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THE AGGREGATE & QUARRY
ASSOCIATION OF NZ

Aggregate News

AGGREGATE & QUARRY ASSOCIATION OF NZ

Setting us up for the future

So here we are in 2026. Last year may not have been a full year of delivery but it certainly finished impressively with the Government's announcements on RMA reform and Drury being the first quarry to get an application through the fast-track hoops.



As someone who's worked most of my life at Drury with Stevenson Aggregates, I am thrilled to see our Sutton Block confirmed – and indeed the application praised – by the Fast-track Expert Panel. As you'll see from the story on page 4 there was commendation for a very high standard application. I mention this firstly to acknowledge the good work of my colleagues but also to indicate that to others in our sector that if you put in the effort, the results will be rewarded. In our case that happened in just 85 days; in the past, 850 days would have been amazing.

It's also great to see that similarly quick time frames for consents have been inserted in the two new Bills replacing the RMA (see story page 6). Also under the legislation, environmental offsets and compensation can now be more generally accepted where avoidance or mitigation is not practicable.

The Sutton Block provides an example of how the environment can be the winner in such situations. Stevensons is replanting 62ha across the Drury site and implementing pest and weed control on another 108ha. We are also doing planting and wetland restoration at Tuakau Quarry and more planting at the Drury Islands in Manukau Harbour.

I think the AQA can take some real credit for the resource management wins, including the pre-Xmas changes to four national direction instruments. Also, our development of a draft National Environmental Standard for Quarrying that is now with the Government. We trust it can be adopted and implemented.

As a board we recently farewelled Peter Walsh who provided a lot of wise counsel and valued input over his years of service, which included time as our Chair. Many thanks Peter on behalf of all of us in the industry.

Incoming board member, Fulton Hogan's South Island Quarries Manager, Kelvyn Jolly, says in his profile article he will bring his operational experience to the table. I am sure he will do that in spades.

At the other end of the experience ladder, it is delightful to see that Jade Piper, who works with the small AQA/MinEx/NZ Minerals Council team in Wellington, is giving up some of her Saturdays to operate quarry machinery. (Story page 5).

Jade is the embodiment of the spirit that sees our next Komatsu Women in Extractives event in Hamilton on March 26. I exhort you to champion diversity and inclusion in our sector across the three categories of Leader of the Year, Emerging

Star and the Kristy Christensen Memorial Award. Get your nominations in by the end of this month. Details are available from office@aqa.org.nz.

Speaking of getting in paperwork, it's a shame some regions simply aren't doing their bit in reporting production. As you'll see AQA Technical Adviser Mike Chilton's update on NZPAM's official data for the 2024 calendar year, we as an industry reportedly produced 35.8 million tonnes (6.8 tonnes per person); in fact we know it's a really around 47 million tonnes (around nine tonnes plus per person). The stats, such as they are, do show how our returns are lifting, so that is very welcome.

Two regions – Waikato and Nelson-Tasman – have really seen huge drops in reported production. Can we all start this new year with a resolve to get our tonnages into NZPAM for 2025 and again in 2026? If we want the Government to continue taking our industry seriously, we need to have real data about what we actually contribute to this nation. **AQA**

Jayden Ellis
Chair, AQA

After five years, four instruments resonate

Changes announced in late December to four national instruments – specifically designed to assist quarrying and mining – were the best Christmas present for the industry, says AQA CEO Wayne Scott.

The Ministry for the Environment said the changes simplify and align consent rules for quarrying and mining, making them clearer and less restrictive.

The four instruments are the National Policy Statements (NPSs) for Indigenous Biodiversity, Freshwater Management, Highly Productive Land and Freshwater Management, and the National Environment Standards for Freshwater.

“We have been working for five years for these changes. They reduce some of the niggling complexities that quarries can face,” says Wayne Scott.

“They do not, however, as some opponents claim, open the door to environmental destruction. That is not something the resources industry has sought, nor wants.”

Wayne says another notable change has been made in the NPS for Infrastructure to make it clearer that quarrying can be included in the definition of activities supporting infrastructure.

These changes all took effect from 15 January 2026.

The amendments to quarrying and mining provisions within the four national policy instruments include these changes:

- The NPS for Indigenous Biodiversity has aligned terms to describe quarrying and mining activities, an amended gateway test and definitions for quarrying activities and ancillary activities.
- The NPS for Freshwater Management adds an "operational need" test in relation to quarrying and mining (clause 3.22).
- The National Environmental Standards for Freshwater changes the discretionary activity status for quarrying, minerals and ancillary activities affecting wetlands by adding "operational need".



Five years of work has paid off for New Zealand quarrying and mining.

- The NPS for Highly Productive Land aligns terms to describe quarrying and mining activities, removes the definition for aggregate extraction, introduces definitions for quarrying activities and ancillary activities and amends the quarrying and mining gateway tests.

The Ministry for the Environment says by adding an "operational need" test, standardising terminology and broadening benefit criteria, the amendments reduce compliance barriers and support Government priorities for infrastructure and growth, while retaining environmental safeguards.

The amended gateway tests remove the requirement for benefits to be "public" and allow broader consideration of benefits (including private and regional).

The requirement for an effects management hierarchy (avoid, remedy, mitigate, offset, compensate) is maintained.

MfE says councils must take immediate

steps with regard to the above changes in provisions when making consent decisions. All existing national direction under the RMA will be reassessed and restructured to ensure it aligns with the goals and framework of the new planning system established by the new Planning and Natural Environment Bills.

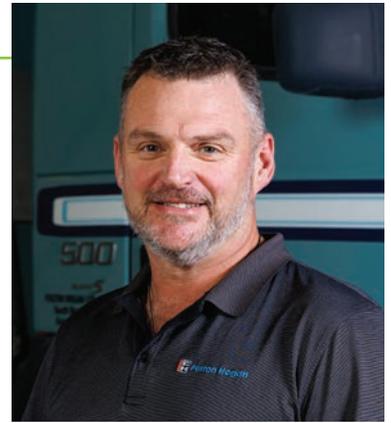
It says the policy intent of the changes to national direction under the existing RMA will be transferred to the new system as appropriate, as will the intent of other changes previously considered.

“We have worked hard with officials to help them understand the issues the quarrying sector has with resource consenting. These changes go a long way to ensuring consenting pathways exist for quarries in any environment,” says Wayne.

“This national direction should now flow through to the Natural Environment and Planning Bills currently being consulted on.” **AQA**

Operational focus for new AQA Board member

Kelvyn Jolly has 25 years' operational experience in quarries and that's what he plans to bring to the AQA Board table as its newest member.



Kelvyn Jolly

He replaces another Fulton Hogan senior executive, Peter Walsh, and attended the last Board meeting of 2025.

Kelvyn grew up in Christchurch, spending a large part of his teenage years around the Rakaia River huts, fishing and duck hunting. He left school after the sixth form.

"I was never super academic." After starting work as a truck driver for a Canterbury transport company, he became foreman of seven staff in an operation that included screening bark and mulch products.

In 2001, a mate suggested he apply for the job he was vacating at Fulton Hogan. Allan McDowell was the Canterbury Divisional Manager at the time and he saw Kelvyn's potential and gave him the job of foreman at one of the company's mobile crushing plant operations.

He was soon operating FH's mobile plants from Oamaru to Kaikoura. "I had a reasonably mature outlook at a young age and could see opportunities if I applied myself."

Allan encouraged him to do his B-Grade CoC in 2008. Kelvyn was promoted to managing Fulton Hogan's Pound Road quarry on the outskirts of Christchurch. He was later appointed to Quarries Operations Manager and gained an A Grade CoC along with also completing his Site Senior Executive qualification. He has spent the last six years as Divisional Manager of the Canterbury quarries.

When interviewed for this story, Kelvyn was a month into his role as South Island Quarries Manager, visiting the joint venture operation Fulton Hogan has with HWR Group at Southern Aggregates. He was then driving to Fulton Hogan's Central Otago Parkburn quarry and returning home via Blackhead Quarries JV in Dunedin then onto Oamaru Shingle Supplies, another JV.

He acknowledges the helping hands he has had in his career and says a primary focus for him will be looking out for the 100-plus staff employed across the mainland, even though not all are direct reports.

"My main passion is to identify key people and help them grow."

As an outgoing personality, Kelvyn also likes engaging with those buying quarry products. "I really like the customer side of it and ensuring everyone gets a quality outcome."

When not at work or at home in Kirwee with his partner Sarah-Jane Clark, Kelvyn likes to head for the hills and hunt; a 13-pointer stag head is a home feature.

"I love getting outdoors in the big wide, open, away from the city lights and where the cell phone stops ringing."

Kelvyn has adult sons, Cameron and Ryan, both in their early twenties. Cameron trained as an auto electrician and is now working towards a qualification in radio communications; Ryan became a light diesel mechanic and has embarked on getting his heavy diesel ticket.

Being in management is not always straight forward and he says keeping mountain fit helps provide mental toughness and clarity when under pressure.

Now he's entering the world of governance with a place on the Board of Oamaru Shingle Supplies (a JV owned by FH with Firth) as well as his new role with the AQA Board.

He's keen to learn more about where industry issues sit and the role the AQA plays in seeking change through activities such as advocacy.

"I'm very strong on how we operate sites and think a lot of the planning and regulations miss the operational side. I will be trying to ensure what we want to achieve can actually be done." **AQA**

AQA works for the quarry industry – join us today

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AGGREGATE & QUARRY ASSOCIATION OF NZ

Supporting New Zealand from the ground up





This graphic shows the scale of the new Sutton Block site.

One of our biggest quarries gets fast-tracked

One of our country's largest aggregate quarries – in Drury – is the first to be given Fast-track approval for its Sutton Block development.

The application, lodged last April by Stevenson Aggregates, was given the green light by a Fast-track panel in December.

The existing quarry produces around 3.5 million tonnes of aggregate per year with an estimated 20 more years of supply. The Sutton Block pit covers 108 hectares north-east of the existing operation. The new quarry pit will be developed to a maximum depth of RL-60 metres over five stages to provide a projected 240 million tonnes of aggregate over half a century of supply.

Development prior to the Sutton Block's commissioning includes a stream diversion and haul road construction. Given consent has only just been granted, Stevenson has not put a time frame on commissioning the new quarry.

Stevenson Consents Manager, Jo Young, says multiple environmental mitigations played a big part in the consent.

This includes 62ha of revegetation planting across the Drury site and 108ha of pest and weed control. In addition to planting at the site, riparian planting and wetland restoration is also proposed at Tuakau Quarry and planting at the Drury Islands in the Manukau Harbour.

Stevenson has also received consent for an 8.2MW solar farm adjacent to the Drury Quarry that, in the future, will power the quarry's electric crusher and conveyor system and allow additional electric-powered infrastructure in the Sutton Block.

Infrastructure Minister Chris Bishop and Resources Minister Shane Jones hailed the Fast-track approval, saying aggregate is essential for Auckland's growth as it supports housing, construction and infrastructure and the Sutton Block extension will help meet the city's demand. They noted the need to have

quarries near demand centres, repeating the AQA's statistic that aggregate cost doubles after the first 30 kilometres is travelled.

The approval took just 85 working days and the Ministers said without Fast-track, gaining approval would have involved navigating multiple, costly layers of consents, over a far longer time frame.

In its decision, the Expert Panel noted the Sutton Block quarry is an expansion to a quarry operating for over 80 years. They said its development has long been provided for within the existing planning regime. The project also benefitted from the site-specific knowledge and experience gained from the operation of the existing Drury Quarry.

"Many of the methods proposed for the development and operation of the Sutton Block quarry are 'tried and tested,'" it said.

The Expert Panel also said while quarrying inescapably has actual and potential adverse effects on the environment, including off-site effects, Stevenson Aggregates did a significant amount of work to ensure adverse effects were fully and appropriately avoided, remedied, mitigated or offset where avoidance was not possible.

It said the application was of a very high standard and endorsed Stevenson Aggregates consultation and engagement with mana whenua to protect the historic Kaarearea Paa site which sits south of the Sutton Block.

Stevenson also obtained consent in November for a sand quarry on Newcombe Road near Cambridge with an estimated 7.5 million tonnes of sand and an anticipated life of 25 years. **AQA**

Jade drives a dump truck

While many young Wellington women might regard Saturday morning as a good time to rest or recreate, Jade Piper is driving big machinery at a quarry.

Jade will be familiar to some in the quarry industry as the key support and administrator for Wayne Scott in his alternate role as CEO of MinEx.

She accompanied Wayne last year to the Fulton Hogan/Higgins joint venture at Horokiwi Quarry on the hills above the Hutt Expressway where, as AQA CEO, he was judging its entry for the 2024 MIMICO Environment and Community Award.

Quarry Manager Matt Hill recalls Jade saying she liked big machinery – which led to a repeat visit last March. “I asked her if she would like to come and operate a dump truck on a Saturday and she jumped at the chance.”

Now, Jade is often there doing a five and a half hour shift driving a fully loaded 70-tonne Caterpillar dump truck, making the average four trips an hour with material from the top of the quarry to the crusher plant.

Matt Hill says such work requires someone who is extremely sensible.

“When Jade comes down the hill, if anything goes wrong, she’s got 70 tonnes of material behind her back.”

More recently, Jade has also been at the controls of a Komatsu 850 excavator, the biggest in the fleet.

“I love it,” Jade says. “It’s good fun and good money but my mum finds it pretty terrifying.”

Jade did get some advice from her tradie partner Nik Harrop about working in an all-male environment such as Horokiwi (though it has had women staff previously).

“He just said, ‘Go on, you’ll work it out’. And that’s what I do – if it’s something I want to try, I just get stuck in. Even in a male-dominated space, the team has been supportive, and it’s easy to reach out when I need a hand.”

Jade credits her workmates for always being prepared to share their experience. “They are always there to help. It’s a dangerous job at the end of the day. If you are doing something wrong, you’ve got to take the feedback.”

Matt Hill says Jade understands the risks and the need to operate safely in a quarry, adding that she provides a breath of fresh air.

“You can see the boys acting a bit differently.”

He says some people can operate a dump truck, others a loader but Jade can do both. “She’s got the right attitude.”

There are also other benefits having Jade in the role, given she has a day job working on extractives’ health and safety issues.

“If there’s a discussion here on regulations or health and safety,



Jade aboard the Komatsu 850 excavator she sometimes operates along with a dump truck.

Jade can say why it is required. We are getting the benefit of that as well.”

So does Jade see a possible future career in quarrying?

“It’s been great learning more about the industry and I’m excited to see what opportunities might come with time.”

But for now, she’s enjoying the best of both worlds, her weekday work with AQA and MinEx, where she’s constantly picking up insights she can take into the quarry and her Saturday mornings on the machines.

• *If you have someone like Jade on your workforce, please consider nominating them for the Komatsu Women in Extractives event in Hamilton on March 26. Nominations close at the end of February. **AQA***

RMA changes good for quarries over time

The coalition Government’s replacement bills for the Resource Management Act should work well for quarries. The bills include property rights as a guiding principle, a narrowed scope of regulable effects, standardised zones and rules, competitive urban land markets and higher thresholds for objections.

AQA CEO Wayne Scott says one significant change proposed under the new Planning Bill is a maximum time frame for the approval of a resource consent.

A quarry facing a fully notified hearing would have a decision within six months or, if extensions of time are sought, a year at most. A simple permit needs to be approved in 45 days and no more than 90.

“Such consents would occur within a fraction of current consenting time frames with all the resultant extra cost and frustration that delays bring to quarries,” Wayne says

Another significant change he sees within the Natural Environment Bill is changes to the hierarchy of effects management. To date, the courts have tended to say environmental effects must be avoided as a first principle and then the hierarchy of mitigate, offset etc applied if effects cannot be avoided. The Bill allows for offsets and compensation where avoidance or mitigation are not practicable.

Wayne says various national direction instruments will be critical to allowing the new legislation to work.

The coalition Government has already consulted on National Policy Statements for Freshwater, Indigenous Biodiversity and Highly Productive Land.

The AQA engaged KC Bal Matheson, a resource management law specialist, to help draft a National Environment Standard for Quarrying.

“This is now with the Ministry for the Environment and government, and is about 85% complete,” says Wayne. “It would sit nicely alongside the other developed national instruments.”

Permit applications for natural resources (including quarries) are discretionary, unless provided for in a national direction such as the NES for Quarrying.

Councils will be looking to national direction under the two new bills. Some 17 Regional Spatial Plan Committees are to be formed

to develop Natural Environment Plans but these can be existing planning committees already established by councils.

An applicant’s compliance history can be considered in any resource consent application and they can now include an adaptive management approach.

“This will be useful for quarries that may start small and grow over time,” says Wayne.

Existing appeal rights to the Environment Court remain and the option of taking it to a new Planning Tribunal has been added. The latter will be a faster, more streamlined process for dealing with minor issues or appeals.

Both bills define “affected persons” as a qualifying resident of the district or someone directly affected by the application.

“That will mean a group like Coromandel Watchdog can’t object to a West Coast mining or quarrying proposal.”

Wayne also believes it will be largely backed by the Labour Party, which would mean a further round of substantial change is not likely under any change of government.

“The coalition Government could have saved us all time by simply amending the previous reforms of the RMA. We have two main bills with similar aims and even names. The key changes are around iwi engagement requirements which are less complex and time-consuming in these two bills.”

Wayne adds the bills still need to go through the Select Committee process before likely enactment later in 2026. The changes, including national directions, will then need to be embedded in by councils.

“It’ll be a couple of years before quarries start seeing the benefits but these are broadly welcome changes; let’s hope bipartisanship can seal them in.” **AQA**

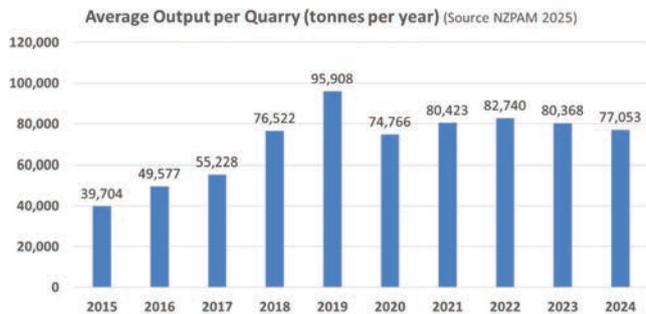
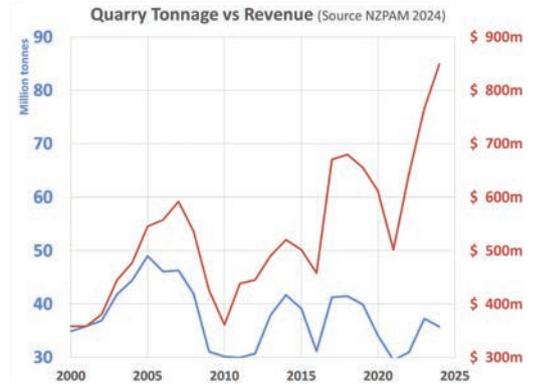
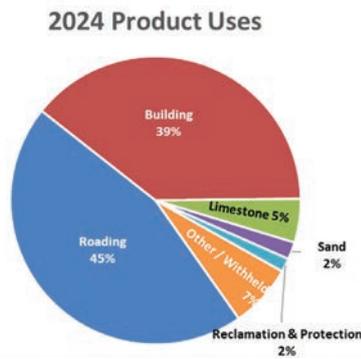
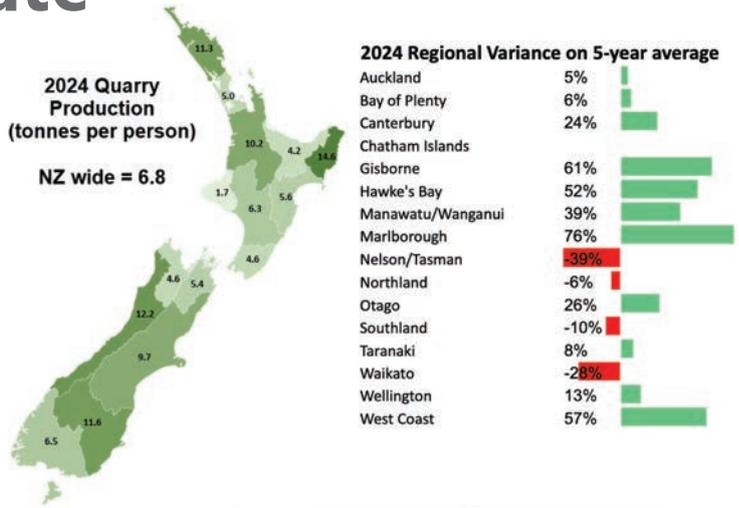


AQA Technical update

NZPAM Quarry Production Data Released

- Thank you very much to the 431 quarries that provided data to New Zealand Petroleum and Minerals for the 2024 calendar year.
- The official total aggregate production for 2024 was 35.8 million tonnes (6.8 tonnes per person) with average output dropping slightly to 77,000 tonnes per quarry.
- Total revenue generated increased healthily to \$849 million (\$776 million in 2023), on par with revenue generated from gold and silver mining (\$850 million).
- There was a large increase in the percentage of aggregate supplied for building (39%) compared to previous years with roading dropping back to 45%.
- Lack of reporting from the Waikato region led to the Gisborne region taking the title for the first time ever for officially highest production per person – at 14.6 tonnes.
- Gisborne, Hawke’s Bay, Marlborough and West Coast all reported total production increases over 50% from their 5-year average, a significant increase! **AQA**

Mike Chilton, AQA Technical Adviser



<p>AQA Board https://aqa.org.nz/our-members/</p> <p>Chair Jayden Ellis Stevenson Aggregates</p> <p>Deputy Chair Mike Higgins J Swap Contractors</p>		<p>Aggregate & Quarry Association of NZ PO Box 10668 Ground floor, 93 The Terrace Wellington 6140 0800 469 272</p> <p>Chief Executive Wayne Scott wayne@aqa.org.nz 021 944 336</p> <p>www.aqa.org.nz</p> 	
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