

MPI advice on Fast-track Listed Project Application

Application name	Northern Block Mining Project
Application number	FTA372
Applicant	Taharoa Iron Sands Limited
Whether the application is ineligible under Clause 18 of the FTA Bill	No
Other authorisations that may be required from MPI	
Aquaculture settlement considerations	N/A
Fisheries settlement considerations	<p>The mining sites themselves do not have implications for the Fisheries Treaty settlement. However the at sea loading and de-watering of sand may effect fisheries in the area.</p> <p>Fisheries settlements have been concluded with the two main iwi with fisheries interests in the area, Ngāti Maniapoto and Waikāto - Tainui. These iwi have significant quota holdings, some of which will be caught in the loading area.</p> <p>Customary fishing is managed by the hapū of these iwi under the provisions of the Fisheries (Kaimoana Customary Fishing) Regulations 1998 which were made to give effect to Fisheries Settlement agreements. Customary fishing and management of important customary fishing grounds can only be conducted under these regulations. The rohe of some hapū for customary fishing purpose overlays the loading site. An application that affected the ability of the iwi to exercise customary rights would require careful consideration in relation to Treaty obligations. We would recommend consulting Ngāti Maniapoto and Waikato-Tainui hapū to understand the possible impacts of the application (eg for particular customary fishing locations).</p>
Impacts of a project on Māori development and PSGE priorities	<p>Comments from Māori Partnerships and Investment –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Mine is on Māori-owned land and subject to a lease with the owners, Taharoa C, and adjacent to a block privately owned by the Kana Whānau. - The application does not include the lease or evidence that the landowners have agreed for the application to seek an expansion of their mining activities. - MPI has a Primary Industries Protocol with Maniapoto.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - There is a coastal statutory acknowledgement that follows the coastline from Kawhia Harbour south to Taranaki, which includes the coastal area adjacent to Tahaora. - There are statutory acknowledgements over Ngā Wai o Maniapoto, covering waterways that fall within the Taharoa area of operation. - Waikato-Tainui rohe also spans the Taharoa area of operation. There is a relevant Agriculture, Biosecurity and Forestry Accord with Waikato-Tainui. <p>Note – Biosecurity NZ will have interests in the operation of Port Taharoa.</p> <p>-</p>
Other matters	<p>Comments from Water Availability & Security team –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Water is being used as a part of extraction process and the project proposes to use water from another existing resource consent (Central and Southern blocks which are also considered under FTA process). The application acknowledges the challenges to the legality of transfer. A request for water consent is not included in the present submission. However, in the Central and Southern Block Mining application, no such transfer of water is mentioned. - It is not clear if the environmental assessment report is based exclusively on expert knowledge, or any data was used. Since the assessment conclusions are qualitative (e.g. low, minor, less than minor, etc.), it is not clear as what scale was used to define them. - The environmental assessment report indicates that there will be no water take from Mitiwai stream or any other freshwater body but there is no mention on the source of required freshwater. - Application has provision to avoid spring and perennial water bodies. However, where mines intersect with local groundwater systems and aquifers, there is potential for groundwater contamination. Need to have provision to monitor as a part of the mining operation. This is specifically critical during periods of high-water table (i.e. groundwater closest to the surface). The potential of intersecting with water table is highlighted in the environmental assessment report. - An option of diverting groundwater from mining areas into a dredge pit is suggested but such interception of groundwater could influence the flows in the Mitiwai stream (receiving water) - Majority of mine tailing and water are to be used within the mining area. This raises a few additional questions -- - What does majority entail and where does the minority of water go?

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Is the water cleaned/treated before land application to avoid accidental recharge of groundwater systems with contaminated water? - Are there provisions in place to avoid the land-applied mine tailing to be transported in overland flow to downstream water bodies? <p>The environmental assessment highlights that erosion is high though the impact is minor. This may need additional investigation, especially during high intensity rainfall events and on recently reestablished/regenerated slopes.</p>
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Disclaimer: This advice has been developed to support MfE advice to the independent Fast-track Projects Advisory Group and is not intended to provide comment on the merits or viability of the application.