

Submission to Te Tai o Poutini District Plan – ten-year plan (“the TTPP”).

(Formal submissions will be accepted until midday on 30 September 2022)

Council Activity Area: **Community & Recreation – Heritage**

Subject: **The Historic Mining area of the Southern Paparoas.**

(We have prepared this submission based on the earlier TTPP exposure draft.)

Aim: The Southern Paparoa mining area is a mountainous block of land that contains the vestiges of a complete historic mining economy – the mines (State, co-operative, and privately owned), the communities and the infrastructure including the following: prospecting tracks, towns, railways, tramways, bridges and industrial mining equipment. The sustaining of this inherited character should be taken account of when evaluating substantial developments proposed within the area.

This is a request for a notation status to be applied to the *Historic Mining Area of the Southern Paparoas*. To achieve this, we are requesting that the area be listed as one of the *West Coast Historic Heritage Items and Areas and Archaeological Sites* (aka the HH list), in what has to date been Schedule 1, Part 4 of the Te Tai o Poutini District Plan.

We are requesting something like an extended version of the registrations currently held by the Denniston Historical Area (noted at HH5 in the present version of the District Plan), or HH45 listing the Waiuta Historic Area. Similarly, the Reefton historic area is substantially dealt with via a number of individual listings (HH28-HH41).

We believe the area of note can be listed in the HH List by reference to a geologically defined area: the “Greymouth Coalfield” (see map below). Anchored within the area delineated by the Greymouth Coalfield are some acknowledged historic taonga and monuments – the Brunner Mine site (HH53-57) in the south on the eastern side of the Southern Paparoas, and north to Blackball (HH48-52), and on the western side of the Paparoas, the Rūnanga Miners’ Hall (HH47) up to the Strongman Mine memorial. The towns involved would include Dobson, Stillwater, Blackball, Taylorville, Runanga, Dunollie and Rapahoe - as well as the sites of several old towns such as Rewanui, Wallsend and Brunnerton.

We also note that as a “Coalfield” is defined geologically as an area in which coal measures have been found, it is a scientific delineation that avoids the complications that can arise when defining areas in terms of land tenure.

The idea is two-fold:

1. To initiate a survey/study of the natural and built heritage of the area by Heritage NZ, evaluating it as a joined-up, holistic whole – in the way the Ruhr Region in Germany promotes and looks upon itself as an “industrial cultural landscape”, and the “Coal Region” is identified in eastern

Pennsylvania, USA. This exercise would enrich the geological definition of the initial listing we are proposing.

2. To add another evaluation lens to any proposals for large developments that may have substantial impact on the built or natural heritage within this zone.

We understand that a notation on the list of *West Coast Historic Heritage Items and Areas and Archaeological Sites* will not impose any sort of new preservation order over such an extensive area - which includes land variously controlled by the State, iwi and private owners – other than where that status already attaches to sites specifically acknowledged as having national heritage status (e.g., the Brunner site, Rūnanga Miners' Hall, and Blackball sites with Heritage NZ listings).

It is envisaged that this listing will mean that subsequent proposals for substantial new developments in the area should then be required to give some consideration as to how they might affect the “Heritage Dimension” of the *Historic Mining Area of the Southern Paparoas*.

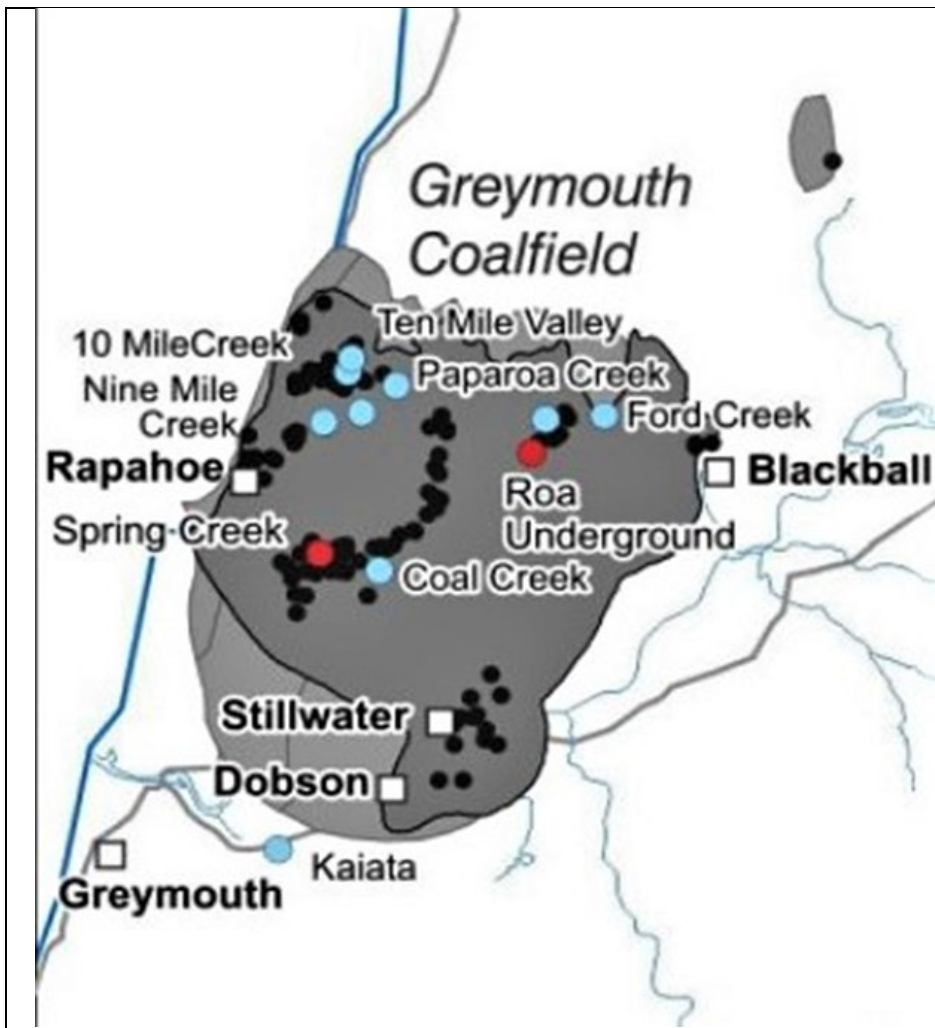
Similarly, future, and existing proposals might be promoted by reference to the “Heritage Dimension” of the new *Historic Mining Area of the Southern Paparoas*; for example, the establishment of a network of 26 or so Southern Paparoa walking/cycling trails based on historic mining infrastructure tracks, rail and tramways which have stood the test of time (as initially proposed c2015).

We see this proposal as a way to promote, protect and market the heritage values of the Southern Paparoas in relation to the industrial, social and economic history of New Zealand. A heritage evaluation (undertaken by Heritage NZ) will be a useful educational overlay - specifically covering the area and infrastructure of the coal-mining activity in the Southern Paparoas since the 1860s.

We note that there will be other initiatives which will sit alongside and enhance the concept of *The Historic Mining area of the Southern Paparoas*. For instance, there is clearly some geographic cross-over with some of the considerations around the status of the Paparoa National Park and areas nearby. We see those concerns relating more to the "natural heritage" of those areas, while we are trying to raise the profile of an integrated zone of both "built heritage" and natural environmental features. But the initiatives should compliment each other.

As residents of the area with a passion to explain the unique nature of the history that has been made in the Southern Paparoas, we commend the concept of the recognition of the *The Historic Mining area of the Southern Paparoas* as one of the *West Coast Historic Heritage Items and Areas and Archaeological Sites*, within the Te Tai o Poutini District Plan.

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Taken from: **Mineral resource assessment of the West Coast Region, New Zealand**

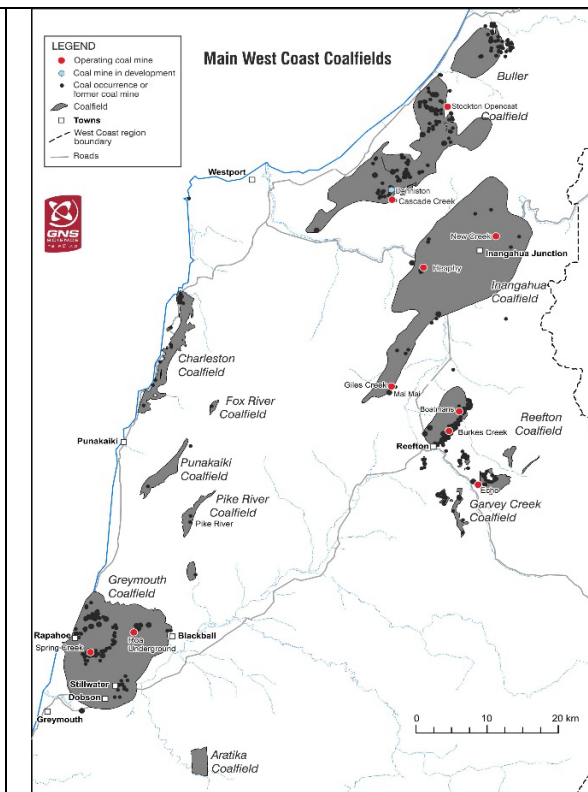
A.B. Christie
R.G. Barker
R.L. Brathwaite

(GNS Science Report 2010/61 November 2010) P68

LEGEND

- Operating coal mine
- Coal mine in development
- Coal occurrence or former coal mine
- Coalfield
- Towns
- West Coast region boundary
- Roads

Nb – the status of some of the mines marked has changed since 2010



Nb – through designating the proposed *Historic Mining area of the Southern Paparoas* by reference to the “Greymouth Coalfield” - which is a defined geological area mapped over many years by the Institute of Geological and Nuclear Sciences Limited (GNS Science, Te Pū Ao) - we are delineating the area for recognition from other historic coal-mining locales on the West Coast (including Pike River) which are separate Coalfields (see map left). Many of these other Coalfields already have local or national historic recognition.