

# Barrytown sand mining company plans to protect petrel colony

The company behind sand mining plans at Barrytown says it has a raft of measures to protect Westland petrels, such as pointing lights downward and stopping trucks from running at night.

The consent application from TiGa Minerals will be publicly notified shortly.

Managing director Robert Brand says an avian management plan proposes that all mining activities adhere to the Australian government's national light pollution guidelines for wildlife, which are also the accepted standard in New Zealand.

These guidelines include pointing all fixed lighting downward, shielding to avoid light spill and the use of the yellow-orange spectrum.

"Of course, everyone is aware of the

special need to protect the tāiko (petrels) from light pollution that might confuse the birds and result in them becoming grounded," Mr Brand said.

The company will not run its ore-carrying trucks north along State highway 6 during hours of darkness when petrels are at the breeding colony, located just south of Punakaiki.

"We also propose to publish an annual bird management report that will measure our success and guide the implementation of any further measures to protect native wildlife, should they be required."

TiGa had commissioned avian, water, and vegetation plans.

Activities will include creating a new wetland, pest control, an increase in

native vegetation, enhancement of local wetland and riparian areas, and special provisions to avoid negative impact on birds such as the petrel and little blue penguin (kororā).

TiGa's avian management plan provides for: the detection and monitoring of breeding birds within the mining area, protection of any nests from human disturbance and introduced predator restrictions on lighting and traffic movements during darkness; management of any grounded birds; and monitoring of birds using the site and the adjoining lagoon to help with operational decisions and species management.

Mr Brand also clarified the size of the proposed mine and its longer-term

plans.

"There's a lot of talk around that this will be a mine stretching the length of the Barrytown Flats operating for 50 years. That could never happen, given the multitude of barriers standing in the way of extending mining activity north of the site for which we are currently seeking resource consent.

"There will be four discreet areas that we will seek to mine over a 15-year period, the first being the 68ha site subject to the current consent process, which we anticipate will have a five-year life. The land is in private ownership, we'll be mining to a maximum of 9m deep and in not more than 5ha at a time.

"At no stage will we be closer to the petrel colony than 4.3km."