

July 14 2022

Media Release from Aggregate & Quarry Association

Auckland faces crisis shortage of core building materials

Auckland, already importing one truckload in six of the quarried materials it needs for infrastructure and housing requirements, may see many more delivery trucks coming into its region within a decade.

That projection today from Steve Riddell, Managing Director of Kaipara Quarries whose Brookby operation is one of Auckland's big three sites producing more than 80% of the region's need for aggregate which forms the foundation of all construction.

The keynote speaker to the QuarryNZ conference in New Plymouth says currently Auckland imports 2.2m tonnes of aggregate – most from Waikato – to supplement 11.1m tonnes of local production.

Steve Riddell says if Auckland's population grows to its high end forecast of 2.5m residents by 2033, this combined with tens of billions in infrastructure spending, could see the region's aggregate needs double – and most might have to be imported.

He says there is no shortage of aggregate within Auckland but the cost and time of getting resource consents have ballooned out of control. It had taken 7 years for Kaipara's existing Brookby quarry in south Auckland to get approval just to apply for a resource consent to expand its operations. New quarries took even longer to secure and he was not aware of any new quarry being developed in Auckland for many years; however, several major production sites had closed, with imported materials partly meeting the deficit.

Steve Riddell says other regions face similar challenges. Kaipara's Waikato quarry last year quoted to supply \$280,000 worth of aggregate for Transmission Gully because of Wellington shortages; the trucking cost was more than three times as much.

The supply did not proceed but Aggregate and Quarry Association CEO Wayne Scott says Transmission Gully did use materials from Taranaki, causing huge trucking and carbon costs

“Taranaki, which is hosting our conference, has more than 40 operating quarries - 13 within 20km of New Plymouth. Auckland has only 9 quarries between Bombay and Puhoi and Wellington only 4 south of the Kāpiti Coast.”

He says the cost of rock and aggregate in Taranaki is amongst the lowest in the country because people can source it from a nearby local quarry; in contrast, Wellington has only a handful of quarries and Auckland was now facing a potential doubling of its aggregate requirement.

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