

Submission to Kaipara District Council from the AQA on the Kaipara Exposure Draft District Plan

September 2022

Introduction

The Aggregate and Quarry Association (AQA) is the industry body representing construction material companies which produce 50 million tonnes of aggregate and quarried materials consumed in New Zealand each year.

Funded by its members, the AQA has a mandate to increase understanding of the need for aggregates to New Zealanders, improve our industry and users' technical knowledge of aggregates and assist in developing a highly skilled workforce within a safe and sustainable work environment.

We would like to thank the Kaipara District Council for the opportunity to comment on the [Kaipara Exposure Draft District Plan](#).

General Comments on Aggregate

Importance of Aggregate

Aggregate (crushed rock, gravel and sand) is an essential resource for the construction sector, for housing and transport infrastructure, and for climate change adaptation.

Due to unprecedented levels of construction and infrastructure development activity, there is growing demand for aggregate which is in short supply in many parts of New Zealand including the Kaipara region.

Characteristics of Aggregate

Aggregate is a locationally constrained resource. Quarrying can only occur where suitable aggregate resource exists.

It is therefore important that the District Plan does not shut off access to potential aggregate resources. Council planning must identify where the rock and sand is located and protect those areas from other development and alternative land uses.

Due to its weight and volume, aggregate is very expensive to transport. An additional 30km travel typically doubles the cost of aggregate. This highlights that shifting large

volumes from outside the region or far from where it is to be used is very expensive and would increase the cost of many of the proposed projects.

Quarrying and the Kaipara District Plan

Clearly, the quarry sector has an important role to play in providing the necessary aggregate for the current and future growth of Kaipara and the wider region and it needs to be accommodated in the District Plan. This means planning for new and expanded quarries in Kaipara to reduce the need for importation of aggregate from further afield.

Provisions Relating to Quarrying in District Plan

Earthworks

Quarrying and other mineral extraction activities are managed in the Earthworks chapter, as is clearly specified in the Overview section of the chapter.

It is important that provisions relating to quarrying within the chapter are clearly differentiated from other provisions as quarrying activities are typically significantly different activities from general earthworks.

To avoid confusion and potential duplication and inconsistency it should be made clear in the EW chapter that earthworks associated with quarrying activities are exempt from the provisions in the earthworks chapter that don't relate to quarrying, and likewise it should be made clear which ones do.

Definitions

The definitions of **Earthworks**, **Quarry** and **Quarrying Activities** are taken from the National Planning Standards. We support the use of these definitions and National Planning Standards definitions generally throughout the draft plan to avoid confusion and potential duplication.

Objectives

We support the intent of **EW-O4** which is to “efficiently and effectively manage the District's mineral resources recognising the social and economic benefits of such resources, while ensuring any adverse effects associated with quarrying and mining are avoided, remedied, or mitigated.”

We are pleased with the reference to the social and economic benefits. Recognising these is important, particularly in light of the Government's moves in the upcoming resource management reform to plan for positive outcomes and not just manage adverse effects.

With regard to the last part, adverse effects needing to be 'avoided, remedied or mitigated.' We support this but we argue that in keeping with the effects management hierarchy, 'offsetting' and 'compensation' should also be available to companies and need to be included in the wording of these subclauses.

Policies

We support the intent of the policies in the Earthworks chapter relating to quarrying i.e. **EW-P9, EW-P10 and EW-P11**.

Quarrying and mineral extraction activities - EW-P9

We support Policy EW-P9, but we reiterate the point made above that 'offsetting' and 'compensation' should also be available in keeping with the effects management hierarchy.

Managing conflicts between quarrying activities and other land uses - EW-P10

We fully support the need to manage potential conflicts between quarrying activities and other incompatible and sensitive land use activities. However, we note that "reverse sensitivity effects" work in two directions and there needs to be safeguards so that residential activity and other sensitive activities do not impede on existing mineral extraction activities.

We fully support the use of planting and/or screening from existing quarry operations as set out in the policy.

We support the use of setbacks to ensure that incompatible activities are not established in close proximity to existing or future mineral extraction activities to avoid potential reverse sensitivity effects. This would safeguard the benefit and amenity of neighbouring activities and residents as well as the interests of the quarries.

We note that **EW-S3**, which relates to setbacks for general earthworks, is not clear in terms of the distance from the boundary and secondly not relevant to quarrying.

We support **GRUZ-S4**, Setbacks for reverse sensitivity, which specifically require all buildings used for sensitive activities to be set back 500m from the site boundary of any existing mineral extraction or quarrying activity.

Rehabilitation of quarry and mining sites - EW-P11

We support **EW-P11** which requires sites used for mineral exploration and extraction to be rehabilitated to enable the land to be used for other activities.

Aggregate extraction is a temporary land-use whereby the aggregate material is extracted and processed before the area is rehabilitated to a former use, or an alternative and/or enhanced use. Responsible environmental management using best practice approaches is an integral part of any aggregate extraction and processing venture.

Activity Status

We support the Discretionary Activity Status for quarrying activities in the General Rural Zone and Rural Production Zone as specified in **EW-R7**.

Ecosystems and Indigenous Biodiversity

We support the council waiting for finalisation of the National Policy Statement on Indigenous Biodiversity before providing this chapter for consultation. This is likely to be of importance for the quarrying sector and others and we recommend that an exposure draft of the Ecosystems and Indigenous Biodiversity chapter be released for consultation before the Proposed Plan goes out for consultation.

We support protecting Outstanding Natural Features and Landscapes from inappropriate subdivision, as is required under the Resource Management Act. At the same time, it is important that some flexibility is available for quarrying to access a consenting pathway. Such a pathway will enable environmental effects and outcomes to be dealt with on a case-by-case basis.

Natural Features and Landscapes

We support **NFL-P7** which provides for assessment of the scale and significance of effects of development on the characteristics and qualities of outstanding natural landscapes and outstanding natural features.

We support **NFL-R14** which provides for mining and quarrying as a Discretionary activity outside the coastal environment.

Coastal Environment Overlay

As with Natural Features and Landscapes, it is important that quarrying can access a consenting pathway within the Coastal Environment Overlay. This coastal area is very large and provides considerable access to quarried materials

We support **CE-R13** which provides for mining and quarrying as a Discretionary activity in the coastal environment.

Wayne Scott

Chief Executive Officer

[Aggregate and Quarry Association](#)

wayne@aqa.org.nz

021 944 336