

#### **Item 4: OIAD-5275 tranche 2**

##### **Summary of 2025 exploration proposals**

As context, Santana Minerals/Matakanui Gold Limited (MGL) hold a Mineral Exploration Permit and have undertaken annual exploration drilling here over the last eight years from 2017-2025, authorised by DOC by way of a Letter of Authority under delegated authority from the Minister of Conservation.

In late 2024 MGL indicated to DOC's Central Otago District Office that they were likely to apply to DOC for further exploration works within the Conservation Covenant at Bendigo Station.

Following pre-application consultation, the District Office in a letter dated 24 February 2025 indicated to MGL that their proposal was something that was unlikely to be able to approved due to the effects, particularly in regard to historic values.

District Office staff made arrangements to view the site from the Thomsons Gorge Road on 9 May, but this was called off due to bad weather.

The District Office received an application for the proposed exploration works on 20 March 2025. This was assessed using information in the application, the applicant's accompanying historic and ecological assessments, a Restoration and Enhancement Plan, and internal DOC technical review and advice on the ecological and historic/heritage values.

On 11 June 2025 an internal report recommending a decline of the application and a draft response letter was put forward to the decision-maker, Charlie Sklenar, Central Otago Operations Manager.

An invitation from MGL was made to visit the site on 17 June but was declined.

Following conversations with MGL, on 28 July 2025 DOC received confirmation that MGL had withdrawn the application.

In parallel, on 4 July 2025 the District Office received a request for pre-application consultation, to understand what is required to progress an application with DOC, regarding a separate proposal for upcoming exploration drilling works within Public Conservation Land. As per standard process, all relevant information on what is required for a complete Access Agreement application was provided in email form.