

15 November 2018

My name is Samantha Muir. My partner and I have lived in the Waihi/Waihi Beach area for the better part of 8 years. I am a geologist at Oceanagold and hold a Bachelor of Social Science in Psychology and a Bachelor of Science in Earth Sciences – both from the University of Waikato.

I work alongside a number of young professionals working in technical roles such as Geologist, Engineer, Surveyors, Metallurgist and Environmental Technicians. University educated with at least a small portion of Environmental Science included in that. These 25-35 year olds are those who will be running the mine going forward. We are part of a generation who is deeply concerned and well informed about the environment – after all it is my generation and the next who are going to live with the consequences of poor global stewardship. The company vision states a commitment to uphold the highest standards in environmental and sustainable practices and in my experience working on site here that is what I have seen.

Many of us own properties in the area and love living here and the only reason we are here is because of employment at the mine. A number of us are actively involved in the community through sport participation and coaching, local societies and volunteer groups such as fire brigades and land search and rescue.

Without mining in Waihi there would be no other work in the area that utilizes our skills and expertise and the majority of us would have to move overseas to continue a career in our technical field – options are very limited in NZ. A large majority of people at work grew up here or have family here but without employment they would be unable to stay. The partners of my colleagues include highly sought after Teachers and Nurses– who again would not be able to stay here if their other halves were not locally employed.

The Resource Management Act and other local/national Government rules require the business to operate under a number of regulations – and rightfully so. The not in my backyard attitude held by some is unfortunate. As long as there is a societal demand for technology there will continue to be demand for gold mining. Why not do it responsibly here where the industry can be heavily regulated and monitored, benefit local people and the local economy without “third world” conditions and exploitation of workers and the environment. The infrastructure and facilities are already in place and functioning so why not continue to utilize them, and keep the community thriving.

These are reasons why the whole application should be approved.