

Submission on Notified Resource Consent PL260336076



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Submission on Notified Resource Consent

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Notified Submission

SUBMISSION ON NOTIFIED APPLICATION CONCERNING RESOURCE CONSENT

(Form 13)

Section 95A (public) Resource Management Act 1991

To: The Chief Executive
Central Otago District Council
PO Box 122
Alexandra 9340

This is a submission on the following resource consent application:

Resource Consent Number	RC250077
Valuation Number	2842107654
Applicant	Awa Koura Mining Limited
Location of Site	Luggate-Cromwell Road (SH 6), Cromwell
Brief Description of Application	Land use consent to extract alluvial gold in the rural resource area
Submissions Close	4:00pm on Thursday 19th March 2026

Writing a submission

The following will be required during this process:

- Your full name and address, telephone number and email address
- Whether you support or oppose the application for resource consent
- The reason for your submission
- The decision you wish the Council to make, including any conditions sought
- Whether you wish to be heard.

Important information so you don't lose your data

If you wish to take some time completing this form, we strongly recommend that you **create a [login](#) and log in to your account prior to starting to complete the form.** This gives you the ability to save a draft and return to it later.

If you are a club or organisation, please use an email that is associated with the club rather than your work or personal email.

Logging in before starting to enter information into the form also means you won't lose your information if the form times out, or if you accidentally navigate away from the screen you're working on.

You cannot save your information and return to it later unless you log in before you start the form.

Regardless whether you are logged in, once you have completed and submitted the form, you will receive a copy of your submission to the email address you specify in the form.

Either go to our [Online Services](#) page to create an account (or log in if you already have an account) or continue below to start without logging in.

Privacy

The information you provide is official information and is used to help process your application. The information is held and used in accordance with the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987 and the Privacy Act 2020. This means that your information may be disclosed to other people who request it in accordance with the terms of these Acts. Under the Privacy Act 2020 you have the right to see and correct any personal information that Council may hold about you.

Declaration

By continuing with this application you certify that: **The** Yes
information you provide is true and correct to the best
of your knowledge.

Notified Submission

Notes to submitter

1. If you are making a submission to the Environmental Protection Authority, you should use [form 16B](#).

The closing date for serving submissions on the consent authority is the 20th working day after the date on

which public or limited notification is given. If the application is subject to limited notification, the consent authority may adopt an earlier closing date for submissions once the consent authority receives responses from all affected persons.

2. You must serve a copy of your submission on the applicant as soon as is reasonably practicable after you have served your submission on the consent authority.
3. If you are a trade competitor, your right to make a submission may be limited by the trade competition provisions in [Part 11A](#) of the Resource Management Act 1991.
4. If you make a request under [section 100A](#) of the Resource Management Act 1991, you must do so in writing no later than 5 working days after the close of submissions and you will be liable to meet the additional costs of the hearings commissioner or commissioners, compared to our hearing panel. Typically these costs range from \$3,000 - \$10,000.
5. Please note that your submission (or part of your submission) may be struck out if the authority is satisfied that at least 1 of the following applies to the submission (or part of the submission):
 - it is frivolous or vexatious:
 - it discloses no reasonable or relevant case:
 - it would be an abuse of the hearing process to allow the submission (or the part) to be taken further:
 - it contains offensive language:

It is supported only by material that purports to be independent expert evidence, but has been prepared by a person who is not independent or who does not have sufficient specialised knowledge or skill to give expert advice on the matter.

In lodging this submission, your submission, including contact details, become public information and will be available for anyone to view.

DETAILS OF SUBMITTER

Full name	Mark and Tony Williams
Contact person (if applicable)	Tony Williams
Electronic address for service of submitter:	tony@williamsgroup.co.nz
Phone number - day time	+64 21348150
Postal address (or alternative method of service under section 352 of the Act):	71 Pukerangi drive RD 3 Cromwell 9383

Your Application

Please select one regarding the application	I oppose
Do you wish to be heard in support of this submission?	Yes - I wish to be heard
Are you a trade competitor for the purposes of section 308B of the Resource Management Act 1991?	I am not
I would consider presenting a joint case if others make a similar submission	Yes

Details of submission

The specific parts of the application that my submission relates to are:	Noise Dust and air quality Property values
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The submission - include:

- **whether you support or oppose the specific parts of the application or wish to have them amended; and**
- **the reasons for your views.**

Town Planning

INTRODUCTION

I make this submission as a directly affected neighbouring property owner in relation to Resource Consent Application RC250077, which seeks consent for alluvial gold extraction within the Rural Resource Area adjacent to the Clutha River / Mata-Au corridor.

I strongly oppose the granting of this resource consent.

The proposed activity represents a large-scale industrial mining operation within a rural landscape that is characterised by natural river terraces, open vistas, and high environmental and amenity values.

The application fails to adequately address numerous significant environmental effects including:

- degradation of the Clutha River environment
- noise pollution across the river valley
- dust and air quality impacts
- landscape and visual degradation
- cumulative effects of mining within the river corridor

These effects are inconsistent with the sustainable management purpose of the Resource Management Act 1991 (RMA) and the planning framework governing land use in Central Otago.

LEGAL AND PLANNING CONTEXT

Under Section 5 of the Resource Management Act, sustainable management requires safeguarding the life-supporting capacity of air, water, soil and ecosystems. Section 6 identifies matters of national importance including:

- preservation of the natural character of rivers
- protection of outstanding natural landscapes
- maintenance of public access to rivers

The Clutha / Mata-Au River is one of New Zealand's most significant waterways and forms a defining feature of the Central Otago landscape.

Industrial scale alluvial mining adjacent to this river corridor is inconsistent with the preservation of its natural character and environmental values.

RELEVANT COURT PRECEDENTS

New Zealand courts have repeatedly emphasised the need to carefully manage activities affecting sensitive river environments.

In *Clutha District Council v Otago Regional Council* [2020] NZEnvC 194, the Environment Court recognised the

environmental importance of the Clutha River system and imposed restrictions on water use due to potential environmental effects.

Similarly, the Supreme Court in *Environmental Defence Society Inc v New Zealand King Salmon Co Ltd* [2014] NZSC 38 confirmed that where planning policies require environmental protection, adverse effects must be avoided rather than merely mitigated.

These precedents demonstrate that activities posing significant risks to river environments require a precautionary approach and strict scrutiny.

The present proposal fails to meet this standard.

EFFECTS ON THE CLUTHA RIVER / MATA-AU

The proposal involves large-scale excavation of alluvial gravels within the river terrace environment.

Such activities inherently create risks including:

- sediment mobilisation
- groundwater disturbance
- erosion and runoff
- ecological disruption

The Clutha River is a highly dynamic braided river system where sediment processes are critically important to river health.

Disturbance of surrounding terrace gravels has the potential to increase sediment transport into the river during rainfall events.

Increased turbidity and sedimentation can adversely affect:

- aquatic ecosystems
- fish habitat
- water clarity
- recreational use of the river

The application provides insufficient hydrological analysis demonstrating that these risks can be avoided.

SEDIMENT DISCHARGE RISKS

Sediment discharge from mining operations represents one of the most significant environmental risks associated with alluvial mining.

Excavation pits, stockpiles, and disturbed ground surfaces significantly increase the likelihood of sediment mobilisation during storm events.

Even with sediment control measures, such activities often generate:

- fine sediment runoff

- increased turbidity in receiving water bodies
- long-term degradation of water quality

The applicant has not provided sufficiently robust modelling demonstrating how sediment discharge into the Clutha River will be prevented under extreme rainfall conditions.

Given the zero alignment proximity of the proposed operation to the river corridor, this risk must be considered significant.

NOISE PROPAGATION ACROSS RIVER VALLEYS

The acoustic effects of mining operations have been underestimated in the applicant's noise assessment. River valleys such as the Clutha corridor are known to amplify and channel sound due to:

- open terrain
- reflective valley walls
- atmospheric temperature inversions
- minimal vegetation barriers

Heavy mining machinery including excavators, bulldozers and processing equipment produces significant low-frequency noise which can travel long distances across water and open valley landscapes.

Low-frequency noise is particularly problematic because it:

- travels further than higher frequency noise
- penetrates buildings more easily
- causes greater disturbance to residents

The applicant's noise report relies heavily on averaged data and assumptions regarding machinery operation, which masks peak noise levels that residents may experience.

Given the geographic characteristics of the Clutha valley, the actual noise impacts are likely to be substantially greater than predicted.

DUST AND AIR QUALITY EFFECTS

Alluvial mining operations generate significant dust from:

- excavation
- truck movements
- stockpiling of gravel
- material processing

The Clutha valley experiences strong seasonal wind patterns which can transport dust considerable distances. Windborne particulate matter may affect neighbouring

properties through:

- reduced air quality
- contamination of outdoor living areas
- impacts on vegetation and agriculture

The application provides only limited detail regarding dust suppression measures and does not quantify expected particulate emissions.

This represents a significant deficiency in the environmental assessment.

CUMULATIVE EFFECTS OF MINING IN THE CLUTHA CORRIDOR

The Resource Management Act requires decision-makers to consider cumulative environmental effects.

Central Otago has experienced increasing pressure from mining activities within river terrace environments.

The approval of additional mining operations contributes to the gradual industrialisation of the Clutha River corridor.

Cumulative impacts may include:

- progressive landscape degradation
- increased traffic and heavy vehicle movements
- sustained noise and dust impacts
- fragmentation of natural habitats

When considered collectively, these effects can significantly erode the environmental and landscape values that define the region.

Allowing further mining activity risks establishing a precedent for continued expansion of industrial land uses within this sensitive environment.

LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL IMPACTS

The Central Otago landscape is internationally recognised for its distinctive natural character. Mining operations introduce highly visible industrial elements including:

- excavation pits
- heavy machinery
- gravel stockpiles
- processing equipment

These features are incompatible with the existing rural landscape and will result in long-term visual degradation. Even if rehabilitation is proposed, the landscape is unlikely to fully recover to its natural state for many decades.

Flood Hazard Risk and Downstream Impacts

The proposed mining site is located within an area identified as being subject to flood hazard risk within the Clutha River floodplain. This raises significant concerns regarding the ability of the proposed excavation pits, stockpiles, and associated mining infrastructure to be safely managed during a flood event. The Clutha River is known for its extremely high flow volumes during major rainfall and snowmelt events, and flooding in this corridor can occur rapidly and with considerable force. Excavated mining pits and disturbed ground surfaces within a flood hazard area create a substantial risk that sediment, stockpiled materials, machinery, and contaminants could be mobilised during flood conditions. Once mobilised, these materials could be transported downstream, potentially causing severe sedimentation, obstruction of natural river flows, and damage to river ecosystems and infrastructure. Given the scale of the Clutha River and the dynamic nature of its floodplain, it is highly questionable whether such a mining operation could be effectively secured or managed during a significant flood event. The potential downstream consequences of flood-driven sediment discharge and debris movement could be catastrophic, impacting water quality, aquatic habitats, and properties located further downstream. In the absence of robust hydrological modelling and flood risk mitigation measures demonstrating that these risks can be avoided, the proposed activity represents an unacceptable hazard within a known flood-prone environment.

Amenity Values, Land-Use Compatibility and Cumulative Effects

The proposed mining activity is fundamentally incompatible with the existing character and amenity values of the surrounding rural environment within the Clutha River corridor. The surrounding area is characterised by open rural landscapes, natural river terraces, low levels of development, and a high degree of tranquility. Residents and landowners in this area reasonably expect a rural environment defined by natural landscape values, minimal industrial activity, and a quiet setting. The introduction of a large-scale alluvial mining operation involving heavy excavation machinery, processing equipment, truck movements, stockpiling of gravel, and associated noise and dust emissions would represent a significant industrial intrusion into this rural

landscape. Such activity would fundamentally alter the character of the area and significantly diminish the enjoyment and use of neighbouring properties. This proposal also creates a clear land-use conflict between intensive industrial mining and the surrounding rural and rural-residential properties. Activities such as

mining generate noise, dust, lighting, heavy vehicle movements, and continuous operational disturbance which are inherently incompatible with the expectations of residents living within a rural environment. Introducing such an activity into this setting creates an ongoing potential for conflict between the mining operation and neighbouring landowners, a situation commonly described in planning practice as reverse sensitivity. Good planning seeks to avoid establishing land uses that are incompatible with their surrounding environment, particularly where they introduce industrial effects into areas valued for their natural and rural character. In addition, granting consent for this proposal would create a significant precedent for further mining activities within the Clutha River corridor. Once industrial-scale extraction is permitted in one location, it becomes increasingly difficult for decision-makers to refuse similar proposals in nearby areas where comparable alluvial resources exist. The Clutha River valley contains extensive alluvial gravels and therefore remains particularly vulnerable to incremental mining expansion. When considered collectively, these individual consents can gradually lead to the industrialisation of an otherwise natural river landscape. The Resource Management Act requires decision-makers to consider cumulative environmental effects, and approval of this proposal risks establishing a pattern of development that could progressively degrade the environmental and landscape integrity of the wider Clutha River valley. The effects of this transformation are also reflected in the likely impact on neighbouring property values and rural residential expectations. Properties within the Clutha River corridor derive much of their value from the natural environment, scenic landscape, and the expectation of limited industrial activity. The presence of an active mining operation in close proximity would inevitably reduce the desirability of neighbouring properties for both current residents and future purchasers. While property value effects are not in themselves determinative under the Resource Management Act, they provide a clear indication of the loss of amenity values experienced by neighbouring landowners. The degradation of the rural environment caused by the proposed mining activity therefore represents a direct and tangible adverse effect on the surrounding community.

DEFICIENCIES IN THE APPLICATION

The application lacks sufficient technical information to enable a comprehensive assessment of environmental effects.

Key information gaps include:

- full raw noise monitoring data

- detailed machinery specifications used in acoustic modelling
- hydrological modelling of sediment transport
- comprehensive dust management plans
- detailed lighting and operating hour information

Without this information the environmental effects cannot be properly evaluated.

DECISION SOUGHT

For the reasons outlined above, I request that the Central Otago District Council:

Decline the resource consent application in its entirety.

CONCLUSION

The proposed mining operation presents significant environmental risks to the Clutha River corridor and surrounding rural environment.

The application fails to adequately demonstrate that these effects can be avoided, remedied or mitigated.

For these reasons the proposal is inconsistent with the principles of sustainable management under the Resource Management Act and should not be approved.

Regards Mark and Tony Williams

Please upload any documents / photos that are relevant



Please upload any documents / photos that are relevant



I seek the following decision from the consent authority.

Give precise details, including the general nature of any conditions sought

Alternatively, if the Council is minded to grant consent, the applicant should first be required to provide comprehensive additional information including:

- full acoustic monitoring data and independent peer review
- hydrological modelling of sediment discharge risks to the Clutha.
- detailed dust mitigation strategies
- comprehensive landscape and visual impact assessments

Strict operational limits and environmental monitoring conditions would also be required.

Select below - Pursuant to [section 100A](#) of the Act, that you delegate your functions, powers, and duties to hear and decide the application to 1 or more hearings commissioners who are not members of the local authority. "See note 4 (second tab) as you may incur costs relating to this request."

I do not request

Any other comments?

In lodging this submission, I understand that my submission, including contact details, are considered public information, and will be made available and published as part of this process.

Yes

Please sign (click on the words CAPTURE)



Date signed:

18/03/2026