

To: Chris Wedding, Ecology Lead, Kings Quarry Limited; Alexander Semenoff, Operations Manager, Kings Quarry Limited; Daniel Minhinick, Counsel; and Pamela Santos, Lead planner.

From: Matt Baber, Principal Ecologist

Date: 9 April, 2025

Subject: Terrestrial Ecology Peer Review

Introduction

This memo¹ sets out our peer review assessment of terrestrial ecology documentation to support the Kings Quarry Stage 2 Fast Track Approvals Act (FTAA) application. The conclusions presented below are informed by:

- A review of all relevant information found on the EPA website in relation to the previous Covid-19 Recovery (Fast Track Consenting Act 2020) application.
- A site visit on 17 January 2025 to the Kings Quarry site and the proposed offset/compensation site at Oldfield Road.
- Bioresearches' response to an internal Alliance Ecology Peer Review memo on available information dated 10 February, and corresponding updates to documentation prepared for lodgement including:
 - Kings Quarry Stage 2 Expansion: Ecological Impact Assessment, prepared by Bioresearches (April 2025)
 - Kings Quarry Stage 2 Expansion: Residual Effects Plan prepared by Bioresearches (April 2025)
 - Kings Quarry Stage 2 Expansion: Ecological Management Plan, prepared by Bioresearches (April 2025)
 - Kings Quarry Stage 2 Expansion: Residual Effects Management Plan prepared by Bioresearches (April 2025)
 - Proposed consent conditions (terrestrial ecology matters) April 2025.

The scope of this review excludes long-tailed bats, biosecurity matters and mammalian pest management, but relates to:

- the assessment of ecological characteristics and values
- the assessment of effects on those characteristics and values
- the effects management measures proposed to address adverse effects
- draft consent conditions.

Non-material inconsistencies or errors or last minute changes prior to lodgement that I have not reviewed are also excluded from the scope.

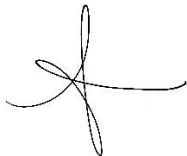
¹ In accordance with our Offer of Service of 18 November 2024.

My qualifications and experience relevant to this terrestrial ecology peer review are set out in **Addendum A**, attached.

Review Conclusion

I concur with the overall assessment of ecological effects and proposed effects management. Most notably:

- I consider the surveys to be comprehensive and commensurate with the ecological values present or potentially present.
- I agree with the description of ecological characteristics and values, including the assessment of ecological significance of habitat types present within the project footprint.
- I agree with the assessment of effects and the assigned level of effects before and after efforts to avoid, minimise or remedy effects for all impacted biodiversity values. Importantly, I consider that proposed onsite measures to avoid, minimise or remedy adverse effects will reduce the severity of effects to the extent practicable.
- I agree with the proposed residual effects management approach. Specifically, I consider that the proposed offsite habitat restoration and enhancement measures for addressing residual adverse effects are likely to generate net betterment outcomes, i.e., net gain outcomes (offsets) or net positive outcomes (compensation) with a high degree of certainty.



Matt Baber
Principal Ecologist / Director

Addendum A: Qualifications and experience – Matt Baber, Principal Ecologist/Director Alliance Ecology:

Qualifications

- PhD (Ecology) 2001 from Florida International University
- MSc (Hons) Conservation Ecology 1996 (University of Auckland)
- BSc. 1993 (University of Otago).

Certifications and memberships

- Certified Hearings Commissioner (since 2018)
- Department of Conservation lizard permit holder (63519-FAU)
- Environmental Institute of Australia and New Zealand (EIANZ)
- New Zealand Ecological Society (NZES)
- Ornithological Society of New Zealand (OSNZ)
- Society for Research on Amphibians and Reptiles in New Zealand
- National Wetland Trust

Previous employment

Tonkin + Taylor (2011 – 2019)

- Project Director/ Technical Director (Ecology) (2019)
- Group Manager (Ecology) (2017 – 2018)
- Team Leader (Ecology) (2016)
- Principal Ecologist (2014 – 2015)
- Senior Ecologist (2011 – 2013)

Auckland Council (2010 – 2011)

Team leader Biodiversity

Auckland Regional Council (2007 – 2010)

Natural Heritage Scientist

Ecovision (2004 – 2007)

Principal Ecologist/ Director

University of New Hampshire (2001 – 2004)

Postdoctoral Research Associate

Professional experience (selected)

38 Rawene Avenue helicopter application: (2023 – ongoing): Lead ecologist representing Quiet Sky Waitematā.

Bendigo-Ophir Gold Project for Santana Minerals Ltd (2023 – ongoing): Lead ecologist for the Fast Track Approvals application.

Kaihuku Wind Farm for Lochindorb Wind Limited Partnership (2023 – ongoing): Terrestrial ecology expert for the Fast Track Approvals application.

Huia Water Treatment Plant (2022–2023): Terrestrial ecology expert representing Auckland Tree Council in Environment Court mediation.

Brynderwyn emergency works for NZ Transport Agency Waka Kotahi (sub-consulting to WSP Limited)(Nov 2023 – ongoing): Lead herpetologist overseeing the development and implementation of fauna salvage and relocation operations.

Beachlands South plan change application for Beachlands South Limited Partnership (2022 – ongoing): Lead terrestrial ecologist and expert witness.

Pakiri sand mine resource application for Auckland Council (2022 – 2024): Environment Court expert witness in relation to coastal birds (including fairy tern /tara iti).

Water discharge resource consent renewal project for New Zealand Steel (2022 – ongoing). Lead terrestrial and wetland ecologist through the application stage and council hearing process.

Muriwai Downs Golf resort project for Auckland Council (2023). Lead coastal bird expert through the council hearing process.

Aupōuri Aquifer Water Permits for Aupōuri Aquifer Water User Group (2022): Environment Court expert witness on ecology matters.

Peacocke Structure Plan (Plan Change 5 for Hamilton City Council (2022 – 2023): Council reviewer and expert witness for terrestrial offset and compensation matters.

Manawatū Tararua highway for NZ Transport Agency Waka Kotahi (2020 – 2022): Lead terrestrial and wetland ecologist for the Assessment of Effects and co-lead for the development of the biodiversity offset and compensation package.

Auckland Regional Landfill for Waste Management New Zealand (2018 – ongoing): Lead terrestrial and wetland ecologist, and Environment Court expert witness.

Northern Pathway (Westhaven to Akoranga) for Waka Kotahi (2020 – ongoing): Lead terrestrial ecologist for the Northern Pathway Alliance.

Mill Road for NZ Transport Agency Waka Kotahi (2020 – ongoing): Lead terrestrial ecologist for pre-consenting phases for the Supporting Growth Alliance.

Mt Messenger Bypass Project for NZ Transport Agency Waka Kotahi (2017 – 2018): Ecology Lead for the Multi-Criteria Analysis phase.

Hamilton Section, Waikato Expressway for NZ Transport Agency Waka Kotahi (2018 – ongoing): Lead terrestrial ecologist for the construction phase, including the development of ecological management plans. Expert witness.

Waterview Connection for NZ Transport Agency Waka Kotahi (2011 – 2017): Lead terrestrial ecologist overseeing compliance on the Ecological Management Plans and consultation with stakeholders, including iwi.

Huntly Bypass, Waikato Expressway, for NZ Transport Agency Waka Kotahi (2011–2015): Lead ecologist for the effects assessment phase, including engagement with regulatory authorities and iwi. Expert witness at Council hearings.

State Highway 1, Puhoi to Warkworth motorway for NZ Transport Agency Waka Kotahi, 2015 – 2016): Ecology Lead through the tender, financial close and implementation phases, including overseeing consent compliance and stakeholder and iwi engagement on ecological matters.

Lower Waikato Flood Control Scheme Project for Waikato Regional Council (2014–2015): Lead wetland ecologist for a Section 128 review of consent to discharge water from Lake Waikare outlet into Whangamarino Wetland.

Transmission Gully for the Department of Conservation (2012): Expert witness for terrestrial ecology matters in the Board of Inquiry.

Regional Biodiversity Monitoring Programme, Auckland, New Zealand, Auckland Regional Council (2009 – 2010). Project managed the development and implementation of Auckland's regional lizard monitoring programme

Recent publications (selected)

Baber et al., 2025. The Biodiversity Compensation Model: a framework to facilitate better ecological outcomes. *New Zealand Journal of Ecology* 47(1).

Markham, J, Baber, M et al. 2022. Assessing limits to biodiversity offsetting in Aotearoa: a proposed framework. *Resource Management Journal*, November, 2022.

Quinn, Baber et al. 2021. Defining mitigation: an ecology perspective. *Resource Management Journal*, August 2021.

Baber et al. 2021. Wetlands and prohibited activity status: too blunt an instrument? *Resource Management Law Association News Brief* May 20, 2021.

Baber et al. 2021. The use of modelling for terrestrial biodiversity offsets and compensation: a suggested way forward. *Resource Management Journal*, April 2021.

Baber et al. 2021. A Biodiversity Compensation Model for New Zealand – A User Guide and Calculator Tool (Version 1). Prepared by Tonkin & Taylor Limited. Project number 1017287.0000P.