

5.18 GOLDEN CROSS MINERAL ZONE

5.18.1 BACKGROUND

Golden Cross Mine has been operating in the Waitekauri Valley since 1990. From its commissioning to the end of 1993, it has produced approximately 191,000 ounces of gold. It directly provides employment for approximately 200 people (including earthmoving contractor), its wages bill in 1993 amounted to \$10 million and payment for goods and services amounted to \$35 million.

The mine operates subject to the terms and conditions of Mining Licence 32 2954, issued under the Mining Act 1971 and various water rights granted under the Water and Soil Conservation Act 1967. The mining licence was granted in 1990. Within the zone, activities are controlled under Mining Licence 32 2954 and continue to be subject to the provisions of the Mining Act 1971 and the Crown Minerals Act 1991.

The licence covers an area of 388.9 hectares, comprising:

- ✍ Open Pit
- ✍ Underground Areas (2 areas)
- ✍ Process Plant
- ✍ Tailings Disposal
- ✍ Waste Rock Disposal
- ✍ Waste Water Treatment and Disposal

It is appropriate that the District Plan recognises and provides for the Golden Cross mining project as currently consented to. Therefore the District Plan contains a zone, the Golden Cross Mineral Zone, the boundary of which equates to the boundary of the existing mining licence. Within this zone, mining and ancillary activities, are Permitted Activities, subject to meeting set performance standards. These performance standards are identical to the conditions set out in the current mining licence.

The Golden Cross Mineral Zone adjoins land zoned Rural and Conservation (Indigenous Forest). Should an extension to the mine development be contemplated beyond the boundary of the present zone (which is the same as the Mining Licence), further authorisation in terms of the Resource Management Act and the District Plan would be required.

Should the development extend into land zoned Rural, approval to an application for discretionary activity would be necessary before operations could commence. If the mine is extended into the Conservation (Indigenous Forest) zone, the land use consent requirements would be dependent on the area of surface vegetation to be removed/or ground surface disturbed. Minor or moderate clearance/disturbance would require consent to a discretionary activity or non complying activity.

(Refer Section 5.1 - RURAL ZONE, Section 5.2 – CONSERVATION (INDIGENOUS FOREST) ZONE and Section 8.3 - EXTRACTIVE INDUSTRY).

5.18.2 RESOURCE MANAGEMENT ISSUES

Minerals are included in the definition of natural and physical resources under the Resource Management Act 1991. The purpose of the Act is to promote the sustainable management of these resources. The Act recognises the non-renewable nature of minerals and therefore excludes minerals from the definition of sustainable management. However, the Act also requires that the mining of mineral resources be undertaken in a way which ensures the sustainability of other natural and physical resources (ie land, water, air, soil, energy, plants, animals and structures).

Three key issues are relevant to the Golden Cross mineral resource:

1. The need to recognise in the Plan the existing mining project and to provide for it by way of a special zone.
2. The need to provide a mechanism in the Plan to consider any proposal to extend the mine beyond the present zone boundary.
3. The need to ensure that mining and associated activities are carried out in a way which enables the people of the District to provide for their economic, social and cultural wellbeing and for their health and safety while ensuring the tests of sustainability set out in S5 (2) (a)-(c) of the Act are met.

5.18.3 ANTICIPATED ENVIRONMENTAL RESULTS

The anticipated environmental results for the Golden Cross Mineral Zone are:

1. To provide for the social and economic well being of the residents of the District as a consequence of the utilisation of the Golden Cross mineral resource in a manner that promotes the sustainable management of resources.
2. To ensure the current operations meet the conditions of the existing licence and other permits which provide protection to the residents' amenities and the natural environment.
3. To ensure that the rehabilitation of the area once mining is completed is such that the long term uses of the area within this zone provide an appropriate and sustainable environment.
4. To consider any proposals to extend the mining operation beyond the boundary of the zone by the mechanisms provided for in the Plan and the requirements of the Resource Management Act 1991.

5.18.4 OBJECTIVES AND POLICIES

Objective 1

To recognise and provide for the existing licensed Golden Cross mining project.

Policies:

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

1. Delineating in the District Plan a zone to accommodate the mining project established by way of Mining Licence 32 2954.
2. Within this zone allowing mining, processing and ancillary activities as permitted activities in accordance with the provisions of Mining Licence 32 2954.
3. Requiring that all permitted activities be subject to performance standards, as set out in the licence conditions and specified in this Plan.

Objective 2

To recognise the value of the mineral resource and provide for its utilisation in a sustainable manner

Policy:

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

1. Providing for the social, economic and cultural well being of the people of the District and for their health and safety.

Reasons for all Objectives and Policies

The Golden Cross Mine is an economically and environmentally significant development in the District. It is subject to a Mining Licence issued under the former Mining Act 1971. Given these circumstances, specific recognition of and provision for the activity is necessary in the Plan. The special purpose zone for the Golden Cross Mine is also included in recognition of the value of the Golden Cross mineral resource and decisions already made to develop that resource.

5.18.5 METHODS TO IMPLEMENT OBJECTIVES AND POLICIES

1. Zone the existing licence area as Golden Cross Mineral Zone, with mining and ancillary activities being afforded Permitted Activity status.
2. Incorporate the existing conditions of the mining licence as Performance Standards in the Golden Cross Mineral Zone.
3. Considering any proposal for an extension to the Golden Cross Mine into the Conservation (Indigenous Forest) Zone by either a resource consent application, or through zone extension by plan change.

5.18.6 ACTIVITIES

5.18.6.1 Permitted Activities

Any activity conducted in terms of Mining Licence 32 2954.

5.18.6.2 Controlled Activities

There are no controlled activities.

5.18.6.3 Discretionary Activities

The following are discretionary activities:

1. Any activity provided for in Mining Licence 32 2954 that does not comply with the performance of a condition of Mining Licence 32 2954.

5.18.7 PERFORMANCE STANDARDS

The performance standards for activities carried out in the Golden Cross Mineral Zone are the conditions applying to Mining Licence 32 2954. These standards are set out in Appendix 1 (Performance Standards - Golden Cross Mineral Zone) to the District Plan (separate volume). Copies are available at the Hauraki District Council offices, Paeroa. All permitted activities in the zone shall meet these performance standards.

Note: Only those Mining Licence conditions which are resource management matters within Council's responsibility under the RMA are deemed to be performance standards for the purpose of this zone.