

By now you will be well aware of the rock fall on the north wall which happened just before 5.00am on Tuesday 26 April. Approximately two million tonnes of rock has fallen from the wall. In this Update we explain why it occurred and what happens now.

Were we expecting this rock fall?

There was a smaller rock fall on 2 April last year. After this all mining in the open pit was halted. We have been monitoring the north wall using a sophisticated radar system and a range of other devices. This monitoring told us that the wall was moving. We advised the community of the likelihood of another rock fall on 20 April. We closed a section of the Pit Rim Walkway at that time.

Why did this slip happen?

The effects of historic underground mining beneath the north wall combined with the rock structure of the wall as seen in the 2 April 2015 slip weakened the area.

What happens now?

We wait. There is still unstable material which will fall. While we are waiting for this to happen we will determine the safest way of dealing with the fallen material and stabilising the north wall. Then we can determine the safest way of re-entering the pit. In the meantime any work near the slip has stopped. We are continuing to upgrade the perimeter road to the south of the pit and have moved a short section fence near the viewing area at the Cornish Pumphouse. This activity is unrelated to the 26 April rock fall.

How long will all of this take?

It will take months rather than weeks to determine the best course of action. The rock fall you can see on the north wall will be staying there for quite a while yet. We will keep the community informed as we work through the issues and develop strategies and timeframes.



We have placed information sheets around the pit rim as well as delivering additional information to residents adjacent to the north wall.

HOW STABLE IS THE REST OF THE OPEN PIT?

Monitoring of the other walls shows that the movement was restricted to the section of the north wall which has fallen. There may be some subsequent smaller rock falls as the area settles. There are certainly some very large boulders within the slip area that will fall.

Can the Pit Rim Walkway still be used?

We have rerouted a northern section of the walkway onto a public road. The remainder of the walkway is open.



This photo was taken with our quadcopter a few hours after the rock fall. It clearly shows the amount of material that has fallen out of the wall and how much is in the bottom of the open pit.

Can we just shut the mine and walk away?

Our consent conditions require us to leave the walls of the open pit in a safe and stable condition. This is clearly not the case at present. We cannot leave the north wall as it is. Irrespective of whether we find a way to safely re-enter the open pit and resume mining or whether it is determined this will not be possible, the wall must be left safe and stable.

Will the rock fall have any effect on underground mining at Correnso?

Although the rock fall looks dramatic, its effects are limited to the north wall of the Martha open pit. Mining operations at Correnso have not been affected.

Work underground continues as usual.



Quadcopter photo taken late last week.

WILL THERE BE ANY JOB LOSSES?

After the 2 April 2015 slip mining in the open pit ceased. With no work available the Macmahon Contractors contract was terminated. About 50 people lost their jobs at this time. Mining had not resumed when the most recent rock fall occurred, so there will be no jobs lost as a result of this event.