

March 8 2022

Media Release from AQA

Featherston quarry approval emerges as river sources deplete

Featherston quarry operator Peter Warren says he's pleased a long and challenging process to get approval for a new quarry on the outskirts of the town has concluded.

South Wairarapa District Council last week approved the consent for PJ Warren Earthmoving to process extract and process gravel on a 30 ha Underhill Road site. It said an external consultant planner assessed the application and recommended it did not need to be publicly notified as all affected parties had given their written approval.

Peter Warren says the consent process was rigorous and followed the RMA process. "We are very pleased that resource consent has been issued and we can now focus on providing a much-needed local source of aggregate to south Wairarapa. We are very conscious of being good neighbours and the operation will only occur during weekday working hours and is subject to a number of other conditions to mitigate effects on neighbouring properties."

The SWDC consent, required for land use, follows one granted in 2020 by the Greater Wellington Regional Council which focused on any environmental effects to water and air. This consent had allowed material from the Underhill Rd site to be extracted but not processed there. Extracted material had been trucked to PJ Warren's principal site on Diversion Road, bordering the Tauherenikau River.

Aggregate and Quarry Association CEO Wayne Scott says new land-based quarries are critical with extraction from rivers around the country reducing as the effects of climate change impact on river flows and rock resources deplete.

"We are increasingly having to look to land-based quarries to provide the rock, stone and sand that were often once sourced from riverbeds. Such supplies are crucial when we have a housing and infrastructure boom as these materials form the very foundation of every building and road."

Wayne Scott says getting a resource consent for a new quarry is an exhausting and exhaustive process.

"Councils like South Wairarapa's are obliged to look at all the effects including a community or region's need for quarry materials. Almost inevitably, you'll get one or more opponents but the decision-making process is very robust."

Wayne Scott says quarries fully expect to have environmental and resource management requirements put in place for new or renewed consents. PJ Warren Earthmoving faces the need to meet a range of environmental requirements on noise, dust and transport issues.

"I know Peter wants to work collaboratively with the local community and council to reduce environmental impacts and meet community expectations of an environmentally sustainable operation."

Contact: Wayne Scott, AQA CEO 021 944 336