



## Resource Management Act 1991

### Notification Decision s.95A-95F

*Report determining whether an application for resource consent should be processed as publicly notified, limited notified or non-notified*

**Consent Number:** RC-200.2013.00000208.001  
**Applicant:** New Talisman Gold Mines Ltd  
**Application to:** To undertake exploratory underground drilling at the Talisman Gold Mine in Karangahake  
**Site address:** Crown Hill Road, Karangahake  
**Legal Description of Site:** Lot 4 DP 316844 (65780)  
**Zones:** Conservation (Indigenous Forest) Zone – Operative District Plan – Map 19  
Conservation (Indigenous Forest) Zone – Proposed District Plan – Map 29  
**Activity Status:** Discretionary Activity  
**Lodgement Date:** 24 October 2013  
**Notification Decision Due Date:** 8 November 2013

#### 1.0 Initial Notification Assessment

- **Has the applicant requested public notification (s95A)?**
  - No, go to section 2.0**
  - Yes, go to sections 6.3 & 7.0 (only)
  
- **Is there a rule or national environmental standard which requires the resource consent application to be publicly notified (s95A)?**
  - Yes – PUBLICLY NOTIFY (If no decision on notification has already been made)
  - No - go to Section 2.0**
  
- **Has the applicant failed to respond by the deadline specified or refused to provide requested further information or refused to agree to the commissioning of a report? (s95C)**
  - Yes – PUBLICLY NOTIFY (If no decision on notification has already been made)
  - No - go to Section 2.0**

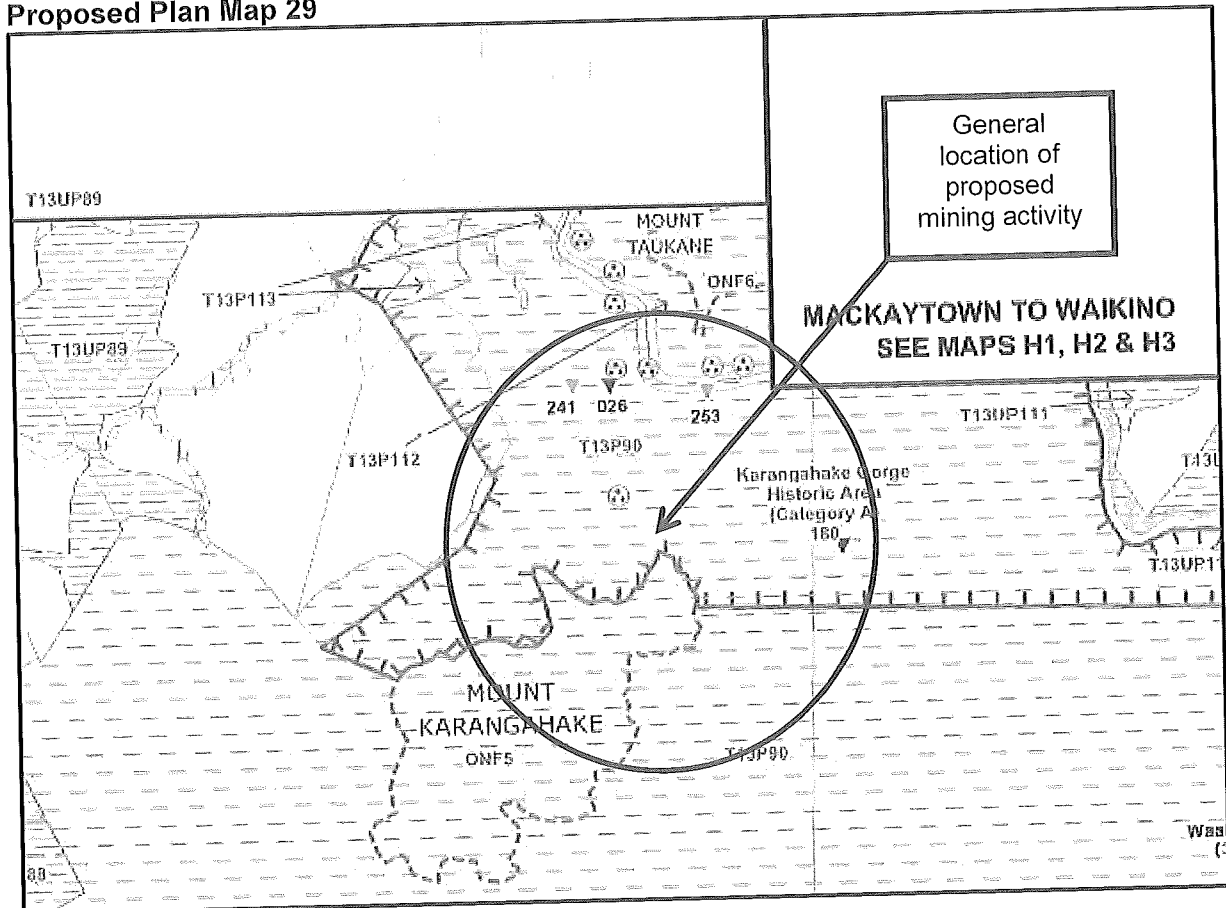
#### 2.0 Introduction

New Talisman Gold Mines Ltd seeks land use consent to undertake exploratory underground drilling at the Talisman Gold Mine in Karangahake. The site is within the Conservation (Indigenous Forest) Zone of both the Operative District Plan (Operative Plan) and the Appeals Version of the Proposed District Plan (Proposed Plan). Within the Proposed Plan,

the site is identified as being within a Significant Natural Area and the Karangahake Gorge Historic Area (Category A). The Talisman Mine is identified as a category C heritage item, being heritage item 241. The figure below identifies the location of the subject site.

It is noted that this notification assessment is limited to this proposal for exploration only and does not apply to future applications including an application for mining, should such be lodged.

**Proposed Plan Map 29**



### 3.0 The Proposal

The application is for land use consent to undertake exploration within No 8 Level of the Talisman Mine located in Karangahake within land administered by the Department of Conservation (DoC). This will involve the taking of bulk metallurgical samples from underground within the Talisman Mine via underground drilling and blasting. It is proposed that between 10,000 and 20,000m<sup>3</sup> of samples per annum will be taken.

It is anticipated that this sampling will take between 18 months to 2 years to complete. The applicant proposes that this work will be carried out 24 hours a day, over two 12 hour shifts of 7am to 7pm (surface and underground operations) and 7pm to 7am (underground operations) on Monday to Saturday, excluding public holidays. Work during these shifts will be undertaken by between 4 to 7 staff.

Prior to sampling commencing, it is proposed that refurbishment of the main underground access will be undertaken. This will include securing and replacing timber supports in unstable areas.

Once sampling commences, the applicant anticipates that the volume of mullock (being non-acid forming rock) to be removed will be small, approximately 5-8m<sup>3</sup> per day. This will be temporarily stored on the Portal Pad and crushed on site for use on the access road,

maintenance of the Portal Pad and for resurfacing of DoC tracks. A small front end loader or similar will be used to load an 8-10 tonne capacity truck to remove rock from the stockpile, resulting in approximately 1 truck load per day. No mullock would be stockpiled for longer than 5 days and the stockpile will have a perimeter drain with water directed to a silt trap.

The metallurgical samples (being potentially acid forming rock) will be loaded into steel bins with a 4-5 tonne capacity. They will be covered with tarpaulins to avoid the generation of acid and will be removed from site on a regular basis. Loading of the bins will be undertaken during the 7am to 7pm shift, generally between 9am and 5pm, about 3-4 times per day. Loading would take 7-10 minutes and will be undertaken with the use of a small front end loader or digger. Up to 9 loads will be removed from the site via a truck per day. These samples will be taken to the H G Leach & Co quarry at Tirohia for temporary storage. The applicant is currently investigating options for testing of the samples and options include; Newmont Waihi's mine processing plant in Waihi, Macraes mine processing plant in Otago or an overseas testing facility.

Samples will be removed by extending small drives (tunnels) at positions between 200 and 1,500 metres into the mine. Development of these tunnels will require blasting by loading explosives into holes drilled with pneumatic hand held rock drills.

A Portacom unit will be used as a changing/lunch room, a separate Portacom will be used for a site office and a Portaloo or similar will be used to provide toilet facilities. Two water tanks will be located on the site also. Lighting directed inwards on the site will be installed. Power will be supplied via either a sound proofed generator or by reconnecting the site to mains power.

Light vehicle movements are expected to average 5-7 movements per working day.

Signs will be located in four places; at the bottom gate on the Mine Road, at the Dominion Knoll track turn-off, the No. 7 levels trace turn off and the top gate to the hardstand areas. These signs will include hours of vehicle operation, hours of heavy vehicle operation, identification of hazards and safety recommendations, contact details for reporting of incidents and a small plan to show the operating part of the road, site office position, first aid station and Portal Pad.

#### **4.0 The Site and Locality**

The site is located on the northern side of Mt Karangahake within the Karangahake Gorge. It is accessed from the end of Crown Hill Road via a paper road that has been formed with loose metal to provide access to the mine and also provides foot access to the DoC walkways. The formation of the roadway is approximately 3 metres in width.

The No 8 Level Portal Pad is located at the southern end of this road, approximately 380 metres vertically below Mt Karangahake's survey trig station. A lockable gate prevents access to members of the public. This Portal Pad is a relatively flat area that has been cleared of vegetation (except for pasture) to serve the past mining activities that have occurred within the Talisman Mine. It is surrounded by native bush. Within this clearing are two concrete pads and four entranceways to the former mine tunnels are located around the edge of the Portal Pad.

The entrance to the tunnel where the exploratory drilling is to occur is located at the southern end of the Portal Pad. This tunnel extends into Mt Karangahake to the south and connects with other tunnels which form part of the former mine network. A lockable gate is located at the entrance to this tunnel and warning signs are positioned at the entrance to identify the potential hazards that existing within the tunnel.

The surrounding area is conservation land containing primarily native bush and Mt Karangahake has a relatively steep contour.

## 5.0 Assessment of Relevant Plan Provisions / Activity Status

The application was lodged on the 24th of October 2013. The Appeals Version of the Proposed District Plan was notified on the 14<sup>th</sup> September 2012. Therefore the rules of the Appeals Version of the Proposed District Plan are applicable to the assessment of the activity status of the application. There are no outstanding appeals to the relevant provisions of the Proposed District Plan therefore no further consideration to the rules of the Operative District Plan are required for this assessment.

Within the Conservation (Indigenous Forest) Zone, Rule 5.2.4.2 C1 provides for Exploration as a controlled activity subject to compliance with the requirements of activity specific standard 5.2.6(1). The proposed exploration is unable to comply with clause (d) of this standard as outlined below:

- (d) *Bulk sampling is subject to a maximum of 500 cubic metres of material per 100 hectares.*

The exploration will remove between 10,000 and 20,000m<sup>3</sup> of material per annum within an area of less than 100 hectares.

Standards 5.2.6(1) (a) – (c) and (e) and (f) are not applicable to this proposal.

As the proposal cannot comply with all of the standards in rule 5.2.6(1), rule 5.2.4.4 D3 outlines that exploration not otherwise provided for as a controlled activity shall be considered as a discretionary activity.

The site is within the Karangahake Gorge Historic Area (being a Category A Area, Item HAU180). Rule 6.1.5.2(1)(e) identifies that any activity on a site within a Category A Heritage Area is a permitted activity subject to compliance with the Activity Specific Standards specified in Rule 6.1.5.8(2).

Within Rule 6.1.5.8(2), the following standard is applicable

- (d) *The activity does not involve the construction of any building or structure (including network utility structures), track, roadway, fence or the undertaking of earthworks and exploration within 20 metres of any heritage item located within the defined boundaries of the following listed heritage areas listed in 6.1.6.5 and 6.1.6.6 Schedules of Historic Heritage Inventory Category A and B Heritage Areas:*
- (i) *HAU180 Karangahake Gorge Historic Area*

The only identified Heritage Item within 20 metres of the proposed activity is the Talisman Mine itself which is identified as a Category C Heritage Item, being heritage item 241. There are no Category A or B Heritage Items within 20 metres of the proposed activity. Therefore this aspect of the proposal is a permitted activity.

Section 6.1.5.1(2)(a) states the following with regard to Category C Heritage Items:

*“Category C Heritage Items are shown on the planning maps and are listed in the Schedule of Historic Heritage Inventory for information purposes. There are no protection or conservation rules applying in the District Plan with respect to any Category C Heritage Items, except that the Council requires a photographic record to be provided prior to the demolition or removal of any listed buildings or structures.”*

Further to the above, rule 6.1.5.8(1)(a) includes the following note with regard to archaeological sites:

*"Note: All pre-1900 archaeological sites are protected under the Historic Places Act. Demolition of a pre-1900 building may require an authority under this legislation from the New Zealand Historic Places Trust. Owners/developers are advised to contact the NZHPT for further information on this requirement."*

The applicant has confirmed that the tunnels where exploration is proposed were constructed in the 1980's and are therefore will not require an authority under the Historic Places Act.

The site is also within a Significant Natural Area. No vegetation clearance is included in this proposal, exploration activities will be undertaken underground, the Portal Pad is an existing clearing which was established as part of the previous mining activities, and the existing roadway will be used. Therefore no rules within the Indigenous Biodiversity and Significant Natural Areas are applicable to this proposal.

As described in section 3.0 above, information/safety signs are included in this proposal. Rule 7.6.6(2)(c) provides for the following signs as a permitted activity:

- (i) Official and regulatory signs erected or approved by the Road Controlling Authority.
- (ii) One sign at each public access to the reserve, not exceeding 3m<sup>2</sup> in area, bearing the name of and information relating to the reserve.
- (iii) Any directional, safety, public information signs approved and erected within any reserve area by or on behalf of the agency responsible for the reserve.

The signs are not official and regulatory signs, will not bear the name of and information relating to the reserve, and will not be erected by or on behalf of the agency responsible for the reserve. Therefore the signs shall be considered as a non-complying activity as per rule 7.6.10(2).

Hazardous Substances will be used as part of the exploration activity. As the activity will be undertaken within the Conservation Zone, which is not specified in the Hazardous Facilities Screening Procedure Consent Status Matrix in Rule 7.7.12(5), the activity is a non-complying activity as per rule 7.7.10(1)(a).

The proposal will comply with all other requirements of the plan. Given that the most stringent activity status shall prevail, the overall status of this proposal is non-complying.

It is noted that a discussion with Sheryl Roa at Waikato Regional Council on the 7<sup>th</sup> of November 2013 has confirmed that no regional council resource consents are required for the proposal.

## **6.0 Notification Assessment**

### **6.1 ASSESSMENT OF ADVERSE EFFECTS OF THE ACTIVITY ON THE ENVIRONMENT FOR PUBLIC NOTIFICATION UNDER SECTION 95A (RMA)**

**Are the adverse effects on the environment more than minor or minor for the purposes of determining if the application shall be publicly notified (s95A(2) ?**

<b>Effect</b>	<b>Comments</b>	<b>Effects Less Than Minor / Minor / More Than Minor?</b>
<b>Conservation Values</b>	The proposed exploration is within the Conservation (Indigenous Forest) Zone, being on the northern side of Mt Karangahake. While this area is predominately an area of native bush, the proposed access road and Portal Pad	Minor effects

	<p>are already formed and the exploration activity is to be undertaken underground. Therefore the proposed activity will not disturb existing areas of the native bush or existing habitats of flora and fauna. The existing walking tracks will remain accessible to the public. The applicant will require the permission of DoC, being the party responsible for the management of this land to undertake this activity and discussions around the access arrangements are currently being finalised. With these factors in mind the effects to conservation values will be minor.</p>	
<b>Visual and Amenity</b>	<p>The location of the above ground activity, the dense bush surrounding it and the contour of the land is such that it will generally not be visible. In particular the Portal Pad will not be visible from any public roads or neighbouring dwellings. The access road is also used by recreational walkers to access some of the walking tracks in the area and therefore these parties will see trucks removing ore from the site as well as staff vehicles. These vehicle numbers are expected to be low, being up to 9 trucks per working day, limited to day shifts (7am to 7pm) and up to 7 light vehicles per day. The walking tracks themselves do not overlook the Portal Pad and the nature of the activity and health and safety implications are such that it is not appropriate that the public have access to the site. Signs will be erected, primarily with the purpose of providing safety information. The content proposed is considered to be essential information only and appropriate within the context of the proposed activity. The signs will be visible only to the few parties who access the area.</p> <p>Overall visual and amenity effects are will be minor.</p>	Minor effects
<b>Recreation</b>	<p>Access to the walking tracks within the area surrounding the proposed exploration activity will be maintained. Existing walkways will not be affected by the proposed exploration activities. Thus recreation values will be maintained and effects will be less than minor.</p>	Less than minor effects
<b>Water effects</b>	<p>It is noted that Waikato Regional Council staff have confirmed that the proposed activity will not require any regional council consents. Therefore the effects in terms of water management are within the scope for permitted activities under the Regional Plan and the associated effected will be less than minor.</p> <p>In particular it is noted that a closed circuit system is proposed for water to be supplied for use during drilling. This water will be drawn from within the existing mine. A bund will be formed around the edge of the mullock (non-acid forming rock) stockpile with a perimeter drain</p>	Less than minor effects

	directing runoff to a temporary silt trap which will be cleaned on a regular basis. The ore (potentially acid forming rock) will be stored in bins and covered with tarps for removal to the Tirohia quarry for temporary storage. It will be transported from the quarry to a (yet to be determined) testing site at a later date.	
<b>Heritage</b>	The proposed activity is within the Karangahake Gorge Historic Area and the mine is a Category C Heritage Item. As noted in section 5.0, the proposal does not trigger the need for a resource consent under the Proposed District Plan and therefore the effects will be less than minor.	Less than minor effects
<b>Cultural Effects</b>	The applicant has undertaken consultation with local iwi and has provided a summary of discussions held. The matters raised are considered to be issues relating to issues that are dealt with by the regional plan and as noted above, no consent is required from the regional council. No sites of cultural significance have been identified at the subject site, and the exploration activity is within a mine that has been established for many years. Thus with these factors in mind, the potential cultural effects are considered to be minor.	Minor effects
<b>Noise</b>	The Portal Pad and nearest dwelling are separated by approximately 800 metres and the extraction of samples is to be underground. Therefore noise is not expected to exceed the permitted levels outlined in the Proposed Plan and will not be of a level that it will create a nuisance. Therefore noise effects will be less than minor.	Less than minor effects
<b>Vibration</b>	All blasting will take place within the mine, approximately 700 metres from the No. 8 level entrance. The amount of explosive to be used is minimal within the context of general mining practice and therefore is expected to be well within the limits for permitted activities. Therefore the vibration effects will be less than minor.	Less than minor effects
<b>Hazardous Substances</b>	The use of explosives and storage of diesel on site is such that the proposed activity requires a consent as a hazardous facility. Despite this, it is noted that the applicant has undertaken an assessment of the volumes of hazardous substances to be used and stored on site to provide an effects ratio as per the Hazardous Facility Screening Procedure. This has provided a ratio of 0.02 which is relatively low, with the permitted level being 0.05 or less for other zones with a high level of sensitivity to such activities. The activity will be required to comply with the requirements of the Hazardous Substances and New Organisms Act 1996 and	Minor effects

	<p>conditions to ensure that best practice measures are employed can be included on the consent decision should it be granted. Therefore the effects in terms of hazardous substances are considered to be minor.</p>	
<b>Traffic Safety</b>	<p>As noted, vehicle movements will be relatively low given the scale of the exploration activity. The applicant has outlined that a traffic management plan will be put in place to ensure safety. This plan includes measures such as; speed limits, vehicle operation and safety procedures being included in site inductions, the use of flashing lights and limits on operation to 7am and 7pm Monday to Saturday and outside of school bus operating times on River Road. A traffic management plan can be included as a condition of consent should consent be granted. The access road is relatively narrow and does not provide sufficient room for two vehicles to pass by one another should they meet. This is unlikely to occur on a regular basis given the low vehicle numbers. Despite this, during the site visit undertaken on the 5<sup>th</sup> of November 2013, with Wayne Chowles, Principal Mining Engineers for New Talisman Gold Mines Ltd, Mr Chowles advised that a radio system will be used to ensure that vehicles on the access road are all travelling in the same direction at the same time.</p> <p>Council's Roading Manager, Gene Thomsen has reviewed the proposal and the only comment he has made is to note that the Traffic Management Plan must comply with the Code of Practice for Temporary Traffic Management. This matter can also be incorporated as a consent condition.</p> <p>It is also noted that the applicant has obtained the written approval of NZTA, therefore any effects to the state highway network can be disregarded.</p> <p>With these factors in mind, it is considered that the traffic effects will be minor.</p>	Minor effects
<b>Safety</b>	<p>As noted in section 3.0 above, signs are proposed to make members of the public and visitors to the mine, aware of its presence and to provide general safety information. The entrance to the Portal Pad is via a locked gate as is the entrance to the tunnel where mining will take place. The application also notes that all requirements of the Health and Safety in Employment Act 1992 will be complied with. Overall safety effects will be less than minor.</p>	Less than minor effects
<b>Servicing</b>	<p>Potable water will be delivered to the site by tanker and stored in water tanks. Effluent will be retained within the portable toilets and removed from site as required. Buildings located to the site will be placed on the existing concrete pads</p>	Less than minor effects



	and therefore will not generate additional stormwater runoff. Therefore servicing effects will be less than minor.	
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After consideration of the factors above, I am satisfied that the adverse effects on the environment as a result of the proposal will be no more than minor.

## 6.2 AFFECTED PERSONS ASSESSMENT FOR LIMITED NOTIFICATION UNER SECTION 95B (RMA)

### Are there any affected persons in relation to the proposed activity?

A consent authority must decide that a person is an affected person if the activity's adverse effects on the person are minor or more than minor (but are not less than minor). As a non-complying activity, the consent authority may take into consideration all potential adverse effects.

Written approval has been obtained from NZTA, being the party responsible for the management of the state highway network. Ore from the site will be transported via State Highway 2. As written approval has been obtained from NZTA, they cannot be considered an affected party as per section 95D(e) of the Act.

No other parties are considered to be affected by the proposal. The subject site is well screened and the scale of the activity is relatively minor. Sufficient separation between the activity and adjacent sites will ensure that they are not subjected to the nuisance effects of noise and vibration.

Iwi are not considered affected by this proposal. No sites of cultural significance have been identified at the subject site, and the exploration activity is within a mine that has been established for many years. The applicant has undertaken consultation with iwi and the summary of issues raised relates primarily to matters with which the Regional Council is concerned.

DoC are not considered to be an affected party. It is understood that the applicant has undertaken consultation with DoC as an access agreement will be required in order for the proposed exploration to take place. The applicant has advised that such an agreement will be finalised shortly and a copy will be provided to Council. Should this agreement not be obtained, the activity will not be able to occur. In terms of the recreation and conservation values that DoC represents, the effects of these matters upon DoC are considered to be minor. While the access road also provides access to walking tracks, such access will be maintained, the walking tracks are not high use tracks, vehicle numbers along the road are low and the proposal includes provisions to ensure the safety of walkers should a truck encounter them on the road.

Furthermore the Historic Places Trust are not considered an affected party as the area in which the exploration will take place does not include tunnels that were established pre-1900's and are therefore not archaeological sites. The proposal will not require a consent due to heritage matters.

## 6.3 SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES

**If special circumstances exist, Council may still publicly notify the resource consent application (s95A(4)).**

There are **no** special circumstances that exist in relation to this application, which would lead to the conclusion that the application should be notified.

## 6.4 WRITTEN APPROVALS OF AFFECTED PARTIES

Written approval **has** been obtained from NZTA being the only party that could be considered affected by this application. The council is satisfied that no other persons will be adversely affected by the granting of resource consent, and the effects on persons adjacent to the site will be less than minor as discussed in section 6.2.

#### 6.5 OTHER CIRCUMSTANCES REQUIRING LIMITED NOTIFICATION (S95B)

**Are there any affected protected customary rights groups?**

There are no affected protected customary rights groups in relation to this application.

**Are there any affected customary marine title groups? - No**

#### 7.0 NOTIFICATION RECOMMENDATION

That the application **need not be publicly or limited notified** in accordance with sections 95A(3) and 95B of the Resource Management Act 1991.

Reported and Recommended by: \_\_\_\_\_  
*Julia Masters - Consultant Planner (AECOM)*

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

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**Decision: That the above recommendations be adopted.**

**Delegated Officer (Peer Reviewer):** \_\_\_\_\_  
*Marina van Steenberg*

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Delegated Officer (Authorised for final approval):** \_\_\_\_\_  
*Peter Thom, Manager of Planning & Environmental Services*

Date: \_\_\_\_\_



<b>R E P O R T</b>	<b>TO</b>	PETER THOM – PLANNING & ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES MANAGER
	<b>FROM</b>	JULIA MASTERS - CONSULTANT PLANNER
	<b>FILE REF</b>	LUSE-202.2013.00000208.001
	<b>DATE</b>	21 <sup>st</sup> NOVEMBER 2013
	<b>SUBJECT</b>	PLANNERS REPORT – LAND-USE APPLICATION TO UNDERTAKE EXPLORATORY UNDERGROUND DRILLING AND BLASTING AT THE TALISMAN GOLD MINE IN KARANGAHAKE

## 1.0 DETAILS OF APPLICATION

<b>Date Received:</b>	24 October 2013
<b>Submitted By:</b>	New Talisman Gold Mines Ltd
<b>Applicant:</b>	New Talisman Gold Mines Ltd
<b>Property Address:</b>	Crown Hill Road, Karangahake
<b>Legal Description</b>	Lot 4 DP 316844
<b>Certificate of Title:</b>	65780
<b>Area:</b>	489.0030 hectares
<b>Zoning:</b>	Conservation (Indigenous Forest) Zone – Operative District Plan – Map 19 Conservation (Indigenous Forest) Zone – Proposed District Plan – Map 29
<b>Application:</b>	Section 88 of the Resource Management Act 1991:- Non-Complying Activity
<b>Recommendation:</b>	Approval with conditions

## 2.0 THE PROPOSAL

The application is for land use consent to undertake exploration within No 8 Level of the Talisman Mine located in Karangahake within land administered by the Department of Conservation (DoC). This will involve the taking of bulk metallurgical samples from underground within the Talisman Mine via underground drilling and blasting. It is proposed that between 10,000 and 20,000m<sup>3</sup> of samples per annum will be taken.

It is anticipated that this sampling will take between 18 months to 2 years to complete. The applicant proposes that this work will be carried out 24 hours a day, over two 12 hour shifts of 7am to 7pm (surface and underground operations) and 7pm to 7am (underground operations) on Monday to Saturday, excluding public holidays. Work during these shifts will be undertaken by between 4 to 7 staff.

Prior to sampling commencing, it is proposed that refurbishment of the main underground access will be undertaken. This will include securing and replacing timber supports in unstable areas.

Once sampling commences, the applicant anticipates that the volume of mullock (being non-acid forming rock) to be removed will be small, approximately 5-8m<sup>3</sup> per day. This will be temporarily stored on the Portal Pad and crushed on site for use on the access road, maintenance of the Portal Pad and for resurfacing of DoC tracks. A small front end loader or similar will be used to load an 8-10 tonne capacity truck to remove rock from the stockpile, resulting in approximately 1 truck load per day. No mullock would be stockpiled for longer than 5 days and the stockpile will have a perimeter drain with water directed to a silt trap.

The metallurgical samples (being potentially acid forming rock) will be loaded into steel bins with a 4-5 tonne capacity. They will be covered with tarpaulins to avoid the generation of acid and will be removed from site

on a regular basis. Loading of the bins will be undertaken during the 7am to 7pm shift, generally between 9am and 5pm, about 3-4 times per day. Loading would take 7-10 minutes and will be undertaken with the use of a small front end loader or digger. Up to 9 loads will be removed from the site via a truck per day. These samples will be taken to the H G Leach & Co quarry at Tirohia for temporary storage. The applicant is currently investigating options for testing of the samples and options include; Newmont Waihi's mine processing plant in Waihi, Macraes mine processing plant in Otago or an overseas testing facility.

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A Portacom unit will be used as a changing/lunch room, a separate Portacom will be used for a site office and a Portaloo or similar will be used to provide toilet facilities. Two water tanks will be located on the site also. Lighting directed inwards on the site will be installed. Power will be supplied via either a sound proofed generator or by reconnecting the site to mains power.

Light vehicle movements are expected to average 5-7 movements per working day.

Signs will be located in four places; at the bottom gate on the Mine Road, at the Dominion Knoll track turn-off, the No. 7 levels trace turn off and the top gate to the hardstand areas. These signs will include hours of vehicle operation, hours of heavy vehicle operation, identification of hazards and safety recommendations, contact details for reporting of incidents and a small plan to show the operating part of the road, site office position, first aid station and Portal Pad.

### **3.0 SITE AND LOCALITY**

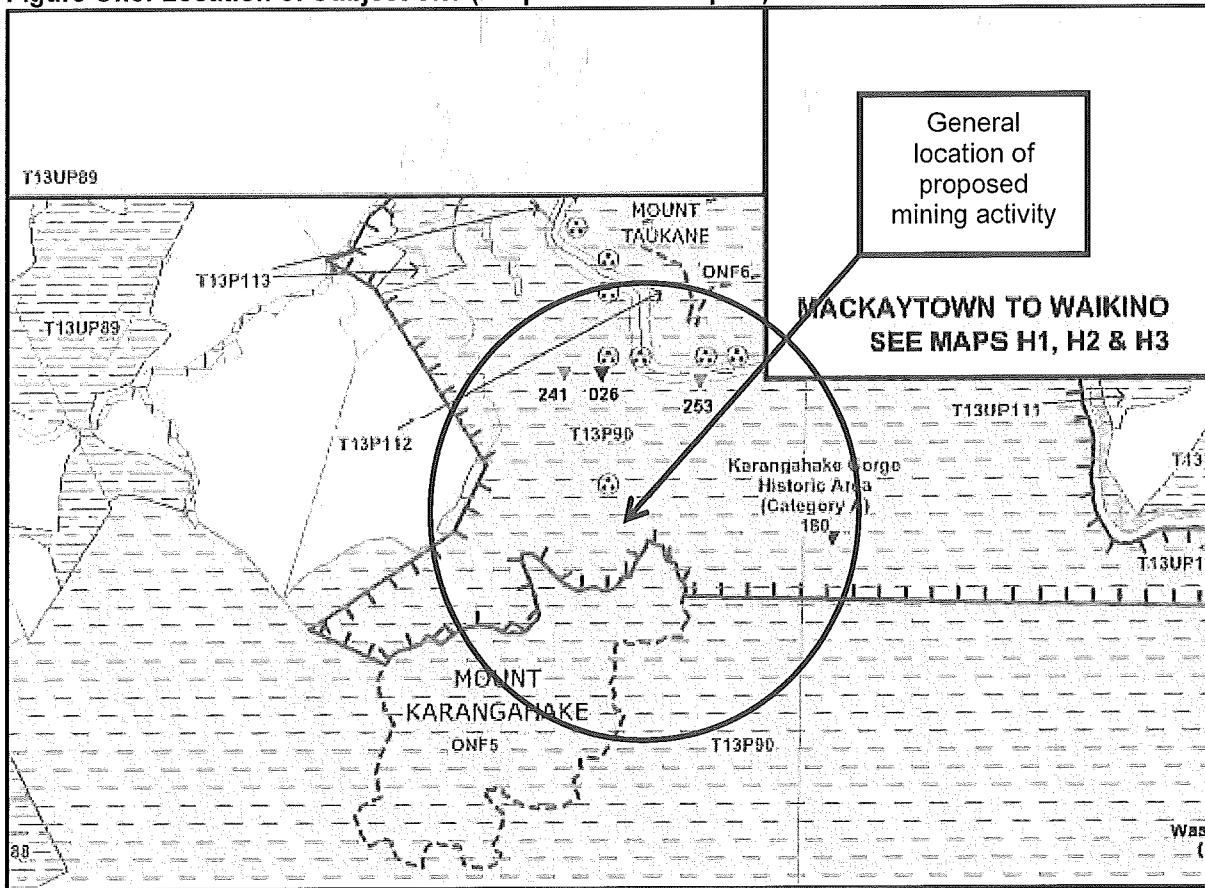
The site is located on the northern side of Mt Karangahake within the Karangahake Gorge as shown in Figure One below. It is accessed from the end of Crown Hill Road via a paper road that has been formed with loose metal to provide access to the mine and also provides foot access to the DoC walkways. The formation of the roadway is approximately 3 metres in width.

The No 8 Level Portal Pad is located at the southern end of this road, approximately 380 metres vertically below Mt Karangahake's survey trig station. A lockable gate prevents access to members of the public. This Portal Pad is a relatively flat area that has been cleared of vegetation (except for pasture) to serve the past mining activities that have occurred within the Talisman Mine. It is surrounded by native bush. Within this clearing are two concrete pads and four entranceways to the former mine tunnels are located around the edge of the Portal Pad.

The entrance to the tunnel where the exploratory drilling is to occur is located at the southern end of the Portal Pad. This tunnel extends into Mt Karangahake to the south and connects with other tunnels which form part of the former mine network. A lockable gate is located at the entrance to this tunnel and warning signs are positioned at the entrance to identify the potential hazards that existing within the tunnel.

The surrounding area is conservation land containing primarily native bush and Mt Karangahake has a relatively steep contour.

**Figure One: Location of Subject Site (Proposed Plan Map 29)**



**4.0 STATUS OF THE APPLICATION**

The application was lodged on the 24th of October 2013. The Appeals Version of the Proposed District Plan was notified on the 14<sup>th</sup> September 2012. Therefore the rules of the Appeals Version of the Proposed District Plan are applicable to the assessment of the activity status of the application. There are no outstanding appeals to the relevant provisions of the Proposed District Plan therefore no further consideration to the rules of the Operative District Plan are required for this assessment.

Within the Conservation (Indigenous Forest) Zone, Rule 5.2.4.2 C1 provides for Exploration as a controlled activity subject to compliance with the requirements of activity specific standard 5.2.6(1). The proposed exploration is unable to comply with clause (d) of this standard as outlined below:

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The exploration will remove between 10,000 and 20,000m<sup>3</sup> of material per annum within an area of less than 100 hectares.

Standards 5.2.6(1) (a) – (c) and (e) and (f) are not applicable to this proposal.

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Within Rule 6.1.5.8(2), the following standard is applicable

- (d) *The activity does not involve the construction of any building or structure (including network utility structures), track, roadway, fence or the undertaking of earthworks and exploration within 20 metres of any heritage item located within the defined boundaries of the following listed heritage areas listed in 6.1.6.5 and 6.1.6.6 Schedules of Historic Heritage Inventory Category A and B Heritage Areas:*
- (i) *HAU180 Karangahake Gorge Historic Area*

The only identified Heritage Item within 20 metres of the proposed activity is the Talisman Mine itself which is identified as a Category C Heritage Item, being heritage item 241. There are no Category A or B Heritage Items within 20 metres of the proposed activity. Therefore this aspect of the proposal is a permitted activity.

Section 6.1.5.1(2)(a) states the following with regard to Category C Heritage Items:

*"Category C Heritage Items are shown on the planning maps and are listed in the Schedule of Historic Heritage Inventory for information purposes. There are no protection or conservation rules applying in the District Plan with respect to any Category C Heritage Items, except that the Council requires a photographic record to be provided prior to the demolition or removal of any listed buildings or structures."*

Further to the above, rule 6.1.5.8(1)(a) includes the following note with regard to archaeological sites:

*"Note: All pre-1900 archaeological sites are protected under the Historic Places Act. Demolition of a pre-1900 building may require an authority under this legislation from the New Zealand Historic Places Trust. Owners/developers are advised to contact the NZHPT for further information on this requirement."*

The applicant has confirmed that the tunnels where exploration is proposed were constructed in the 1980's and are therefore will not require an authority under the Historic Places Act.

The site is also within a Significant Natural Area. No vegetation clearance is included in this proposal, exploration activities will be undertaken underground, the Portal Pad is an existing clearing which was established as part of the previous mining activities, and the existing roadway will be used. Therefore no rules within the Indigenous Biodiversity and Significant Natural Areas are applicable to this proposal.

As described in section 3.0 above, information/safety signs are included in this proposal. Rule 7.6.6(2)(c) provides for the following signs as a permitted activity:

- (i) *Official and regulatory signs erected or approved by the Road Controlling Authority.*
- (ii) *One sign at each public access to the reserve, not exceeding 3m<sup>2</sup> in area, bearing the name of and information relating to the reserve.*
- (iii) *Any directional, safety, public information signs approved and erected within any reserve area by or on behalf of the agency responsible for the reserve.*

The signs are not official and regulatory signs, will not bear the name of and information relating to the reserve, and will not be erected by or on behalf of the agency responsible for the reserve. Therefore the signs shall be considered as a non-complying activity as per rule 7.6.10(2).

Hazardous Substances will be used as part of the exploration activity. As the activity will be undertaken within the Conservation Zone, which is not specified in the Hazardous Facilities Screening Procedure Consent Status Matrix in Rule 7.7.12(5), the activity is a non-complying activity as per rule 7.7.10(1)(a).

Section 8.3 relates to Amenity Matters and section 8.3.2 deals with Vibration. The blasting proposed will comply with all of the permitted activity standards except for 8.3.2.3(b)(1) which outlines that Blast Duration as defined by the delay timing (ie the difference in time between the first and last charge detonation) shall be limited to 1 second. The blasting proposed will have a duration of 8 seconds. Failure to comply with this standard requires consent as a restricted discretionary activity as per rule 8.1.4(2) of the Proposed Plan.

The proposal will comply with all other requirements of the plan. Given that the most stringent activity status shall prevail, the overall status of this proposal is non-complying.

It is noted that a discussion with Sheryl Roa at Waikato Regional Council on the 7<sup>th</sup> of November 2013 has confirmed that no regional council resource consents are required for the proposal.

## **5.0 NOTIFICATION**

Section 95 of the Act outlines the provisions for notification and determination of affected parties. An assessment against the relevant provisions has been separately undertaken (refer to notification report FRED 1139257). The assessment has determined that the application be processed on a non-notified basis.

## **6.0 ASSESSMENT OF THE PROPOSAL**

The effects of the proposal will relate to the following matters which are assessed below:

- Conservation Values
- Visual and Amenity
- Recreation
- Water effects
- Heritage
- Cultural Effects
- Noise
- Vibration
- Hazardous Substances
- Traffic Safety
- Safety
- Servicing

### **6.1 Conservation Values**

The proposed exploration is within the Conservation (Indigenous Forest) Zone, being on the northern side of Mt Karangahake. While this area is predominately an area of native bush, the proposed access road and Portal Pad are already formed and the exploration activity is to be undertaken underground. Therefore the proposed activity will not disturb existing areas of the native bush or existing habitats of flora and fauna. The existing walking tracks will remain accessible to the public. The applicant will require the permission of DoC, being the party responsible for the management of this land to undertake this activity and discussions around the access arrangements are currently being finalised. With these factors in mind the effects to conservation values will be minor.

### **6.2 Visual and Amenity**

The location of the above ground activity, the dense bush surrounding it and the contour of the land is such that it will generally not be visible. In particular the Portal Pad will not be visible from any public roads or neighbouring dwellings.

The access road is also used by recreational walkers to access some of the walking tracks in the area and therefore these parties will see trucks removing ore from the site as well as staff vehicles. These vehicle numbers are expected to be low, being up to 9 trucks per working day, limited to day shifts (7am to 7pm) and up to 7 light vehicles per day. The walking tracks themselves do not overlook the Portal Pad and the nature of the activity and health and safety implications are such that it is not appropriate that the public have access to the site.

Signs will be erected, primarily with the purpose of providing safety information. The content proposed is considered to be essential information only and appropriate within the context of the proposed activity. The signs will be visible only to the few parties who access the area.

Overall visual and amenity effects will be minor.

### **6.3 Recreation**

Access to the walking tracks within the area surrounding the proposed exploration activity will be maintained and are well separated from the proposed exploration working area. Existing walkways will therefore not be affected by the proposed exploration activities. Thus recreation values will be maintained and effects will be less than minor.

#### **6.4 Water effects**

It is noted that Waikato Regional Council staff have confirmed that the proposed activity will not require any regional council consents. Therefore the effects in terms of water management are within the scope for permitted activities under the Regional Plan and the associated effects will be less than minor.

In particular it is noted that a closed circuit system is proposed for water to be supplied for use during drilling. This water will be drawn from within the existing mine. A bund will be formed around the edge of the mullock (non-acid forming rock) stockpile with a perimeter drain directing runoff to a temporary silt trap which will be cleaned on a regular basis. The ore (potentially acid forming rock) will be stored in bins and covered with tarps for removal to the Tirohia quarry for temporary storage. It will be transported from the quarry to a (yet to be determined) testing site at a later date.

#### **6.5 Heritage**

The proposed activity is within the Karangahake Gorge Historic Area and the mine is a Category C Heritage Item. As noted in section 5.0, the proposal does not trigger the need for a resource consent under the heritage provisions of the Proposed District Plan and therefore the effects will be less than minor.

#### **6.6 Cultural Effects**

The applicant has undertaken consultation with local iwi and has provided a summary of discussions held. The matters raised are considered to be issues relating to issues that are dealt with by the regional plan and as noted above, no consent is required from the regional council.

No sites of cultural significance have been identified at the subject site, and the exploration activity is within a mine that has been established for many years. Thus with these factors in mind, the potential cultural effects are considered to be minor.

In particular, it is noted that iwi are not considered affected by this proposal. No sites of cultural significance have been identified at the subject site, and the exploration activity is within a mine that has been established for many years. The applicant has undertaken consultation with iwi and the summary of issues raised relates primarily to matters with which the Regional Council is concerned.

#### **6.7 Noise**

The Portal Pad and nearest dwelling are separated by approximately 800 metres and the extraction of samples is to be underground. Therefore noise is not expected to exceed the permitted levels outlined in the Proposed Plan and will not be of a level that it will create a nuisance. Therefore noise effects will be less than minor and can be appropriately addressed by consent conditions.

#### **6.8 Vibration**

All blasting will take place within the mine, approximately 700 metres from the No. 8 level entrance. It is noted that the duration of blasting will exceed the permitted standard for duration of 1 second, being up to 8 seconds. However, the blasts will be small and are expected to generate a peak amplitude of well under the maximum of 5.0mm/second. Within the context of general mining practice, the amount of explosive to be used is minimal and the location of blasting is well removed from any neighbouring dwellings. Therefore the vibration effects will be less than minor and can be appropriately addressed by consent conditions.

#### **6.9 Hazardous Substances**

The use of explosives and storage of diesel on site is such that the proposed activity requires consent as a hazardous facility. Despite this, it is noted that the applicant has undertaken an assessment of the volumes of hazardous substances to be used and stored on site to provide an effects ratio as per the Hazardous Facility Screening Procedure. This has provided a ratio of 0.02 which is relatively low, with the permitted level being 0.05 or less for other zones with a high level of sensitivity to such activities. The activity will be required to comply with the requirements of the Hazardous Substances and New Organisms Act 1996 and it is recommended that an advice note is included on the consent to ensure that the applicant is aware of these requirements. Therefore the effects in terms of hazardous substances are considered to be minor.



## **6.10 Traffic Safety**

As noted, vehicle movements will be relatively low given the scale of the exploration activity. The applicant has outlined that a traffic management plan will be put in place to ensure safety. This plan will include measures such as; speed limits, vehicle operation and safety procedures being included in site inductions, the use of flashing lights and limits on operation to 7am and 7pm Monday to Saturday and outside of school bus operating times on River Road. A traffic management plan can be included as a condition of consent should consent be granted.

The access road is relatively narrow and does not provide sufficient room for two vehicles to pass by one another should they meet. This is unlikely to occur on a regular basis given the low vehicle numbers. Despite this, during the site visit undertaken on the 5<sup>th</sup> of November 2013, with Wayne Chowles, Principal Mining Engineer for New Talisman Gold Mines Ltd, Mr Chowles advised that a radio system will be used to ensure that vehicles on the access road are all travelling in the same direction at the same time.

Council's Roading Manager, Gene Thomsen has reviewed the proposal and the only comment he has made is to note that the Traffic Management Plan must comply with the Code of Practice for Temporary Traffic Management. This matter can be incorporated as a consent condition.

It is also noted that the applicant has obtained the written approval of NZTA, therefore any effects to the state highway network can be disregarded.

With these factors in mind, it is considered that the traffic effects will be minor.

## **6.11 Safety**

As noted in section 3.0 above, signs are proposed to make members of the public and visitors to the mine, aware of its presence and to provide general safety information. The entrance to the Portal Pad is via a locked gate as is the entrance to the tunnel where mining will take place. The application also notes that all requirements of the Health and Safety in Employment Act 1992 will be complied with. Overall safety effects will be less than minor.

## **6.12 Servicing**

Potable water will be delivered to the site by tanker and stored in water tanks. Effluent will be retained within the portable toilets and removed from site as required. Buildings located to the site will be placed on the existing concrete pads and therefore will not generate additional stormwater runoff. Therefore servicing effects will be less than minor.

## **7.0 ASSESSMENT CRITERIA - APPEALS VERSION OF THE PROPOSED DISTRICT PLAN**

### **7.1 Conservation (Indigenous Forest) Zone**

The following assessment criteria are outlined in section 5.2.7.1 of the Proposed Plan and are regarded as relevant to the proposal. It is noted that there are no outstanding appeals in relation to these provisions.

- (1) *The effects of the activity on the indigenous flora and fauna of the locality and zone. In particular, such assessments shall include, but not be limited to:*
- (a) *the extent to which the activity will adversely affect the indigenous vegetation canopy;*
  - (b) *the effects on the habitat of indigenous fauna;*
  - (c) *the proposals for rehabilitation of disturbed areas;*
  - (d) *the measures proposed to avoid accelerated erosion;*
  - (e) *the overall effect on the health and diversity of the indigenous vegetation.*
- Development proposals will need to demonstrate that the adverse effects on the indigenous vegetation cover and associated habitat are being avoided, remedied or mitigated.*

As discussed in section 6.0 above, the proposed access road and Portal Pad are already formed and the exploration activity is to be undertaken underground. Therefore the proposed activity will not disturb existing areas of the native bush or existing habitats of flora and fauna. No new above ground areas will be disturbed and therefore rehabilitation is not required and erosion will be avoided. The overall effect to the health and diversity of indigenous vegetation will be minor.

- (2) *The effects of the activity on the Hauraki Ecological Corridor including, but not limited to:*
- (a) *adverse effects on the functioning of the Corridor;*
  - (b) *the potential for the proposal to enhance the ecological, landscape and scenic amenity values of the Corridor;*
  - (c) *proposals to provide additional land for conservation purposes which may enhance the values of the Corridor.*

As noted above, the proposed activity will not disturb areas of existing indigenous vegetation or fauna habitats. Therefore the activity will have a negligible effect on the Hauraki Ecological Corridor.

- (3) *The visual impact of the activity in particular the degree to which prominent visual features such as ridgelines and skylines are affected, as viewed from inside and outside the zone.*

The location of the Portal Pad will not be visible from walking tracks or public roads given the dense bush that surrounds it and the contour of the land. Prominent features such as ridgelines and skylines will be unaffected. The exploration activity will be undertaken underground.

- (4) *The effects of the activity particularly with regard to the generation of noise, dust, fumes, smoke or odours which may be noxious, dangerous or offensive to persons undertaking recreational, scientific, educational or cultural activities in the zone or may affect properties outside the zone.*

The effects of noise, dust, fumes, smoke or odour generated by the exploration activity are expected to be minor, particularly as the bulk of the activity will occur underground.

- (5) *Whether traffic movements resulting from the activity will have any significant impact on the safe and efficient operation of any road. Pertinent matters for consideration in this regard are:*
- (a) *the carrying capacity, standard and status in the roading hierarchy of the road concerned;*
  - (b) *the ability of the site to accommodate the activity requirements for on-site parking, loading and manoeuvring areas;*
  - (c) *the means by which any likely adverse traffic effects can be avoided, remedied or mitigated;*
  - (d) *the access, parking and loading standards for permitted activities that shall be used as a guideline in assessing applications for discretionary activities;*
  - (e) *the comments of New Zealand Transport Agency on the possible adverse effects on the safe and efficient operation of the State Highway network.*

Traffic movements generated by the exploration activity will be relatively low and can be accommodated by the existing roads and access to the site. Sufficient area is provided within the Portal Pad for parking, loading and manoeuvring. NZTA have provided their written approval to the proposal.

- (6) *The degree to which the activity will cause demands for the uneconomic or premature upgrading or extension of public services, including roading which are not in the interests of the District or locality.*

The site will not require connections for water supply or sewage and stormwater disposal, or the upgrade of any roads.

- (7) *Whether the activity and any buildings and structures are of a scale and intensity which are in keeping with the character and amenity values of the zone, adjacent rural environment, and the coastal environment where the Conservation (Indigenous Forest) zone is adjacent to the coast.*

The proposed exploration activity will generate low vehicle movements and will be undertaken underground with minimal ancillary activities undertaken above ground in a location that is generally not visible from areas accessible to the public. Buildings and structures located on the Portal Pad will be small, the exploration proposed is a small scale operation and of a short duration, being up to two years.

## **7.2 Signs**

The following assessment criteria are outlined in section 7.6.12 of the Proposed Plan and are regarded as relevant to the proposal. It is noted that there are no outstanding appeals in relation to these provisions.

- (a) *The need for the sign.*
- (b) *The suitability of the location of the sign.*
- (c) *The need for the size, type and number of the sign(s).*
- (d) *The effects of the sign or signs on amenity values of neighbouring properties.*

- (e) *The general rules for signs.*
- (f) *The effects of the sign or signs on traffic safety.*
- (g) *The matters over which control has been reserved in Rule 7.6.7 above.*
- (h) *The comments of the appropriate road controlling authority.*

The overall purpose of the signs proposed is to provide safety information to people using the walking tracks nearby the mine and visitors to the mine itself. The proposed sign locations on the road approaching the site are appropriate being the only route to the Portal Pad, and will be viewed by only a small number of people given the remote location. It is noted that if these signs were erected by the road controlling authority (being Council) or DoC, they would be a permitted activity. No comments of concern have been made by Council's Roading Manager, Gene Thomsen regarding the proposed signs.

### **7.3 Vibration**

The following assessment criteria are outlined in section 8.3.2.5 of the Proposed Plan and are regarded as relevant to the proposal. It is noted that there are no outstanding appeals in relation to these provisions.

- (1) *The Council will restrict the exercise of its discretion to the ability of the activity or development to achieve the particular environmental result in Section 8.3.2.2 of the Standards in Rule 8.3.2.3 for which compliance is not met and the following relevant matters:*
  - (a) *Whether the vibration adversely affects the amenity values of the area, especially residential amenity values, taking into account (but not limited to) the following factors:*
    - (i) *the total project duration*
    - (ii) *the duration of each blast*
    - (iii) *the time at which blasting occurs*
    - (iv) *the number of blasts per day*
    - (v) *the amount by which the standard has been exceeded*
    - (vi) *the cumulative impact where more than one of the standards are exceeded.*
  - (b) *Whether the vibration is intermittent or of a temporary nature.*
  - (c) *Whether the vibration specific to the activity has an effect above the existing background level.*
  - (d) *Whether the best practicable option has been adopted to control vibration.*

The environmental result outlined in section 8.3.2.2 states:

*"To ensure that vibration levels generated by land use activities do not adversely affect the amenity values enjoyed by other land users."*

As noted in section 6.0 above, the vibration effects associated with the blasting are considered minor given the separation from neighbouring dwellings, location within the existing tunnels (700 metres from the No. 8 level entrance), and the fact the blasts will be small and are expected to generate a peak amplitude of well under the maximum of 5.0mm/second. Only one blast will be undertaken per day, therefore few visitors to the neighbouring conservation land (if any) will be aware of them occurring. Overall amenity values will be maintained.

## **8.0 OBJECTIVES AND POLICIES – APPEALS VERSION OF THE PROPOSED DISTRICT PLAN**

### **8.1 Conservation (Indigenous Forest) Zone**

The following objectives and policies as outlined in section 5.2.2 of the Conservation (Indigenous Forest) Zone of the Proposed Plan are relevant to this proposal. It is noted that there are no outstanding appeals in relation to these provisions.

#### **OBJECTIVE 1**

*To protect and enhance the biological diversity and outstanding landscape character values of the zone.*

#### **OBJECTIVE 2**

*To protect and enhance the soil and water protection function of the zone.*

#### **OBJECTIVE 3**

*To recognise the scientific, educational, historic, cultural, recreational and amenity values of the zone.*

**(a) Policies**

Objectives 1 to 3 will be achieved by implementation of the following policies:

- (i) Recognise in the administration of the zone the protection of the significant flora and fauna values, natural landscape character and soil and water protection roles of the zone.
- (ii) Maintain the net total area of indigenous vegetation cover including areas of regenerating indigenous vegetation.
- (iii) Minimise ground surface disturbance in the zone.
- (iv) Recognise that the conservation values of the Conservation (Indigenous Forest) Zone may vary within the zone.

The proposal will be consistent with the above objectives and policies. As discussed above, the biological diversity of the area will not be affected as no areas of indigenous flora and habitats of fauna will be disturbed. While it is noted that the peak of Mt Karangahake is identified as an Outstanding Natural Feature, the only part of the activity that will extend into this area is the underground drilling and blasting which will not alter the visual values associated with this feature. Measures are proposed by the applicant to manage stormwater runoff including silt removal traps and there will be no soil disturbance with exploration being underground. Overall the proposal recognises and will maintain the values of the surrounding area

**OBJECTIVE 4**

*To facilitate efficient conservation management and public use and recreational and visitor opportunities without having a significant adverse effect on biodiversity, landscape, historical, or cultural values of the zone and the amenity values of adjacent zones.*

**(a) Policies**

Objective 4 will be achieved by the implementation of the following policies:

- (i) Recognise that the Department of Conservation and the District Council may carry out emergency, conservation protection, and enhancement works and where appropriate provide and manage recreational facilities within the zone on public land which is the responsibility of those bodies.
- (ii) Avoid, remedy or mitigate the significant adverse effects of activities that have the potential to compromise, damage or destroy the indigenous ecosystems or the amenity values of adjacent land uses.

The proposed activity will not compromise the ability of the public to access existing walking tracks and partake in recreation, nor will it impact on the functions of DoC in managing the area. As has been discussed above, the adverse effects of the proposal will be minor. Overall the proposal is consistent with this objective and the associated policies.

**OBJECTIVE 5**

*To facilitate further investigation of the location, type and extent of mineral resources, in a manner that is consistent with other objectives and policies of the zone.*

**OBJECTIVE 6**

*To avoid, remedy or mitigate any adverse effects of prospecting, exploration and mining activities.*

**(a) Policies**

- (i) Objectives 5 and 6 will be achieved by implementation of the above relevant policies for the zone.

The proposed exploration can be undertaken in a manner that is consistent with Objectives 1 to 4 for the Conservation (Indigenous Forest) Zone as concluded above and the effects can be avoided, remedied or mitigated appropriately. Therefore the proposal is consistent with these objectives and the associated policy.

**8.2 Signs**

The following objectives and policies as outlined in section 7.6.3 of the Signs section of the Proposed Plan are relevant to this proposal. It is noted that there are no outstanding appeals in relation to these provisions.

**OBJECTIVE 1**

*To ensure there is a balance between the need to provide information and the need to ensure that signs do not adversely affect the natural and physical resources or the amenity values of the District.*

**(a) Policies**

Objective 1 will be achieved by the implementation of the following policies:

- (i) Require all signs to be located on the subject site, except approved temporary, directional and off-site signs.
- (ii) Limit the number and impact of signs by placing controls on the size, type, number and location of signs.
- (iv) Provide for directional signs relating to tourist attractions. Require signs to be consistent with the amenities of the environment and the scale of the surrounding buildings. Avoid signs which obscure or detract from important visual aspects of the District, such as scenic views of the coast, rivers, landscape features or buildings of architectural or historic value.
- (v) Encourage the amalgamation of signs onto one structure and/or the establishment of community notice boards providing travellers with information on public utilities and services and community facilities and attractions.
- (vi) Encourage a high standard of sign maintenance and appearance and ensure signs are concise and legible.

The proposed signs will be consistent with the above objective and policies. Overall the signs will provide important safety information to visitors to the area and will be viewed by a small number of people as they are not in a high traffic area.

**OBJECTIVE 2**

To ensure that signs do not create traffic hazards nor impair the efficient functioning of State Highways and District Roads.

**(a) Policies**

Objective 2 will be achieved by the implementation of the following policies:

- (i) Ensure signs do not:
  - (1) Obstruct driver's vision.
  - (2) Cause confusion or distraction for drivers.
  - (3) Create a situation which is hazardous to the safe movement of traffic.

The purpose of the signs is to provide safety information, it is not considered that they will create a traffic hazard or will impair the functioning of the road. It is noted that Council's Roding Manager, Gene Thomsen has reviewed the proposal and has made no comments regarding the proposed signs. Therefore the signs will be consistent with the above objective and policies.

**8.3 Hazardous Substances**

The following objective and policies as outlined in section 7.7.3 of the Hazardous Substances and Contaminated Land section of the Proposed Plan are relevant to this proposal. It is noted that there are no outstanding appeals in relation to these provisions.

**OBJECTIVE 2**

To minimise the risks of adverse effects to the environment and the community associated with the use and storage of hazardous substances.

**(a) Policies**

Objective 2 will be achieved by implementation of the following policies:

- (i) Requiring that the location of sites on which hazardous substances can be stored and on which those facilities that involve the use of hazardous substances can operate should be separated from environments that would be adversely affected by the inadvertent release of hazardous materials.
- (ii) Making the risks to the environment and community associated with the hazardous facility one of the matters to be considered when assessing an application.

The proposal will be consistent with the above objective and policies. As discussed in section 6.0 of this report, while the use of explosives and the storage of diesel on site is such that the proposed activity requires a consent as a hazardous facility, the calculated effects ratio (as per the Hazardous Facility Screening Procedure) of the quantities involved is relatively low at 0.02. The activity will be required to comply with the requirements of the Hazardous Substances and New Organisms Act 1996, and it is recommended that an advice note is included on the consent to ensure that the applicant is aware of these requirements.

## 8.4 District Wide Performance Standards for Development

The following objective and policies as outlined in section 8.1 of the District Wide Performance Standards for Development section of the Proposed Plan are relevant to this proposal. It is noted that there are no outstanding appeals in relation to these provisions.

### **OBJECTIVE 1**

*To avoid, remedy or mitigate the adverse effects of activities (development and subdivision) on the environment, natural and physical resources and the amenity values of the Hauraki District.*

#### **(a) Policies**

*Objective 1 will be achieved by implementation of the following policies:*

- (i) Ensure activities operate within limits that do not have an adverse effect on the environment.*
- (iv) Recognise that the performance standards in this District Plan are one of a range of methods available to achieve the anticipated environmental results identified, and provide flexibility to assess those situations.*

The proposal will be consistent with the above objective and policies. As concluded in section 6.0 above, the adverse effects can be avoided, remedied or mitigated. In particular, while blasting will be up to 8 seconds in duration (in lieu of 1 second provided for the permitted activity standard) the volume of explosives is relatively small. With this and the remoteness of the site taken into consideration, it is considered that the vibration effects will not be contrary to the above.

## 10.0 PART 2 MATTERS

Part 2 outlines the purpose and principles of the Act. The overall purpose of the Act as outlined in section 5 is to promote the sustainable management of natural and physical resources. Sustainable management is defined as meaning:

*"In this Act, "sustainable management" means managing the use, development and protection of natural and physical resources in a way, or at a rate, which enables people and communities to provide for their social, economic, and cultural well-being and for their health and safety while:-*

- (a) Sustaining the potential of natural and physical resources (excluding minerals) to meet the reasonably foreseeable needs of future generations; and*
- (b) Safeguarding the life supporting capacity of air, water, soil and ecosystems; and*
- (c) Avoiding, remedying, or mitigating any adverse effects of activities on the environment."*

The proposal is consistent with the purpose of the Act. In particular, the proposal will enable the applicant to undertake exploration to assess the viability of a future mining activity in a manner in which the adverse effects will be avoided, remedied or mitigated and will not impact upon the life supporting capacity of air, water, soil and ecosystems or the potential for natural and physical resources to meet the reasonably foreseeable needs of future generations.

Section 6 of the Act outlines matters of national importance that Council shall recognise and provide for. The following are relevant to this application:

- "(b) the protection of outstanding natural features and landscapes from inappropriate subdivision, use, and development;*
- (c) the protection of areas of significant indigenous vegetation and significant habitats of indigenous fauna;*
- (e) the relationship of Maori and their culture and traditions with their ancestral lands, water, sites, waahi tapu, and other taonga;*
- (f) the protection of historic heritage from inappropriate subdivision, use, and development."*

The peak of Mt Karangahake is identified in the Proposed Plan as an Outstanding Natural Feature. The proposed exploration activity will be underground and will not impact upon the values associated with this feature. As discussed in this report above, no existing areas of indigenous vegetation or habitats of fauna will be removed and there are no known waahi tapu or sites of significance to Maori that will be disturbed. As noted the site is within the Karangahake Gorge Historic Area (a Category C Heritage Item). This aspect of the proposal will not trigger the need for resource consent, and it is concluded that the effects will be less than minor. Overall the proposal will be consistent with the relevant section 6 matters above.

Section 7 of the Act outlines other matters that Council shall have particular regard to. The following are relevant to this application:

- (b) the efficient use and development of natural and physical resources:*
- (c) the maintenance and enhancement of amenity values.*
- (d) intrinsic values of ecosystems:*
- (f) maintenance and enhancement of the quality of the environment.*
- (g) any finite characteristics of natural and physical resources”*

The proposed activity represents an efficient use of existing physical resources by utilising the existing access road, Portal Pad and underground tunnels. The exploration will allow the applicant to determine the viability of undertaking mining for gold being a finite natural resource. As discussed in section 6.0 of this report, amenity values and the quality of the environment will be maintained. The intrinsic values of the surrounding ecosystem will be maintained as no existing areas of indigenous vegetation or habitats of fauna will be removed.

Section 8 of the Act identifies that “in achieving the purpose of this Act, all persons exercising functions and powers under it, in relation to managing the use, development, and protection of natural and physical resources, shall take into account the principles of the Treaty of Waitangi (Te Tiriti o Waitangi)”. No matters relevant to the Treaty of Waitangi are considered to be relevant to this proposal.

## **11.0 SECTION 104D**

Section 104D outlines particular restrictions for non-complying activities as follows:

- “(1) Despite any decision made for the purpose of section 95A(2)(a) in relation to adverse effects, a consent authority may grant a resource consent for a non-complying activity only if it is satisfied that either—*
- (a) the adverse effects of the activity on the environment (other than any effect to which section 104(3)(a)(ii) applies) will be minor; or*
  - (b) the application is for an activity that will not be contrary to the objectives and policies of—*
    - (i) the relevant plan, if there is a plan but no proposed plan in respect of the activity; or*
    - (ii) the relevant proposed plan, if there is a proposed plan but no relevant plan in respect of the activity; or*
    - (iii) both the relevant plan and the relevant proposed plan, if there is both a plan and a proposed plan in respect of the activity.”*

As is concluded in section 6.0, the adverse effects of the activity on the environment will be minor. Section 8.0 concludes that the activity that will not be contrary to the objectives and policies of the Proposed Plan. Therefore the application satisfies the test under section 104D and Council may grant consent to this application.

## **12.0 CONCLUSION**

The proposal will not result in adverse effects on the environment that will be more than minor, is consistent with the objectives and policies of the Appeals Version of the Proposed Hauraki District Plan and is consistent with Part 2 of the Act. Therefore it is my opinion that consent should be granted to this proposal.

## **13.0 RECOMMENDATION**

**THAT** pursuant to Sections 104, 104B and 104D of the Resource Management Act 1991 the Hauraki District Council grants consent to this non-notified non-complying activity application to undertake exploratory underground drilling and blasting at the Talisman Gold Mine in Karangahake, on land legally described as Lot 4 DP 316844 (65780), for the following reasons:

- It is considered that the adverse effects on the environment of the proposal will be no more than minor. In particular conservation, visual, amenity, recreation, heritage and cultural values will be maintained, and appropriate measures can be put in place that will ensure that the noise, vibration, hazardous substances and traffic effects are avoided, remedied or mitigated.
- Written approval has been obtained from the only party considered to be adversely affected.
- The proposal is consistent with the objectives and policies of the Appeals Version of the Proposed District Plan.
- The proposal is consistent with the purpose of the Resource Management Act 1991.

**Subject to the following conditions:**

1. That the exploration activity be carried out in accordance with the plans and information submitted as part of the application received by the Hauraki District Council on 24 October 2013.
2. That the exploration activity be limited to a maximum of 20,000m<sup>3</sup> of metallurgical samples per annum.
3. That a Traffic Management Plan shall be prepared for approval by Council prior to the commencement of this activity. The Traffic Management Plan shall be prepared in accordance with the Code of Practice for Temporary Traffic Management and shall include (but shall not be limited to) the following:
  - Details of the sections of road subject to this plan;
  - Road users and their respective type and frequency of use;
  - Speed limits for trucks and other vehicles associated with the exploration activity;
  - Matters to be included in site induction;
  - Use of headlights and warning lights on vehicles;
  - Procedures to be undertaken at blind corners and upon encountering pedestrians and cyclists along access road;
  - Hours of operation of heavy vehicles;
  - Limitation of heavy vehicle use during school bus operating hours on River Road, Karangahake; and
  - Details on the use of a radio system to ensure one way vehicle movement along access road

4. All outdoor lighting at the Portal Pad shall be installed, designed and directed into the Portal Pad.
5. All activities which are the subject of this consent, shall be conducted to ensure that noise levels at or within the notional boundary do not exceed the following limits:

Day time	7.00am to 10.00pm	50 dBA <small>L<sub>Aeq</sub>(15min)</small>
Night-time	10.00pm to 7.00am	40 dBA <small>L<sub>Aeq</sub>(15min)</small>

6. Noise shall be measured and assessed in accordance with New Zealand Standards:

NZS 6801: 2008 - Measurement of Environmental Sound  
 NZS 6802: 2008 - Environmental Noise

7. All activities which are the subject of this consent, shall be conducted to ensure that ground vibration exposure do not exceed the following parameters:

Parameter	Standard
Blast Duration as defined by the delay timing (ie the difference in time between the first and last charge detonation)	8 seconds
Number of Blasts	1 per day
Overpressure (Pmax)	Less than 115 dBL – 95 percentile 120dBL - maximum
Peak Amplitude (Vmax)	5.0 mm/second
Time of Day	7.00am to 6.00pm
Days	Monday to Saturday (excluding public holidays)

8. All ground vibration measurements shall be taken at or within the boundary of allotments adjoining the site on which the exploration activity is undertaken. Measurements are to be taken in the ground not within buildings.
9. That in the event of any complaints being received by Council in relation to blast effects and ground vibration, the applicant shall install a certified and calibrated vibration monitor at a location approved by Council and that meets the current Australian Standard AS2187.2 (or equivalent international standard), and shall provide the results of the monitoring to the Council, for a period of 1 month.



10. The consent holder shall ensure that those undertaking works on the subject site are instructed that should any human remains or archaeological items be exposed, that activity in that area is to cease immediately and the Police, New Zealand Historic Places Trust, Hauraki District Council and Kaumatua representing the local Tangata Whenua shall be contacted. Work can recommence in the affected area when any necessary authorisations or consents have been obtained.
11. That pursuant to Section 36(1)(b) of the Resource Management Act 1991, the Applicant shall pay Council charges for receiving, processing and granting the Resource Consent.
12. That pursuant to Section 36(1)(c) of the Resource Management Act 1991 the applicant shall pay an administration fee of \$110.00 for administration of the consent.
13. That pursuant to Section 36(1)(c) of the Resource Management Act 1991 the applicant shall pay all Council's costs for monitoring this consent including all costs associated with the consideration and certification of plans and details associated with the consent as appropriate.

**Advice Notes**

1. The applicant is advised that they must obtain all applicable approvals required under the Hazardous Substances and New Organisms Act 1996 prior to commencing the activity authorised by this consent.

**Julia Masters**  
Consultant Planner

Signed by Planning & Environmental Services Manager: .....  
**Peter Thom**

Date: .....

<b>Event number:</b>	LUSE-202.2013.00000208.001
<b>Decision number:</b>	2013/14 - 74
<b>Applicant:</b>	New Talisman Gold Mines Limited
<b>Document reference:</b>	FRED Doc 1143008 To undertake exploratory underground drilling and blasting at the Talisman Gold Mine in Karangahake, on land legally described as Lot 4 DP 316844 (65780).
<b>Subject:</b>	

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### Decision:

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13. That pursuant to Section 36(1)(c) of the Resource Management Act 1991 the applicant shall pay all Council's costs for monitoring this consent including all costs associated with the consideration and certification of plans and details associated with the consent as appropriate.

#### **Advice Notes**

1. The applicant is advised that they must obtain all applicable approvals required under the Hazardous Substances and New Organisms Act 1996 prior to commencing the activity authorised by this consent.

**Date:** 22<sup>nd</sup> November 2013

SIGNED:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'P. H. H. H.', is written over a horizontal line.