

**BEFORE THE INDEPENDENT
HEARINGS PANEL HUTT CITY
COUNCIL**

UNDER

The Resource Management Act 1991

IN THE MATTER

Of the Proposed Lower Hutt District Plan

Hearing Stream 6: Infrastructure

**Statement of evidence of Colin Robert
Hopkins on behalf of Winstone Aggregates
Ltd (Planning)**

07 September 2026

1. Executive summary

- 1.1. This statement of evidence addresses Winstone Aggregates (**Winstone**) submission points within scope of Hearing Stream 6: Infrastructure.
- 1.2. The majority of Winstone's relief has been accepted or accepted in part, and I support the officer recommendations in those respects.
- 1.3. One submission point relating to High Trip Generating Activities was not accepted. Having reviewed the officer's reasoning, I consider the recommended approach appropriate, noting that the quarry's existing use rights provide a clear and established pathway recognising the existing vehicle movements, and that the Transport chapter provides a workable consenting framework for any future increases to trip generation.
- 1.4. Winstone did not submit on the Three Waters or Renewable Energy Generation chapters. I therefore offer no evidence on those topics.

2. Introduction

- 2.1. My full name is Colin Robert Hopkins. I am a planning consultant at DCS, a planning consultancy based in Auckland.
- 2.2. My statement of evidence on behalf of Winstone is in relation to those matters to be heard within Hearing 6 of the Proposed Lower Hutt District Plan (**PDP**).
- 2.3. I have reviewed the Section 42A Reports for Hearing Stream 6 and the relevant submission points made by Winstone.
- 2.4. I am familiar with the Belmont Quarry and Hayward Quarry (which is known as the Dry Creek Block) sites and their operations, as well as the planning context for quarry activities within Lower Hutt.

3. Qualifications and relevant experience

- 3.1. I hold a Masters in Planning Practice from the University of Auckland (2004) and a Bachelor of Arts from Otago University (2002).
- 3.2. I have 21 years of experience in the planning profession in New Zealand and Scotland, including nine years in government roles and twelve years in the private sector. I have worked for:
 - a. Auckland City Environments (2004-2007);

- b. Aberdeenshire Council (2007-2008);
 - c. Auckland City Environments / Auckland Council (2008-2014); and
 - d. DCS Planning Limited (2014 – present).
- 3.3. I have extensive experience in the preparation and assessment of resource consent and plan changes applications for private clients and the Council, and have previously worked as a Principal Planner and Team Leader within the Auckland Council Resource Consents Department.

4. Expert Witness Code of Conduct

- 4.1. I have prepared my evidence in compliance with the Code of Conduct for expert witnesses set out in the Environment Court's Practice Note 2023. I confirm that my evidence is within my area of expertise and that I have not omitted to consider material facts known to me that might alter or detract from the opinions that I express.
- 4.2. I have qualified my evidence where I consider that any part of it may be incomplete or inaccurate, and identified any information or knowledge gaps, or uncertainties in any scientific information or mathematical models and analyses that I am aware of, and their potential implications. I have stated in my evidence where my opinion is not firm or concluded because of insufficient research or data or for any other reason and have provided an assessment of my level of confidence, and the likelihood of any outcomes specified, in my conclusion.

5. Scope and structure of evidence

- 5.1. In this statement, I address the following chapters to the extent that they relate to the submission points by Winstone:
 - a. Infrastructure and Protection of Infrastructure
 - b. Transport
- 5.2. This evidence identifies where I agree with the Section 42A recommendations, and provides commentary on the implications for the quarrying activities.
- 5.3. Winstone did not submit on the Three Waters or Renewable Energy Generation chapters. I therefore offer no evidence on those topics.

6. Involvement with the applications

- 6.1. I was engaged by Winstone following the close of submissions and further submissions on the PDP. My role is to provide planning advice in relation to the submissions on the PDP to the Infrastructure Chapters, and to support Winstone in responding to the recommendations made in the Section 42A reports for Hearing Stream 6.
- 6.2. In parallel with this work, I am also assisting Winstone with the preparation of applications under the Fast-track Approvals Act 2024 (**FTAA**) for the listed project at Belmont Quarry. This includes advising on planning matters relevant to the overburden disposal area, and the integration of fast-track approvals with the current and proposed District Plan framework.
- 6.3. In preparing this evidence, I have reviewed and relied on the following material in relation to the submissions:
 - a. Winstone Aggregates Submission on the PDP, and Further Submissions.
 - b. The Council Officer's s42A Report: Infrastructure and Protection of Infrastructure.
 - c. The Council Officer's s42A Report: Transport.
 - d. The Council Officer's s32 Evaluation Report: Infrastructure
 - e. The Council Officer's s32 Evaluation Report: Transport.

7. Background and reasons for Submissions

- 7.1. Winstone operates the Belmont Quarry, a regionally significant source of aggregate. Winstone's submissions on the Proposed District Plan sought targeted refinements to ensure the plan continues to provide an enabling and effects-based framework for quarry operations, consistent with national direction and the functional and operational needs of mineral extraction.
- 7.2. For Hearing Stream 6, Winstone's submissions were limited and primarily supportive. The relief sought focused on ensuring that transport and infrastructure provisions do not inadvertently constrain quarry operations, and that the plan appropriately recognises the role of mineral resources.

8. Infrastructure and the Protection of Infrastructure

- 8.1. Winstone sought recognition of the importance of mineral resources and quarrying activities within the district. This was addressed through submission points 444.8 and 444.9, which requested amendments to the strategic direction to better acknowledge mineral extraction. The reporting officer does not accept the specific drafting sought, but recommends addressing the relief by introducing a new strategic objective INFSD-07 recognising mineral resources and quarrying activities. I consider this recommended approach appropriate, as it responds to the intent of Winstone's submission and provides an improved policy foundation for the Quarry Zone and associated overlays.
- 8.2. The officer's other recommended amendments to the Infrastructure Chapter are largely technical and improve clarity and usability. None of the recommended changes adversely affect quarry operations (including the partial acceptance of submission point 444.7), and I support the officer's recommendations in full.

9. Transport

Transport Facilities and Highly Constrained Roads

- 9.1. Winstone supported the general approach to transport facilities and the Highly Constrained Roads overlay. This support was recorded under submission point 444.22, which the reporting officer recommends accepting in part. I agree with the officer's recommendation to retain the effects-based framework for transport facilities and to maintain the targeted Highly Constrained Roads overlay. These provisions do not affect quarry operations and provide appropriate clarity for plan users.

High Trip Generating Activities

- 9.2. Winstone requested that the quarry be specifically recognised within the High Trip Generating Activities framework under submission point 444.23. The reporting officer recommends rejecting submission point 444.23.
- 9.3. Having reviewed the reasoning, I consider the recommended approach by the Council Officer to be acceptable.

- 9.4. The quarry is an established activity with existing use rights that already authorise its current level of vehicle movements (500 vehicles per day)¹. The plan provides a clear pathway for minor increases through TR-R3(1)(c), which permits up to a 5% increase in vehicle movements for existing activities. This ensures that modest operational changes can occur without triggering a resource consent, and provides a practical, effects-based mechanism for managing incremental growth.
- 9.5. Beyond the consideration that existing use rights apply to the activities at Belmont Quarry, I have also considered Council's general approach to High Trip Generating Activities in Table 8, which sets out activity types rather than specific sites. Introducing a site-specific reference to Belmont Quarry would be inconsistent with that structure. I also acknowledge that any provision relating to quarrying activities would apply district-wide, and not only to the established Belmont Quarry. In this context, the officer's recommendation maintains consistency in the application of the High Trip Generator framework. On balance, the notified provisions are workable and do not constrain the quarry's established operations. The combination of existing use rights and the permitted 5% increase provides a clear and appropriate pathway for ongoing activity at the site.

10. Overall Conclusion and Recommendation

- 10.1. In summary, the officer recommendations appropriately address Winstone's submissions on the Infrastructure and Protection of Infrastructure, and Transport chapters. The accepted relief provides a clearer and more robust policy foundation for mineral extraction, and the single non-accepted point relating to High Trip Generating Activities is acceptable given the quarry's established existing use rights and the practical consenting pathway provided through TR-R3 for minor increases in vehicle movements. The Transport and Infrastructure provisions, as recommended, offer a workable and effects-based framework that does not constrain the quarry's ongoing operations.

¹ Certificate of Compliance reference: RM240368 dated 5 May 2025

- 10.2. Overall, I consider the officer recommendations for Hearing Stream 6 to be appropriate and support them.



Colin Robert Hopkins

07 September 2026