

Barrytown mine plans revived

▶ \$63m annual GDP, 47 jobs

Laura Mills

A new and determined bid has been made for a proposed open-cast mineral sands mine on farmland near Barrytown.

After being denied resource consent last year due to insufficient supporting information, the miner is taking no chances this time, with specialist reports galore, and a raft of mitigation offered, from mining in strips, to noise bunds and reduced operating hours.

TiGa Minerals' application to the West Coast Regional Council comes with a raft of specialist advice on everything from screening the site to protecting Westland petrels, which nest nearby.

It proposes pumping sand ore to a processing plant in the south-west of the site, extract heavy mineral concentrate and return the un-mineralised sand to the mining void.

In an economic assessment, Sense Partners said it would generate \$63 million of export earnings annually.

"To provide a sense of context, the entire Grey district's roads, airports



The mine processing plant, office and maintenance area, looking north.

It is proposed to truck out 250,000 tonnes of material each year — and average of 25 truckloads each day.

Trucking would start from 5am and continue through to 10pm, but would not go near the Westland petrel colony during hours of darkness.

The ecological assessment recommends a 1.8m high, 13m-wide permanent bund with planting, parallel to State highway 6 for visual screening, as well as a 4.5m-high temporary bund around the northern-eastern side of the processing plant area, and a 10m-wide band of planting along the open coastline in the south-west corner.

The plant and storage would be located in farm implement-style buildings at the southern end of the site.

entire Grey district's goods exports were \$137 million in 2022, and the West Coast region's goods exports were \$761.3 million.

"So the mine would significantly boost the Grey district's goods exports (by 46% per year)."

Mining would progress in 100m by 300m strips, from west to east, starting in the south-west, to a depth of up to 9m.

The mine pit area will measure 3ha, including 0.5ha of stripping ahead of the mine pit and 0.5ha of active rehabilitation behind it.

The processing plant area will be 3.5ha in area.

Altogether, the mine site covers 63ha, including land owned by Nikau Deer Farm Ltd on the Barrytown Flats.

The heavy mineral concentrate will be trucked either north to Westport or south to Greymouth, for direct export or further processing.

TiGa says it would create 47 full-time jobs.

The mine will operate from 7am to 10pm, seven days a week, while the plant will run 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

During December and January, the peak fledgling period for the Westland petrel, mining may start and finish earlier, to stop lights disorienting them.

the southern end of the site.

Experts Glasson Huxtable, in a report commissioned by TiGa, said the project would have a "low level of effect on landscape character".

Acoustic specialist Marshall Day said bunds would also act as a noise control barrier.

"Our worst-case predicted noise levels show the proposed mine and processing plant is capable of complying with the Grey District Plan permitted activity daytime and night-time noise levels at the closest dwellings to the site.

"The exception is during the day on Sundays when the 'night-time' permitted activity noise limit applies."

KSL said sand extraction would entail the lowering of water table by up to 9m using a sump pump, so a water management system has been developed to manage water.

Eco Logical Solutions said the site was 3.6km south of the only known colony of Westland petrel, so site lights would point downwards, be shielded, and on the yellow-orange spectrum.

TiGa Minerals and Metals (TiGa) has voluntarily asked for the Barrytown application to be publicly notified. Last time it was only limited notification.

Part of the Barrytown Flat is set to become a 'Minerals Extraction Zone' under the proposed Te Tai o Poutini Plan. ► Radiation concerns allayed, p2