PROJECT MEMORANDUM

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LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTS

Project:	**WAIHI NORTH PROJECT**	**Memo:** Three	**Page:** 1 of 6
Topic:	Section 92– Request for Further Information (Landscape, Natural Character & Visual Amenity)		
Date:	1 August 2022		
Attention:	Leigh Robcke / Craig McGarr		
From:	Dave Mansergh		

INTRODUCTION

Oceana Gold New Zealand Limited is proposing to develop a new underground mine (Wharekirauponga Underground Mine) and a new open-pit mine (Gladstone Open Pit), expansion of processing and rock and tailings storage facilities in Waihi referred to collectively as the Waihi North Project. The applicant has engaged Boffa Miskell Ltd to assess the effects of the proposal on the landscape, natural character, and visual amenity.

PURPOSE AND APPROACH

Purpose

The purpose of this review is to assess whether the application documents contain enough information to allow the potential effects of the proposed development on the landscape, natural character and visual amenity to be understood and rated.

The review has been undertaken as a desktop exercise.

Documents Reviewed

Relevant sections (Landscape, natural character, and visual amenity) following documents have been reviewed:

a. *Waihi North Project: Resource Consent Application and Assessment of Environmental Effects.* June 2022. Oceana Gold (New Zealand) Ltd. (Part A Overarching Assessment of Environmental Effects).
b. *B1 CFP and Area 1 Site Specific Assessment of Environmental Effects.* June 2022. Oceana Gold (New Zealand) Ltd. (Part B Site Specific Assessment of Environmental Effects).
c. *B1 CFP and Area 1 Site Specific Assessment of Environmental Effects.* June 2022. Oceana Gold (New Zealand) Ltd. (Part B Site Specific Assessment of Environmental Effects).
d. *B2 Area 2 Site Specific Assessment of Environmental Effects.* June 2022. Oceana Gold (New Zealand) Ltd. (Part B Site Specific Assessment of Environmental Effects).
e. *B3 Area 3 Site Specific Assessment of Environmental Effects.* June 2022. Oceana Gold (New Zealand) Ltd. (Part B Site Specific Assessment of Environmental Effects).
f. *B4 Area 4 Site Specific Assessment of Environmental Effects.* June 2022. Oceana Gold (New Zealand) Ltd. (Part B Site Specific Assessment of Environmental Effects).
g. *B5 Area 5 Site Specific Assessment of Environmental Effects.* June 2022. Oceana Gold (New Zealand) Ltd. (Part B Site Specific Assessment of Environmental Effects).
h. *B6 Area 6 Site Specific Assessment of Environmental Effects.* June 2022. Oceana Gold (New Zealand) Ltd. (Part B Site Specific Assessment of Environmental Effects).
i. *B7 Area 7 Site Specific Assessment of Environmental Effects.* June 2022. Oceana Gold (New Zealand) Ltd. (Part B Site Specific Assessment of Environmental Effects).
j. *Landscape, Natural Character and Visual Effects Assessment*. 17 June 2022. Boffa Miskell Ltd. (Part H – 42 Boffa Miskell – Landscape and Visual).
k. *Ecology and Landscape Management Plan - Waihi North Project 2022.* Oceana Gold (New Zealand) Ltd.

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Site Inspection

The application site was visited on 28 & 29 July 2022.

REQUEST FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION / CLARIFICATION

General

1. Current best practice suggests that landscape is an integrated concept that can be described in terms of its *Physical*, *Associate* & *Perceptual* dimensions and values. To understand the effect of a proposed development on the landscape it is necessary to identify the landscape baseline within which the proposed change will occur.

Regarding Section 6.3.3 of the District Plan, the LVE states:

> *…Protection of outstanding natural landscape(s) in the context of the Hauraki District Plan refers to its integrity and associated aesthetic, cultural and intrinsic values* [emphasis added].

In my opinion, the LVE focuses on the physical characteristics of the existing landscape and does not provide a rounded analysis in terms of its associative and perceptual factors. This is essential for understanding the values associated with/attributable to an existing landscape, and must be undertaken before any changes to that landscape can be assessed.

Request: Please provide a more detailed analysis of the existing landscape baseline , including a more detailed analysis of the relevant associative and perceptual values. The analysis should also clearly identify the factors or features in the landscape that contribute to existing landscape values that are more sensitive to change (such as the ONFL). Further detail is included in the specific requests relating to each part of the application below.

It is acknowledged that Maori cultural values, interests, and associations are intended to be identified through iwi-led cultural impact assessment. Once this has been undertaken, these values must be also considered within the context of the landscape assessment.

2. The LVE does not create a clear link between potential effects and the proposed/required mitigation, meaning that the purpose and/or effectiveness of some of the mitigation recommendations are not always clear.

Request: Please provide further explanation of how the proposed mitigation measures will mitigate the effects identified in the report and identify recommended conditions.

3. The visual assessment does not evaluate the value or importance attached to each view (as identified in the method statement). While the LVE describes what will be seen from each view location, it does not always describe how the proposed change will affect existing visual amenity or identify how the changes may or may not affect existing amenity values.

Request: Please identify the key attributes, which contribute to visual amenity from each viewpoint and the changes described and assessed for each in greater detail.

4. First, in figures 8, 13, 16 and 19 (appendix 4 of the LVE), the OGNZL tenure layer hides several features beneath it, making it difficult to interpret the ZTV maps and identify features within the underlying aerial

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photograph. Second, in the same the symbology used for the ZTV layer is similar to the colours of the underlying aerial photography, making it difficult to read.

Request: Please provide an updated version with the symbology of the OGNZL layer changed to either an outline or a hatch so that the features beneath it are more easily read, and amend the symbology of the ZTV mapping to contrast the underlying photography (It is suggested that a red-green gradient or a blue gradient is used).

5. Figures 1 & 2 in Appendix 5 of the LVE (Visual Simulations) do not have keys, making it difficult to interpret the various features shown (other than the VS points).

Request: Please provide updated versions, with keys.

Wharekirauponga Underground Mine

6. The forms of the proposed rock stack and topsoil stockpiles shown in figures 6 & 7 of the LNCEA are not clear.

Request: Please provide proposed contours or a shade model (as per figure 11) for these areas to enable reconciliation with the photomontages.

7. Section *3.2*.1, 3.2.1.2 and 3.2.1.1 identify the Coromandel Forest Park as an Outstanding Natural Feature and Landscape, having been identified by the Waikato Regional Landscape Assessment (2010) and the Hauraki Landscape Assessment (2006). Since the preparation of these documents, landscape assessment methodologies and best practice recommendations have changed.

Request: Please provide a more detailed analysis of the existing landscape attributes and values associated with those parts of the Coromandel Forest Park potentially affected by the application using the current best practice approach assessment model.

8. Section 6.1.3 of the LNCEA (last paragraph - Willows rock stack) states:

> *…This is expected to be gradually returned until the completion of the project in approximately 15 years. At completion, all stockpiles will be removed and the underlying land rehabilitated.*

Request: Please confirm if the underlying land will be restored to its current condition or will Tributary 2 be rehabilitated in the sense that the watercourse will be restored and its margins replanted with native species to enhance its natural character values.

9. It is difficult to reconcile the description of the vegetation to be removed/retained at the Willows Road site in Section 6.2.2 of the LNCAE against the plans and aerial photographs contained in Appendix 4 of the LNCEA.

Request: Please provide an annotated plan that identifies the locations of the various areas of vegetation to be removed from the Willows Road site (An annotated version of figure 7 would suffice).

10. The LNCEA states, in Section 6.2.2:

> *The removal of riparian vegetation resulting from surface infrastructure within Willows Road is proposed to be offset by enhancing a sub-catchment to the north within the Willows Road site (Tributary 3).*

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The extent of landscape/ecological mitigation planting proposed is not shown in the LNCEA. It is unclear if this is shown in figure 1 of the *Ecology and Landscape Management Plan* (ELMP) due to the lack of a key.

Request: Please identify/confirm the locations of the proposed landscape/ecological mitigation measures discussed in Section 6.2.2 of the LNCEA.

11. Section 6.5.4 of the LNCEA identifies that the ventilation shafts will *… either occupy existing drill sites that have already been authorised and established within the area by OGNZL, or new sites located on legal road reserve (refer Figure 9*).. The location of the existing drill sites is not identified in figure 9 and the legal road sites appear to cover a length of road that is approximately 800m in length. The scale of figure 9 makes it difficult to interpret the underlying landscape. It is understood that some potential site have been eliminated for ecological reasons.

Request: Please provide an enlargement of figure 9 showing the potential ventilation shaft locations, the location of the authorised existing drill site locations being considered and likely locations within the road reserve (i.e please show the location of all potential vent shaft locations within the Coromandel Forest Park.)

12. Section 6.5.4 of the LNCEA identifies that a temporarily combined helicopter pad and single-storey accommodation and amenities facility will be put in place during the construction of the vent shafts.

Request: Please provide either a dimensioned plan and elevations or a photograph of a similar structure.

13. Section 6.5.4 of the LNCEA identifies that, upon completion of mining, the proposed vertical ventilation shafts located within the Coromandel Forest Park will be backfilled from underneath. It is unclear how this will be achieved without further disturbance around the top of the ventilation shafts or a requirement to import materials and place them from above to address settlement.

Request: Please provide further information on how the backfilling of the vertical shafts can be achieved without requiring access to or further disturbance around the top of the shaft (outside of the fenced-off area).

14. Section 6.8 identifies that the plumes from the ventilation shafts may be up to 175m high (when they occur) but are unlikely to be seen. The LVE does not discuss how often the phenomenon may occur or identify likely locations where it may be seen. Because the visual presence of a plume may be associated with the proposed mine, it may have associative or perceptual effects on wider landscape character and values.

Request: Please provide further information about how often this phenomenon may occur and where it may be seen from. Please provide further analysis on how this may affect the existing associative and perceptual values associated with the Coromandel Forest Park/ONL.

15. Section 6.9.2 makes several recommendations to mitigate the effects of the WUG on Coromandel Forest Park. Including ensuring the shaft raisers and temporary activities are not highly visible from within the park or visible from the Wharekirauponga Walk. The recreation and tourism assessment identifies that the Wharekirauponga to Golden Cross Track is located within the same section of road reserve where up to four vent raisers and associated evasē will be installed. It was noted during the site inspection that at least one of the proposed vent sites was located within 5m of the track. From the inspection of the existing evasē at Union Hill, it was noted that the fan noise could be heard.

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Request: Please provide a more detailed analysis of how the vent shaft will affect the existing physical, associative and perceptual landscape values of the forest park. Please include an analysis of how experiencing the temporary drill platforms and evasēs will affect the various attributes identified in the Hauraki District Landscape Assessment Report and the key elements to be protected(including bush-covered ridgelines, homogeneity, wilderness and remoteness, and very high natural character).

16. VS1 is identified as being located at the end of Willows Road.

Request: Please confirm if this location is accessible to the public or only from within the site.

Gladstone Open Pit

17. In Section 7.3.3, it is identified that the Favona Portal is proposed to be relocated adjacent to the existing Processing Plant to ensure any indirect landscape effects associated with existing underground mining remain well contained.

Request: Please identify what the indirect landscape effects will be.

18. In Section 7.5.1, the analysis of the effects is largely limited to a description of the visual changes that will occur. It does not provide enough detail on how these changes will affect existing landscape character and visual amenity values represented by the viewpoints identified.

Request: Please explain how these potential changes will likely affect existing landscape character and visual amenity values (i.e. how does a change in the landscape affect its value) at a level of detail commensurate with the potential effect.

19. It is unclear how much of the GOP will be visible from Black Hill (G3) or how the GOP will change the visual amenity and landscape character of the wider landscape from this location. It is noted that this area is identified as having higher sensitivity in the associated effects table.

Request: Please provide a photograph and an additional photomontage looking towards the GOP from Black Hill (G3).

Tailings Storage Facility 3 (TSF3)

20. The first two bullet points in the landscape character effects section of the landscape effects table at 10.3.4 appear to be incomplete:

- *No formal local / national landscape.*
- *Integrated along the toe of a larger landform backdrop along*

Request: Please review and update as necessary.

21. While Section 10.4 identifies the ecological values of the small permanent, intermittent and ephemeral streams, artificial watercourses and water detention pond as low to moderate-high, it does not identify the existing natural character values of these features or identify the magnitude of effect that will occur.

Request: Please identify existing natural character values (e.g. low, medium, high) and the magnitude of effect on these features.

22. First, it is unclear how the various properties on the elevated land to the northwest of VS20 (within the area identified as T4 on figure 19 in appendix 4) are affected by the proposed TSF3. Second, the effect

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ratings for T4 Trig Road (north) appear inconsistent with what might be expected based on the review of the T2 ratings, ZTV mapping and site photography. No photographs are provided from the T4 assessment area, noting that this area is visible from the crest of the TSF1A storage facility, and therefore the proposed TSF3 is likely visible in reverse.

Request: Please provide further detail about how the various properties on elevated land to the northwest of VS20 are affected by the proposal and review and supply additional explanation as to why the effects ratings decrease from moderate-high to low within the context of a similar ZTV environment.

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