# Hon Shane Jones

Minister for Oceans and Fisheries
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Oparure Quarry South-Western Pit Expert Panel
substantive@fasttrack.govt.nz

**Fast-track Approvals Act 2024 substantive application – Oparure Quarry South-Western Pit application [FTAA-2606-1251]**

Dear Expert Panel,

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this substantive application [FTAA-2606-1251] under the Fast-track Approvals Act 2024 (FTAA 2024).

The FTAA 2024 has been established to provide a regime that makes it easier and quicker for regionally and nationally significant infrastructure and development projects to gain the approvals needed for development, in support of this Government's economic growth objectives.

I have considered the application and its alignment with the priorities of my Resources portfolio. My comments are attached as Annex One.

Yours sincerely,

Hon Shane Jones
**Minister for Resources**


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# Annex One – Resources comments

## Project overview

1. The applicant, Graymont NZ Limited (Graymont) has lodged a substantive application for Fast-track approval for its proposed Oparure Quarry South-Western Pit project. The application is for a new opencast pit at the existing Oparure Quarry, north of Te Kūiti in Waikato. The project would enable New Zealand's largest quarry to maintain its current limestone production as the existing pit approaches the end of its economic life.

2. The proposal is intended to progressively rehabilitate the new pit while using the site's existing processing, storage and transport infrastructure. The quarry is currently the largest limestone quarry in New Zealand and is owned by Graymont, a subsidiary of the global calcium-based solutions company, Graymont Limited.

3. The economic assessment provided estimates that the quarry, associated Waikato kiln sites and associated business activities have contributed $42.7 million to $46.5 million to GDP annually and sustained 262 FTE jobs. The applicant's assessment includes 43 direct full-time employees and $15 million in direct GDP associated with the quarry.

## Resources comments

4. The Government's Minerals Strategy, published in January 2025 sets a long-term, strategic approach to how we develop our mineral resources. The Minerals Strategy emphasises the production of aggregate, which includes limestone, as strategically important and the building blocks for our infrastructure and housing needs.

5. New Zealand's Critical Mineral List also recognises aggregate as critical. This is due to the high level of economic importance of aggregate to New Zealand, and the regulatory constraints limiting new supply opportunities.

6. The applicant's economic assessment indicates the quarry's output is a high-quality product in demand for soil conditioning and dairy nutrition supplements, as well as other agricultural uses. The product is sold for industrial uses, including to New Zealand Steel, Oceana Gold, and Oji Fibre, as well as to Watercare Services for water treatment. These are significant industrial players, which may benefit from a secure and continuous supply in the long-term.

7. I consider the project is likely to support significant existing regional economic benefits by providing long-term access to a domestic critical mineral resource.