
MINUTE 2 OF THE EXPERT PANEL
Project Overview Conference
Oparure Quarry South-Western Pit [FTAA-2606-1251]
6 October 2026

Introduction

This minute records the recent procedural steps taken by the Expert Panel (Panel), addresses invitations to comment on the application under section 53 of the Fast-track Approvals Act 2025 (the Act), and advises of a request for information.

Project Overview Conference

- [1] The Panel records that in accordance with the directions set out in Minute 1 dated 29 September 2026, the Panel convened a project overview conference on 5 October 2026, during which the Applicant and their experts provided an overview of the application. Waikato Regional Council, Te Nehenehenui Trust and Oparure Marae were also in attendance. The Panel appreciated the effort that had been put into the presentation and the useful manner in which the information was presented.
- [2] A recording of the conference will be made available on the fast-track website as soon as practicable here:
<https://www.fasttrack.govt.nz/projects/oparure-quarry-south-western-pit/conferences,-workshops-and-hearings>

Site Visit

- [3] Subsequently, on 6 October 2026, the Panel conducted a site visit. The Panel was met at the site and shown the site by Mr Phil Bishop, a representative for the applicant. The Panel viewed the area surrounding the site and from the wider road network (see Attachment 1). The Panel thanks Mr Bishop for an informative and fulsome tour of the project site and surrounds.

Timing of the invitation to comment

- [4] Under section 53 of the Act, the Panel must invite comments on the application no later than 10 working days after its appointment commences. Comments for this application must therefore be invited no later than 12 October 2026.

Request to Waikato Regional Council and Waitomo District Council

- [5] During the conference on 5 October, it was noted that the local authorities have already commissioned or prepared expert reports or advice in their consideration of the application. The Panel requests the councils provide a list of experts that will provide comments in their section 53 response, as soon as possible, and no later than **5pm on 8 October 2026**.
- [6] The panel has been advised that the Waikato Regional Council will address the status of Plan Change 1 in its section 53 comments.

Request to Oparure Marae and Te Nehenehenui Trust

- [7] Following the panel convener conference the Panel Convener released a Minute noting that the panel will likely want to attend a hui with Ōparure Marae to listen to their concerns in person. The Panel has reflected on

the suggestion for some form of hui and invite a specific suggestion for their consideration and would wish to time this following receipt of the section 53 comments. The Panel requests that Oparure Marae and Te Nehenehenui liase and provide feedback to the EPA to the suggestion of holding a hui late November.

Request for information from the Applicant

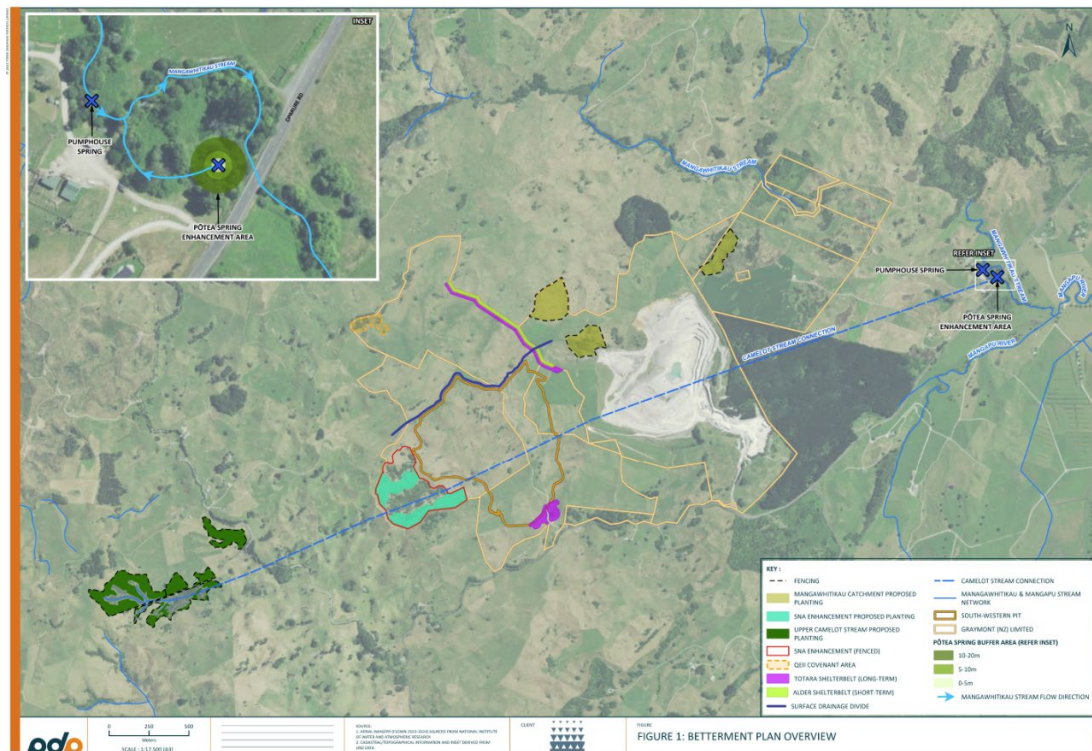
- [8] As foreshadowed at the conference, the Panel has some initial requests for information from the applicant;
- a. Clarify how long both the existing quarry and the new quarry site will be operating at the same time, and whether the assessments of effects takes this in to account.
 - b. Information about the allocation of water permits and existing consents, including clarification about the current water take consent at the site, when it expires, and how that timing lines up with the new water use consent sought for the SW Pit.
- [9] The Applicant is requested to provide the further information by **16 October 2026**.



Stephen Daysh

Oparure Quarry South-Western Pit Expert Panel Chair

Attachment 1 – Site Visit Plan



1. Look out at current Pit from Viewpoint Point A. Explain drill and blast process.
2. Drive and look out at the SW Pit from Viewpoint Point B.
3. Point out Camelot Cave location and location of a cave that will be removed.
4. Drive and look at view of a betterment area from Viewpoint Point C.
5. Drive to the stream sink.
6. Drive to views of Potea Spring, Mangawhitikau Spring, Mangapu River, and unnamed tributary.
7. Visit the Camelot Cave system entrance and the Potea Spring location