



pure kiwi mettle

NEW ZEALAND'S ALUMINIUM SMELTER

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MEDIA STATEMENT

Preliminary Closure Study outlines work programmes in event of NZAS closure

New Zealand's Aluminium Smelter (NZAS) has today released the findings of its Preliminary Closure Study, outlining for the Southland community the detailed work that will take place to remediate the site as part of any future closure.

NZAS Chief Executive and General Manager Chris Blenkiron commented, "The Preliminary Closure Study is an important step in the NZAS closure and progressive remediation programme.

"While we do see a positive long-term future for the smelter to operate beyond 2024, we have progressed this study to understand what work is needed to remediate the site and provide reassurance to the Southland community," said Mr Blenkiron.

The Preliminary Closure Study provides an initial overview of key work programmes that would be undertaken, including:

- Removing of all Spent Cell Lining (SCL) material to be recycled for alternative use. This will be achieved through a combination of export and on-site processing, and NZAS is seeking to accelerate this process irrespective of the closure date.
- Relocating the current landfill to a new lined and capped landfill at a higher elevation on the Tiwai Site
- Demolishing existing assets and removing foundations to a depth of 1.5 metres
- Remediating contaminated soil to an industrial standard, noting any future alternative land use will be identified in due course.

Progressive remediation activities to remove waste and improve our environmental performance will take place where possible while operations continue.

The Preliminary Closure Study's central case has been developed based on a closure date of December 2024, with closure activities estimated to take place over a ten-year period after the end of operations. An extension to operations beyond 2024 would see some activities take place in advance of closure and reduce the timeframe for the successful remediation of the site.

Mr Blenkiron commented, “As a producer of some of the highest quality, lowest carbon aluminium in the world, NZAS is well placed to supply economies focused on decarbonisation. Rio Tinto does see a positive pathway for NZAS to continue operating and contributing to the local and national economy beyond 2024, and is working closely with Ngāi Tahu, government, Southland and key industry leaders to find the best way to achieve this.

“We will remediate the site, whether we stay beyond 2024 or not, and this Preliminary Study shows we have the right plans in place. In the meantime, work is already underway to remove waste and improve our environmental performance. We are also in the process of updating our financial accounts and will release the updated rehabilitation and closure provision in May 2022.

“While we do see a positive future post-2024, we also acknowledge the important work being done by the Southland Just Transitions Working Group and have provided them with the Preliminary Closure Study,” said Mr Blenkiron.

The closure plan contained within the Preliminary Closure Study is not final and further work is needed to develop and confirm a final closure plan. This will include further environmental monitoring and stakeholder engagement, and the completion of a Final Closure Study.

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Note

Closure study documents released today can be found on the NZAS website [here](#), and include:

- NZAS Preliminary Closure Study Document
- Infographic - April 2022 Remediation Update
- Ecology Environmental Study Report
- Geology Report
- Sea Level Rise Impact Assessment
- Closure Socio-economic Impact Assessment Report

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