

Case Study: Drury Quarry Fast Track Approval

Quarry NZ Conference |
July 2026

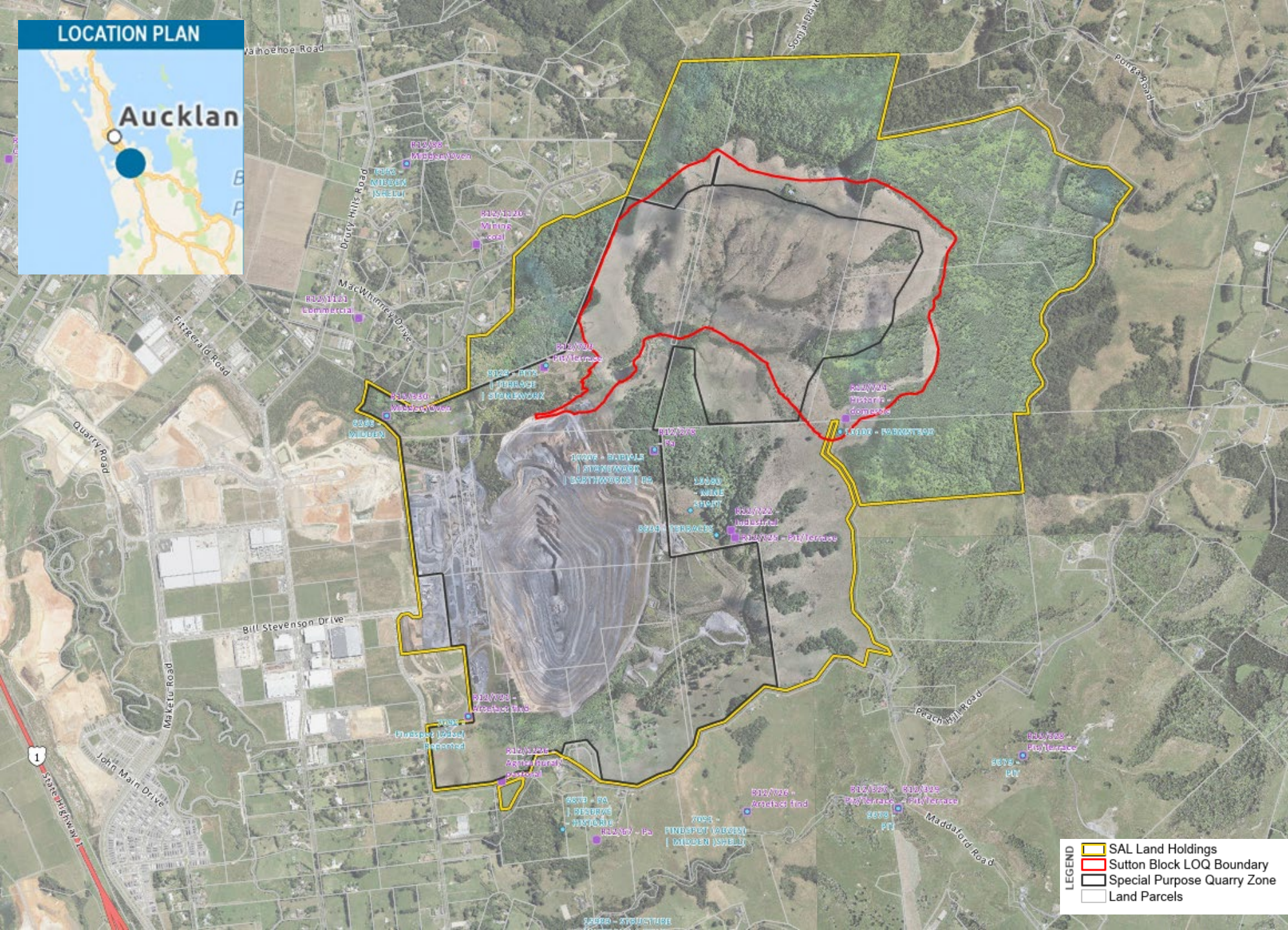
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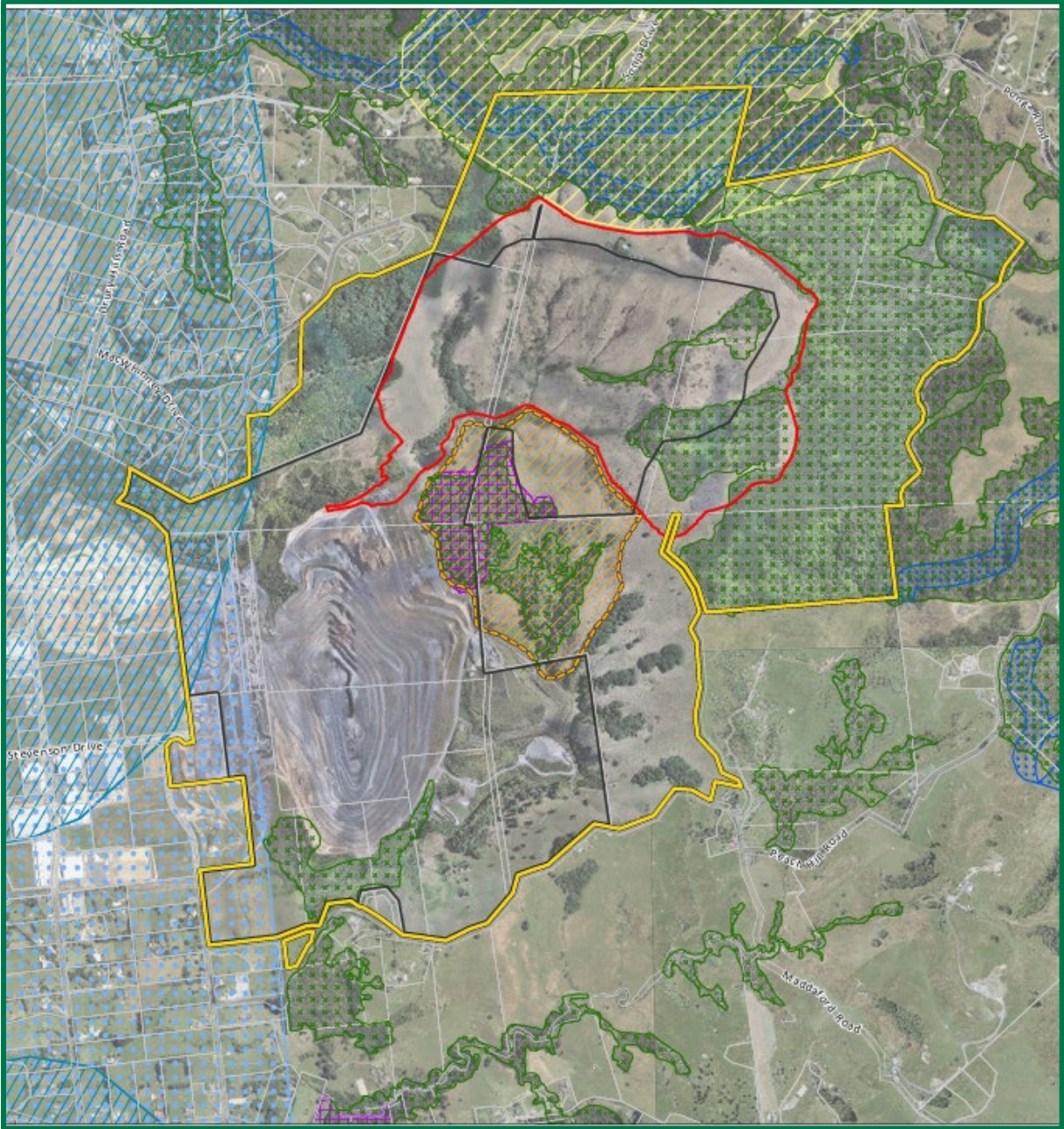
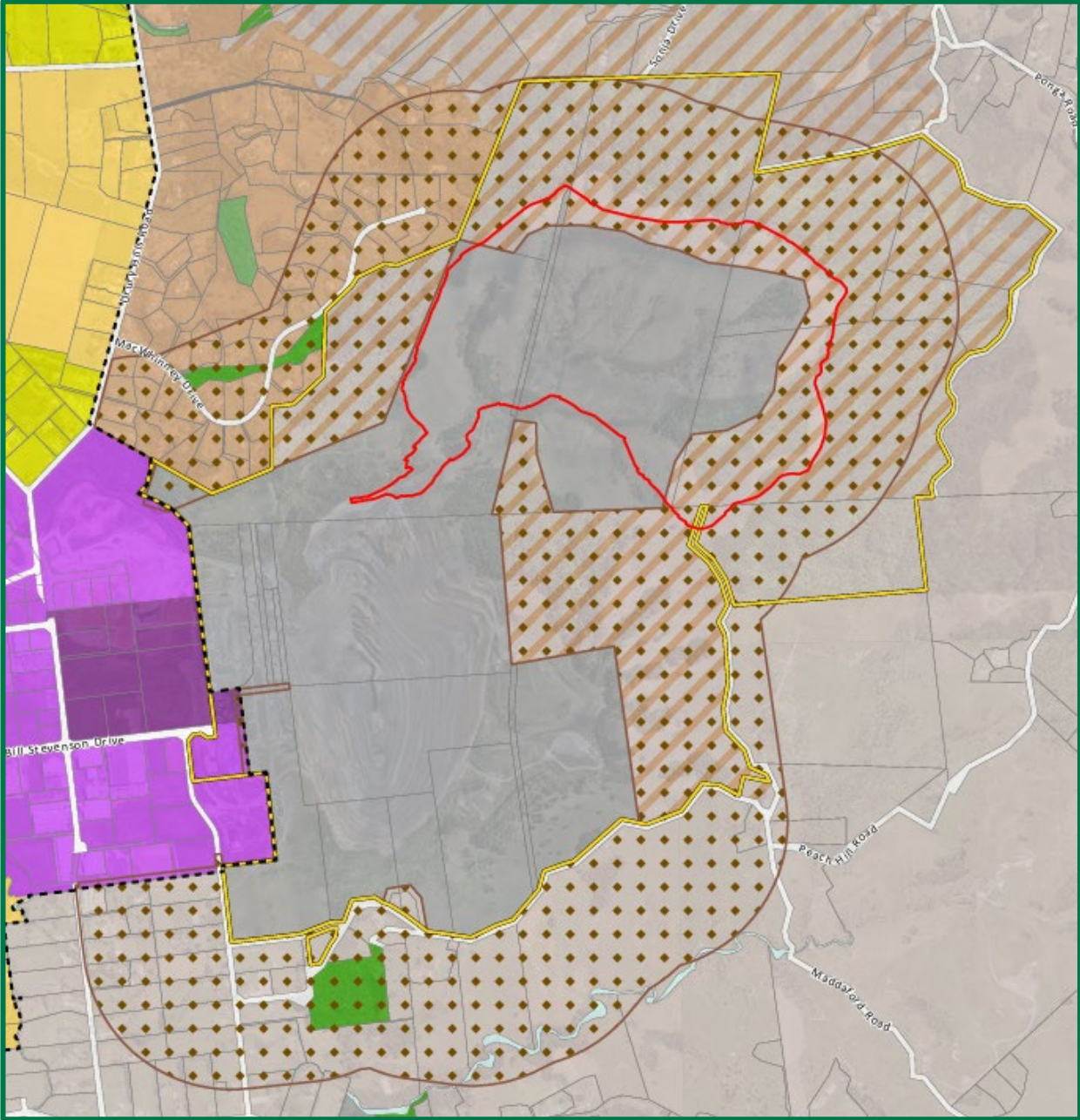
LOCATION PLAN

Auckland

Drury Quarry Sutton Block Expansion



Sutton Block Planning Context



Sutton Block by the numbers

240 Mt

Aggregate resource

5 Mt/year

Production rate

108 ha

Pit footprint

50 years

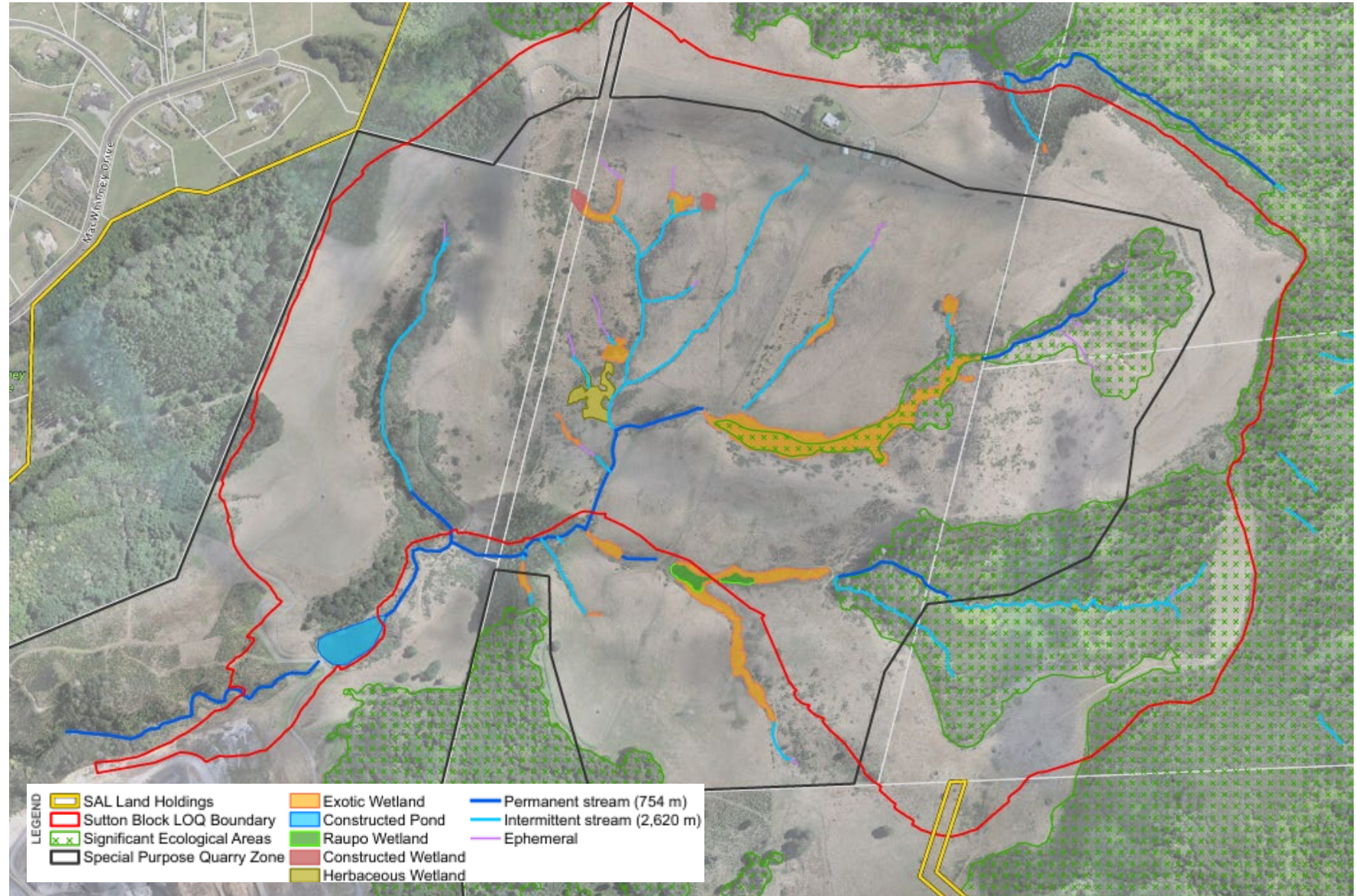
Across five stages





Sutton Block Application Complexity

- Wildlife approval
- Heritage NZ approval
- Wetland reclamation
- Stream reclamation
- Stream diversion
- Removal of SEA
- Groundwater take

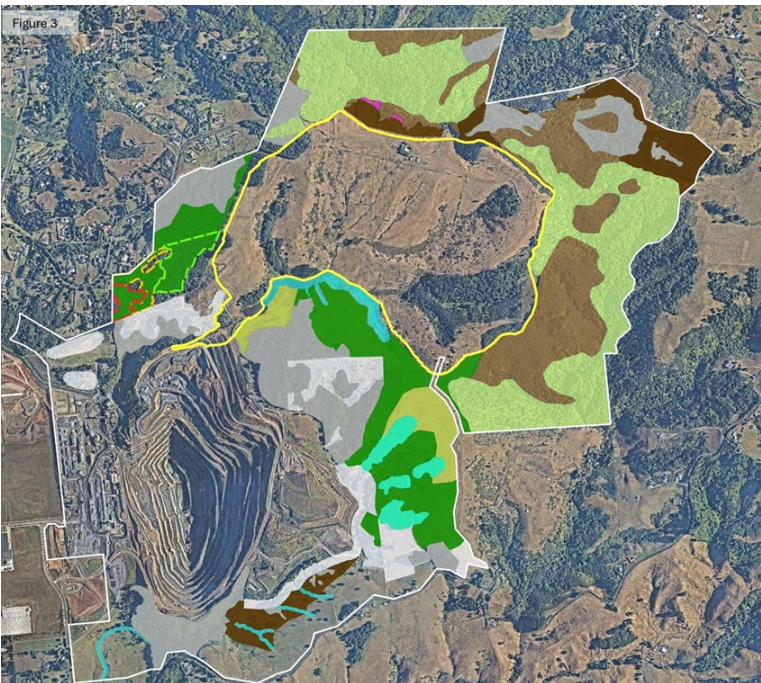


Sutton Block Ecological Mitigation



Sutton Block Ecological Mitigation

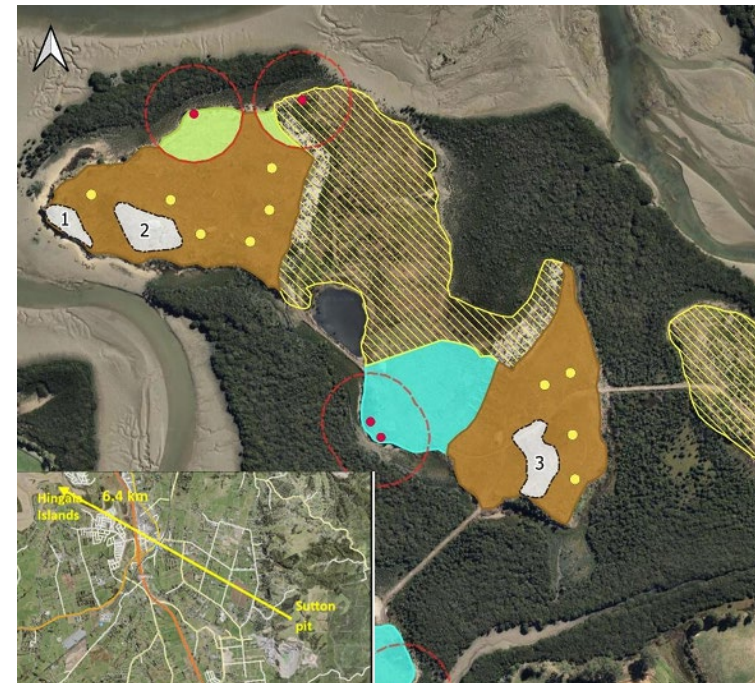
Sutton Block



Tuakau Sand Quarry and Farm



Ngā Motu o Hingaia



Fast-track Approvals Act vs Resource Management Act

PURPOSE—s3 FTAA

*“The purpose of this Act is to facilitate the delivery of infrastructure and development projects with **significant regional or national benefits**.”*

What this means in practice

- ✓ Shifts focus to economic benefits, not just effects on the environment
- ✓ Regional and national benefits become the project's trump card
- ✓ Anchor every approval in a clear, evidenced benefits case

PURPOSE—s5 RMA

*“The purpose of this Act is to promote the **sustainable management of natural and physical resources**.”*

What this means in practice

- ✓ Effects on the environment are a central consideration
- ✓ Decisions require balancing use, development, and environmental protection

Fast Track Timeline – Drury Quarry Sutton Block

108 ha pit | 240 Mt resource | 50 years | 5 Mt / year

2007
Sutton Block Zone
Change

**May 2021 –
March 2024**
Application Preparation
under RMA

Before FTAA application preparation
3 years

October 2024
Sutton Block listed
in FTAA Schedule 2

February 2025
FTAA enacted

After FTAA application preparation
12 months

1 Apr 2025
Application lodged
under FTAA

11 Dec 2025
Final decision

Application processing
8 months



8 MONTHS from lodgement to final decision

Traditional RMA Timeline – Roydon Quarry

170 ha pit | 30+ Mt resource | 40+ years | 625,000 t / year



Cost Comparison – Fast Track vs Traditional RMA

	Fast Track – Sutton Block	Traditional RMA – Roydon Quarry
Cost	✗	✗
Duration	✓	✗
Flexibility	✗	✓
Appeal Risk	✓	✗

The Fast Track Process – Reality & Key Challenges

The Good

- ✓ Actually fast
- ✓ One-stop shop (RC, Wildlife and Heritage Act Approvals)
- ✓ Limited submissions and appeals
- ✓ Conditions no more onerous than necessary

The Not So Good

- High upfront costs
- Stressful and time-consuming
- Intense workload peaks
- Two-stage process (referral + substantive)
- Less flexibility once referral is locked in

5 Lessons from the Fast Track process

1. Plan. Plan. Plan.

- Get the pit design correct.
- **S**pend the time to flesh out the proposal and set a strong but adaptable strategy.
- Take the time to choose the right consultant team.
- Engage as early as possible with Mana Whenua, community, council and other key stakeholders.
- The FTAA rewards preparation, not improvisation.



“The Application was of a very high standard, responses to comments and the reports received have been detailed and careful, and all of the Panel’s requests for further information have been comprehensively addressed.”

2. Invest in relationships with Mana Whenua

- Genuine partnerships from the beginning helps shape design and builds your strongest advocates to the panel.
- Engagement forced us to consider less sensitive environments and find alternatives, where possible.
- Determine, as a collective, what was the best outcome for the whenua
- Acknowledgement of the necessity for quarrying alongside the significant history of the area.



3. The environmental bar has not lowered

- Quarrying is not forgiving in sensitive environments.
- Upfront preparation of management plans and not simply relying on conditions of consent.
- Environmental outcomes are still a significant consideration under the FTAA
- Large amount of scrutiny still.



4. Expect legislative change

- Changing definitions and positions – NES Freshwater
- FTAA was new and no certainty it will remain beyond the next election.
- First quarry to be tested and with every decision comes more learnings and interpretation



5. Focus on conditions

- Work with Council early in the process
- Utilise s83 to test the appropriateness of conditions
- *“When exercising a discretion to set a condition under this Act, the panel must not set a condition that is more onerous than necessary...”*
- Each condition must be tied to a specific reason in the Act.

“

The Panel notes in particular the work undertaken between the Applicant and Auckland Council with regards to the draft proposed conditions for the resource consents. These participants were already working on the conditions prior to the Panel’s appointment, and as a result the conditions were well-advanced.

The Panel thanks the Applicant and Auckland Council for their proactive and collaborative work on conditions. ”

— Drury Decision, para 84-86

Questions & Discussion

Jo Young

Environment Manager

Stevenson Aggregates Limited

jo.young@stevenson.co.nz

