PO Box 52
MILLERS FLAT
CENTRAL OTAGO 9544**

**Email: mfwater@gmail.com
Phone: 027 479 8333**

BACKGROUND

1. My name is Tony (Antonius) Dons and I am chairman of the Millers Flat Water Company Limited (“The Company”). The Company was established in 2010 and is a small community-owned and operated water supply company. The Company is operated by five voluntary directors, has 110 shareholders and supplies potable water to 123 connections within Millers Flat and north along Teviot Road.
2. The Company has significant duties under the Water Services Act 2021 (WSA) to supply safe and sufficient water to its shareholders and to manage risks to its water source.
3. My role today is to present a summary of the Company’s submissions to the Central Otago District Council (CODC) and Otago Regional Council (ORC) on the applications by Hawkeswood Mining Limited (“Hawkeswood”) for permits to operate an alluvial goldmine near Millers Flat township. We have reviewed the Hawkeswood applications, the CODC and ORC S42A reports, and had a helpful meeting with Hawkeswood on 23 September 2022. The Company has also entered into an agreement with Hawkeswood regarding the Company’s infrastructure located in the northern paper road.

ISSUES OF CONCERN TO MILLERS FLAT WATER COMPANY LIMITED

4. The Company considered the Hawkeswood applications at several Board meetings and determined that it had a neutral position on the applications, but we did identify four issues that were the subject of submissions to the Councils.

4.1 MILLERS FLAT WATER COMPANY INFRASTRUCTURE

As outlined in our submission part of our pipeline infrastructure is located in the northern paper road and is located within the proposed mining area. This pipeline services three water connections, two of which are now owned by Jacks Ridge Limited. The Company is obliged to ensure that water supply is continually maintained to these three connections and has now entered into a written agreement with Hawkeswood to ensure this will be accomplished during the mining operation. The Company also requests a resource condition to ensure continuous supply and prior consultation before alteration or relocation of the pipeline. The CODC s42A report recommends a condition (#46) to protect our pipeline and we support the inclusion of this condition particularly given the responsibilities placed on us by the WSA.

4.2 MANAGEMENT OF HAZARDOUS SUBSTANCES

The Millers Flat water scheme depends on a groundwater bore for its water supply and although the risks of contamination from the mining operation are small we are keen to

see appropriate conditions to ensure diligent management of hazardous substances and notification to our Company of any significant breach. The CODC s42A report recommends suitable conditions (#12, #13 and #14) and we support their inclusion particularly the requirement to notify us of spills greater than four litres. I also note that the ORC s42A report recommends a spill response condition (#9) in Appendix 1A including immediate notification to the Company. We support the inclusion of this condition also particularly as the ORC is likely to be the lead response agency.

4.3 POTENTIAL EFFECT ON GROUNDWATER QUALITY AND LEVELS

The Company has a significant duty to protect the groundwater source that provides water to the Millers Flat scheme. Although we accept that predictions show that the risks are small, we are keen to see appropriate monitoring, assessment and reporting as the mining operation progresses. The ORC s42A report recommends conditions requiring groundwater level and quality monitoring and annual reporting to the ORC. We wish to stress that the annual reporting should include a technical assessment by a suitably qualified technical expert and a copy of this provided to the ORC and the Company. I also note that Condition 15 in Appendix 1C recommends comparison against the New Zealand Drinking Water Standards (DWS). The Company wishes to be notified of any exceedances of the DWS so that we can fulfil our responsibilities under the WSA.

4.4 PROVISION OF ADDITIONAL WATER CONNECTIONS

As noted in our submission, I wish to record that no specific arrangements have been made with Hawkeswood to supply additional water connections. We have some spare capacity but additional connections would be considered as and when required. I note that Condition 4 of Appendix 1B requires the provision of 2000 litres per day within 48 hours to any affected bore owner. It is very unlikely that we would be able to provide a water connection within 48 hours but we would be able to supply water from our hydrants subject to certain conditions and limitations.

5. CONCLUSION

The Company has taken a neutral position regarding the proposed Hawkeswood goldmining operation. If it proceeds then the Company is very keen to see appropriate conditions applied regarding protection of our water infrastructure, management of hazardous substances and groundwater level and quality monitoring, assessment and reporting. We also note the limitations of our ability to supply alternative water supply to affected bore owners.

Tony Dons
Chairman, Millers Flat Water Company Limited