

4 September 2026



Jennifer Caldwell  
Panel Convener to the Fast Track Panel

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Dear Jennifer,

Convener conference comments  
Oparure Quarry South-Western Pit  
(FTAA 2606-1251)

This letter responds to Minute 1 of the Panel Convener in relation to the application lodged by Graymont (NZ) Limited to the Fast Track Panel.

### Approvals

The application seeks approval for the following:

- the establishment and operation of a new haul road and the South Western Pit,
- quarrying activities that extend across the Digme-Camelot cave system,
- earthworks and vegetation clearance including those within 20 m of an entry or opening into a cave system within a Landscape of High Amenity or Karst Overlay,
- changes that will cause the loss of cave features,
- quarry activities including blasting,
- placing fill into a cave opening or system, and
- the establishment of an independent water supply for fire fighting purposes.

### Complexity

I consider that the application does have some Factual Complexity primarily in relation to the identification and certification of the Camelot Cave Buffer Zone and the technical matters associated with the protection of the Camelot Cave system. The application also has some sensitive tangata whenua issues associated with it. However the application provides a considerable amount of detailed technical information on which to base a decision.

### Issues

The applicant has engaged extensively with Waitomo District Council staff and those consultants for the RMA process from 2022 through to the end of the statutory RMA submission period in 2025. All technical issues raised over that period were addressed either through amended technical reports and/or amended draft consent conditions.

The FTAA Substantive Application includes all of the technical matters discussed through the RMA process in addition to improved technical information on cave system and ground vibration assessments and an updated set of WDC consent conditions.

## Panel Membership

The knowledge, skills and experience of the Fast Track Panel should include legal and planning expertise, experience with mana whenua issues and a familiarity with large scale aggregate extraction processes.

## Procedural Requirements

Waitomo District Council is willing to engage directly with the panel and the applicant on any matter necessary to efficiently advance the application. However, we are not well resourced and only have planning expertise engaged at present for this process. Waitomo District Council does not have an opinion on the decision timeframe and is willing to follow the direction of the Waikato Regional Council, where the more complex issues lie, on this matter.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'C Dawson', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Chris Dawson  
Planning Consultant to Waitomo District Council