BEFORE THE HEARING PANEL

IN THE MATTER	of the Resource Management Act 1991 (**RMA**)
AND	
IN THE MATTER	of Proposed District Plan for Lower Hutt
& IN THE MATTER	of Hearing Stream 4 (HS4)
SUBMITTER	Winstone Aggregates

STATEMENT OF COMPANY EVIDENCE OF PHILIP WAYNE HEFFERNAN ON BEHALF OF WINSTONE AGGREGATES

DATED: 3 July 2026

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INTRODUCTION

1.1. My name is Philip Wayne Heffernan, and I am contracted as a Principal Planner and a Project Manager at Winstone Aggregates (**Winstone**). I have been fulfilling these roles since 2023.

1.2. I hold a Bachelor of Applied Science degree in Natural Resource Management from Massey University, and I am an Associate Member of the New Zealand Planning Institute and a member of the Resource Management Law Association.

1.3. With over 20 years of experience in resource management and planning in New Zealand, I have worked in both the public and private sectors, managing planning teams, overseeing projects, preparing resource consent applications, providing expert evidence at hearings and resource management and planning advice to a diverse range of clients.

1.4. Prior to my work with Winstone, I served as the Planning Manager and Principal Planner at Wood and Partners Consultants from 2015 to 2022. Previously, I held positions with Babbage Consultants Limited, Jacobs (formerly Sinclair Knight Merz) and Auckland City Council.

1.5. In this instance, I am representing Winstone Aggregates and providing company evidence to support their submissions. I confirm I am authorised to give evidence on their behalf.

1.6. I confirm that I have complied with the Environment Court's Code of Conduct for expert witnesses, as stated in the Environment Court of New Zealand's Practice Note 2023. In preparing this company evidence, I affirm that my expertise covers the matters discussed unless I explicitly rely on the evidence of others. Moreover, I confirm that I have considered all material facts known to me that may impact or detract from my stated opinions.

2. SCOPE OF EVIDENCE

2.1. This evidence is presented on behalf of Winstone Aggregates in relation to the Proposed Lower Hutt District Plan (PDP) and Winstone’s submission (444) and further submission (F33).

2.2. As this is the Quarry Zone hearing, my evidence goes beyond a general description of Belmont Quarry and addresses the practical detail of how the notified and recommended Quarry Zone provisions may affect the existing operation.

2.3. In particular, I address:

- the existing operation and approvals framework for Belmont Quarry, the potential for changes to zoning provisions to disrupt existing operations;
- Winstone's engagement with Hutt City Council on the new zone and amenity overlays;
- the business case for removing the Quarry Amenity Protection Overlay, the need for investment certainty in relation to operational structures under QUARZ-S1; and
- the importance of the Quarry Zone Protection Overlay (QZPO) and notification or written approval where sensitive activities are proposed within it.

2.4. My evidence is intended to provide the company and operational context for the planning evidence of Mr Hopkins and the landscape and visual evidence of Mr Compton-Moen and Mr Exeter.

3. COMPLIANCE HISTORY AND CURRENT PLANNING FRAMEWORK

3.1. Belmont Quarry has a long and established history of operation, tracing back to the 1920s, with Winstone's continuous involvement since 1988. For well over 20 years, we have operated effectively under the existing Extraction Zone Area framework in the operative plan.

3.2. The quarry has an excellent compliance record under this existing framework. The current framework for the Extraction Activity Area has functioned well, without issue, for decades. Our historical compliance, even for activities like noise and vibration during past expansions and overburden disposal, demonstrates the effectiveness of our management. Certificates of Compliance issued by Council (e.g., RM110285, RM120025, RM240368) confirm that our operations, including blasting, noise, and dust, have consistently met strict environmental standards designed to protect surrounding environments and residents.

3.3. We are supportive of Hutt City Council's decision to update the District Plan and the move to a Quarry Zone (QUARZ). We see this as an opportunity to modernise quarry-specific plan provisions to reflect best practice and ensure the plan remains fit for purpose. However, any changes to the district plan rules and zoning need to be workable within existing operational parameters, respecting the long-established nature and legitimate existing rights of the quarry to operate.

3.4. It is important that the new plan accurately reflects the dynamic nature of quarrying, where landforms continuously evolve, and extraction progresses. Our operations are

managed through a comprehensive regulatory framework, including regional consents and a Quarry Management Plan (QMP). This QMP provides a structured and responsive approach to managing environmental effects and operational risks, covering aspects like slope stability, water management, erosion and sediment control, and progressive rehabilitation. The QMP sets out the intended end use of the site, when rehabilitation will occur, and the resulting landform and drainage pattern.

3.5. Furthermore, it is worth noting that earthworks associated with our extraction activities have historically been, and continue to be, explicitly excluded from the general Earthworks chapter of the District Plan. This highlights the long-recognised need for bespoke management approaches tailored specifically to quarrying operations, rather than attempting to fit them into generic district-wide rules.

4. STRATEGIC LOCATION: CLOSE TO MARKET, MANAGED FROM SENSITIVE ACTIVITIES

4.1. Belmont Quarry is one of the last remaining economically viable aggregate resources directly within the Wellington/Hutt area. Its continued operation is therefore exceptionally important to the Wellington region.

4.2. Belmont Quarry is a critical node in the Wellington Region's aggregate supply chain. It currently supplies approximately 40% of the region's total aggregate demand and more than 50% of its high-grade aggregate, including material used in concrete production, road surfacing, civil works, utilities and other public and private infrastructure. Because aggregate is dense, bulky and costly to transport, that supply cannot simply be replaced from more distant sources without increasing haul distances, project costs, emissions, road network effects and supply risk. Maintaining a workable planning framework for Belmont is therefore not only a site-specific issue for Winstone; it is a regional infrastructure and supply chain resilience issue.

4.3. Our established location provides the critical balance of being close to the market, which is indispensable for infrastructure and development, while also being positioned where our operations can be, and are, carefully managed in relation to other activities, such as residential areas. Winstone’s proactively manages potential effects through our QMP and adhere to high environmental standards.

4.4. There is a risk that general district-wide provisions, such as those relating to noise, transport, and earthworks, could inadvertently constrain our long-established, compliant operations if not appropriately integrated with the unique context of the Quarry Zone. This is precisely why bespoke controls are fundamentally necessary for

quarrying activities; they simply do not fit comfortably or effectively within more general rules designed for other, less resource-dependent land uses.

4.5. We have also proactively sought protections against reverse sensitivity effects. The Quarry Zone Protection Overlay (QZPO) is a key tool in this regard, preventing new sensitive activities from encroaching upon and unduly restricting our long-standing operations. This ensures that the planning framework supports the ongoing, efficient functioning of Belmont Quarry while managing its effects, recognising that the quarry is a long-established, lawfully existing activity. Winstone supports the QZPO as it is designed to address potential reverse sensitivity effects on quarrying activities from new land use in rural areas near the Quarry Zone.

5. AMENITY PROTECTION OVERLAY

5.1. The section 42A report identifies three Quarry Amenity Protection Overlay areas. In my view, it is important to distinguish Area 3 from the other areas. Areas 1 and 2 are not the same from an operational perspective, including because of their relationship to retired quarry areas, QEII covenant land and the proposed land exchange process. Area 3 is different.

5.2. Area 3 is within the existing Belmont Quarry setting and is land that has long been associated with, and set aside for, quarrying. It is not a new greenfield quarry site. It sits within the context of a long-established quarry and transport corridor, and it forms part of the operational and resource planning picture for Belmont Quarry.

5.3. There is a regionally significant aggregate resource associated with this part of the quarry. From Winstone's business perspective, removal of the Area 3 overlay is important because it enables access to a finite resource within an existing quarry, rather than forcing reliance on more distant or less accessible sources. The practical benefit would be increased access to the resource within the existing Quarry Zone, which in turn relates directly to the life, efficiency and resilience of Belmont Quarry and to the regional aggregate supply chain.

5.4. In practical terms, the Area 3 overlay currently restricts how the quarry floor can be worked and staged. Removal of the overlay would allow the quarry floor to be quarried in a more efficient and logical way, releasing additional rock within land that is already part of the established quarry setting. Based on Winstone’s current understanding of the resource and the efficiencies that would be gained, access to Area 3 could extend the life of Belmont Quarry by approximately 10 to 20 years. That is a material regional benefit because the gain would be achieved within existing quarry land, rather than by

establishing a new quarry or relying more heavily on more distant sources.

5.5. In my view the section 42A report places too much weight on the potential cost of removing the overlay, in terms of vegetation and visual amenity, and not enough weight on the benefits of enabling access to the resource in Area 3. Those benefits include continued local supply, reduced reliance on more distant sources, better use of land already committed to quarrying, operational flexibility, investment certainty and avoidance of sterilising a significant aggregate resource. In my view, the report does not acknowledge the constrained environment that quarries operate in, the difficulty in establishing a new quarry, including lack of suitable site and resource in proximity to Wellington, and benefits associated with sustainable use of existing quarries, versus the cost of establishing a new one outside of the district.

5.6. Mr Compton-Moen's landscape and visual evidence addresses the actual visual amenity effects of removing the Area 3 overlay. From a company perspective, Winstone's position is that where visual effects are limited and can be managed, the planning framework should not retain a broad overlay that offers little practical benefit and that prevents or materially complicates access to a resource of regional importance.

5.7. If the Area 3 overlay is retained, the practical effect is not simply the preservation of a vegetation area. It creates uncertainty around the availability of the resource and around the staging and investment decisions that depend on that resource. For a quarry with a long planning horizon, that uncertainty has real commercial and supply-chain consequences. While the Officer now suggests a consent pathway for quarrying within the overlay, which I consider is a step in the right direction, it does not provide necessary relief we seek. I note that this would require a discretionary consent, which, in Winstone’s experience, is likely to be subject to either very broad limited notification or a full publicly notified hearing for works within a Quarry Zone. Winstone consider that the primary focus of the Panel’s consideration should firstly be on whether the overlay is required in the first place to manage effects and whether it does that, or not. Having a consent pathway results in uncertainty and increased costs; it is only appropriate where the Panel finds that there is an effect to be managed by that rule.

6. QUARZ-S1: HEIGHT OF QUARRY OPERATIONAL STRUCTURES

6.1. Winstone seeks a targeted carve-out from QUARZ-S1 for quarry operational structures such as radio towers, cell towers, support structures and cement silos. From an operational perspective, that carve-out is important for investment certainty and for the ability to upgrade and replace plant over time.

6.2. Quarry operational structures are not the same as conventional buildings. They are typically utilitarian, narrow or plant-related structures that form part of the productive area of the quarry. Their location is driven by operational need, including plant configuration, material flow, safety, communications, dust management, storage, loading and dispatch requirements.

6.3. In practice, requiring a resource consent each time one of these structures exceeds the height standard can be disproportionate where the structure is located within the existing quarry floor, processing area, stockpile area or yard and is not on a ridgeline or external face. The key issue should be whether the structure creates a material visual effect beyond the quarry, not the height number in isolation.

6.4. The matters of discretion for a height breach include visual amenity and the effectiveness of screening or landscaping. In a productive quarry area, screening opportunities are often limited or impractical. Plant has to be located where it works operationally, where it is safe, and where it integrates with conveyors, haul routes, loading areas and stockpiles. Screening a silo or support structure with planting inside the productive area may be ineffective, unsafe, or inconsistent with quarry operations.

6.5. In my view, a case-by-case resource consent pathway for routine operational structures is unnecessary where a properly targeted exemption can avoid prominent skyline structures and still provide for the functional needs of the quarry. That approach would better reflect the operational reality of quarrying and avoid unnecessary delay and uncertainty for upgrades that may improve efficiency, safety and environmental performance.

6.6. I do not understand Winstone's relief to be seeking an unconstrained ability to place any structure anywhere in the Quarry Zone. The practical need is for a targeted exemption for quarry operational structures in the productive quarry area, where those structures are part of the ordinary operational character of the quarry and are not prominent skyline elements when viewed from outside the site.

7. QUARRY ZONE PROTECTION OVERLAY AND REVERSE SENSITIVITY

7.1. Winstone supports protection against reverse sensitivity effects. The QZPO is a key tool because it manages the risk of new sensitive activities establishing near the quarry and then seeking to constrain quarrying through complaints, consent conditions, expectations about amenity, or pressure on future approvals.

7.2. Reverse sensitivity risk is particularly important for quarries because quarry development is dynamic. To an outside observer, parts of a quarry can appear static,

quiet or inactive for long periods. However, those areas may be required in the future for extraction, overburden management, haul roads, plant, stockpiles, rehabilitation or other operational needs. A consent authority assessing a neighbouring residential or visitor accommodation proposal at one point in time may not have a full understanding of the future operating envelope without input from the quarry operator. Land may look unused for decades, because land banking of underlying resource is an essential part of long-term quarrying operations. It does not mean that that area will not be quarried or used for overburden in the future.

7.3. In my experience, reverse sensitivity issues often arise because people focus on the current snapshot of a quarry rather than the authorised and reasonably anticipated life of the quarry. A person may choose to live near a quarry during a quieter operational stage and later object when extraction, blasting, truck movements or overburden placement move closer to that interface. The fact that the quarry is compliant does not necessarily prevent complaints or pressure on the operator.

7.4. A recent practical example is Whangaripo Quarry in the Auckland region, operated by Rodney Aggregates, a joint venture between Winstone and Fulton Hogan. I understand that site is subject to a Special Purpose Quarry Zone and includes a Quarry Buffer Area Overlay. I also understand that a dwelling has recently been constructed within that buffer area, and that the landowner has submitted in opposition to current Whangaripo Quarry development consents. In my view, that example illustrates the practical reverse sensitivity risk that the QZPO is intended to manage. Once a sensitive activity establishes within a quarry buffer, it can become a basis for objection to ordinary, lawful or reasonably anticipated quarry development, even where the quarry is long established and the buffer has been identified for quarry protection purposes. It often forces operators to internalise effects or kerb development of the quarry to mitigate effects on properties and activities that should not have been there in the first place, resulting in sterilisation of quality aggregate resource.

7.5. For Belmont, the relevant operational effects include blasting, vibration, airblast, dust, truck movements, hours of operation, visual change, lighting, plant noise and the progressive movement of disturbed areas. These matters are managed, but they are also inherent in quarrying. They should be clearly understood before new sensitive activities are established or intensified within the QZPO.

7.6. For that reason, Winstone considers that the quarry operator should either be notified, or its written approval required, where residential activity, visitor accommodation or other sensitive activities are proposed within the QZPO. While Council officers are

experienced planners, they will not necessarily have the same understanding as the quarry operator of detailed quarry staging, operational constraints, future extraction areas, overburden requirements, plant locations, haul routes or other operational matters. In my view, the plan should include a clear mechanism that ensures the quarry operator is involved before sensitive activities are established or intensified within the QZPO.

7.7. I acknowledge that the section 42A report records a lack of Council complaint records from the QZPO area. In my view, that should not be treated as meaning the reverse sensitivity risk does not exist. It may indicate that the existing framework, separation and management practices have been effective to date. The purpose of the QZPO is to prevent future conflict, not merely respond after complaints have occurred.

7.8. Public notification may not always be necessary for applications within the QZPO. However, a requirement for written approval from the quarry operator for sensitive activities within the overlay, would ensure that the consent authority has access to the operational information needed to properly assess reverse sensitivity effects.

8. CONCLUSION

8.1. Belmont Quarry is a long-established, compliant and regionally significant quarry operating under a layered approvals framework that has developed over time. The PDP should preserve that workable framework while modernising the planning provisions through a dedicated Quarry Zone.

8.2. The Quarry Zone provisions need to recognise the dynamic nature of quarrying, the fixed-location and finite nature of the aggregate resource, the importance of Belmont to the Wellington regional supply chain, and the investment certainty required for long-term quarry operations.

8.3. For the reasons set out in this evidence, Winstone supports a clearer and more enabling Quarry Zone framework, including removal of the Area 3 Quarry Amenity Protection Overlay, a targeted QUARZ-S1 exemption for quarry operational structures, and stronger practical recognition of the need for quarry operator involvement where sensitive activities are proposed within the QZPO.

Signature 

Phil Heffernan authorised to give evidence on behalf of Winstone Aggregates.

Dated 3 July 2026

ATTACHMENT A QUALIFICATIONS AND EXPERIENCE OF PHIL HEFFERNAN

Career Summary	2023 - Now	Project Manager and Principal Planner Winstone Aggregates
	2022- Now	Director and Principal Planner 7Lab Limited
	2015 – 2022	Wood and Partners Consultants Ltd – Planning Manager and Principal Planner
	2014 – 2015	Babbage Consultants Limited - Planning Manager
	2012 – 2014	Jacobs – Auckland Environmental and Planning Team Leader
	2010 – 2012	Jacobs – Senior Planner
	2005 – 2010	Jacobs - (formerly Sinclair Knight Merz) - Environmental Planner
	2004 – 2005	Auckland City - Regulatory Planner
Qualifications	Bachelor Applied Science – Natural Resource Management	
Affiliations	Associate New Zealand Planning Institute	
	Member Resource Management Law Association	