

**THE WAITOMO DISTRICT COUNCIL**

<b>UNDER</b>	the Resource Management Act 1991 ( <b>'the Act'</b> )
<b>IN THE MATTER OF</b>	Proposed Waitomo District Plan
<b>SUBMITTER</b>	Graymont (NZ) Limited

---

**STATEMENT OF COMPANY EVIDENCE OF BENJAMIN JAMES MURRAY ON BEHALF OF GRAYMONT (NZ)  
LIMITED**

**21 November 2024**

---

## INTRODUCTION

1. My name is Benjamin James Murray. I am the Corporate Affairs & Health Safety and Environment ('CA & HSE') Manager for Graymont (NZ) Limited ('Graymont' or 'the Company'), with responsibility for the Asia Pacific Southern region which includes four sites in New Zealand. I am accountable for supporting the Company to continuously improve outcomes in health, safety and environmental areas, as well as leading key environmental permitting projects and have been employed by Graymont, or its predecessor companies for the past thirteen years.
2. In terms of my quarry operations experience, I first worked at McDonald's Lime (a predecessor company to Graymont) based in Otorohanga, initially as an Environmental Advisor, from 2012 to 2013, prior to being made a Senior Environmental Advisor in 2013. These roles also included supporting Holcim aggregates quarries with their environmental compliance. Subsequently, I became the Operations Technical Manager for McDonald's Lime in 2014, prior to being employed as the Operations Technical Manager at Graymont in Hamilton in 2015. I have been in my present role as CA & HSE Manager, in Graymont's Hamilton Office for the past five years. This role includes supporting four sites in New Zealand, as well as five in Australia along with general support to other functional groups in the region.<sup>1</sup>
3. Graymont is the wholly owned subsidiary of Graymont Limited, a global operation associated with the manufacture and supply of lime and limestone products. The Company currently operates plant in four locations across New Zealand, with three of these situated within the Waikato Region, being the Oparure quarry together with lime kilns in both Otorohanga and Te Kuiti. Graymont also operates the Makareao plant and quarry within North Otago.<sup>2</sup>
4. Graymont supplies quality lime and limestone products to the Agricultural, Animal Health, Construction, Water Treatment, Environmental and Industrial markets of New Zealand and the Asia Pacific regions. Graymont's products have proven to be essential for mitigating a multitude of natural and man-made environmental impacts, while at the same time remaining indispensable for vital industrial processes. Consistency of supply of quality product is critical to a number of Graymont's customers, including, but not limited to, those that require product for drinking water and wastewater treatment and for pollution mitigation / remediation. As a Company, we place great importance on our ability to manage production and logistics to accommodate our customer's requirements in an environmentally aware and sustainable manner.
5. The value of retaining local supply became even more apparent during the Covid-19 pandemic, within which Graymont continued to operate as an essential service provider in every jurisdiction that it is present. With the disruption of supply chains globally, having local supply of lime products to provide for clean drinking water, environmental water treatment, construction products and tissue paper (amongst other things) was, and continues to be essential.
6. Graymont's Oparure Quarry, which is located within the Waikato Region, and within the Waitomo District, just north of Te Kuiti, is New Zealand's largest single limestone quarry. Supplied with limestone from Oparure Quarry, Graymont's Te Kuiti site operates a vertical

---

<sup>1</sup> One in Otago, three in Waikato, two in Victoria, two in South Australia, one in Tasmania. Advising on HSE matters for sales and logistics teams including compliance with relevant regulations and providing information relevant to customers.

<sup>2</sup> Formerly Taylor's Lime.

gas fired Maerz Kiln to produce hydrated lime and quicklime. In this regard, limestone is taken from the Oparure Quarry, fed into the Kiln at the Te Kuiti site, where it is calcinated at extreme temperatures to produce hydrated lime and quicklime.<sup>3</sup>

7. In October 2022, in order to maximise the quarry's economic life, a suite of resource consent applications were lodged for the expansion of the Oparure Quarry. Those resource consent applications were lodged with both the Waikato Regional Council ('WRC' or the 'Regional Council') and the Waitomo District Council ('WDC' or the 'District Council') and relate to the establishment of a second quarry pit (the 'Western Pit' Application). This application, if granted, will enable the quarrying of limestone to continue for a further 70 years.
8. Given the location of Graymont's Oparure Quarry, quarry expansion and its Te Kuiti Kiln, the Proposed Waitomo District Plan (hereafter referred to as 'pWDP' or the 'proposed Plan'), is of particular relevance to the Company and our ongoing operations.
9. Graymont lodged submissions<sup>4</sup> and further submissions to the proposed Plan.<sup>5</sup>
10. For completeness, I confirm that I am authorised to present this evidence on behalf of Graymont. I am not presenting technical expert evidence, and as such, this brief should be read as 'Company evidence' expressing the position of Graymont.

#### **SCOPE OF MY EVIDENCE**

11. In my evidence, in order to provide context to the key submission points and relief sought by Graymont, I:
  - a. set out a background to the Company, its operations and initiatives; and
  - b. highlight the importance of, and the need to, ensure that Graymont's existing regionally significant and lawfully established activities within the Waitomo District can continue to operate, and are able to be maintained, repaired and upgraded without unnecessary restriction. To this end, Graymont considers a balanced and practical approach to the policy framework of the proposed Plan is important.
  - c. I note that Ms Terry Calmeyer will present evidence addressing planning matters on behalf of the Company. For the Tranche 2 hearings, Ms Calmeyer has prepared briefs of evidence to both the Ecosystems and Indigenous Biodiversity provisions (21 October 2024) and the remainder of the topics addressed in the Tranche 2 hearings, primarily the Natural Features and Landscapes and Natural Character provisions (4 November 2024).

#### **BACKGROUND: THE COMPANY**

---

<sup>3</sup> Hydrated lime and quicklime are both calcium compounds manufactured from limestone. After calcination, limestone forms calcium oxide or quicklime, which in its hydrated state is known as calcium hydroxide.

<sup>4</sup> Submission #43, lodged with the District Council on the 22<sup>nd</sup> of December 2022.

<sup>5</sup> Graymont's lodged ten further submissions with the District Council on the 28<sup>th</sup> of July 2023.

12. As discussed in the preceding paragraphs, Graymont's operations, which commenced in 1865 as McDonald's Lime and Taylor's Lime, are associated with the manufacture and supply of quality lime and limestone products.
13. Graymont's Waitomo based operations include the Oparure quarry (together with the proposed expansion of the same) and the associated Te Kuiti Kiln.
14. Graymont both prides itself on, and is committed to, operating in a sustainable manner. As a Company, we are proud that our products are part of the solution in terms of addressing many of today's environmental challenges.
15. Graymont aims to consistently meet or exceed its regulatory and resource consent or permit obligations, while working to minimise the environmental impact of its operations. Graymont has six environmental standards that establish periodic site led goal setting for environmental improvement. To fulfil our commitment, we integrate environmental accountability into our strategic planning and take a systems approach to our practices with respect to environmental impacts, carefully monitoring environmental compliance and conducting a regular comprehensive audit programme, which includes both internal and external auditing being undertaken, so as to ensure that our consenting requirements are respected and achieved.
16. In addition, and with regard to environmental sustainability, Graymont is determined to become an industry leader with its utilisation of the materials and the reuse of resources involved with its operations. To this end, the Company is seeking to reduce its environmental footprint through continuous operational improvements.

## **NATURAL FEATURES AND LANDSCAPES, NATURAL CHARACTER AND ECOSYSTEMS AND INDIGENOUS BIODIVERSITY**

### **NATURAL FEATURES AND LANDSCAPES**

17. Graymont's Oparure Quarry is New Zealand's largest single limestone quarry. It is 67 hectares in size and located within the Rural Production Zone and both the Landscapes of 'High Amenity Value' and the 'Karst Overlay' in accordance with the proposed Plan. While acknowledging the importance of these overlays, Graymont is concerned to ensure that the policy framework associated with these overlays provides a practical and balanced approach. In this regard, Graymont is concerned that a number of the provisions included in the proposed Plan are overly restrictive, and as drafted, would adversely impact its operations.
18. Graymont notes that Policy NFL-P5 as drafted, for example, requires (amongst other conditions) that the values of karst overlays are recognised, protected and where practicable, enhanced. In doing so, the policy requires that vegetation clearance, and large-scale earthworks including quarrying activities, where these will adversely affect the values of the karst systems or features are avoided. Graymont records that, given the location of its Oparure Quarry, it is not always possible to avoid effects that may adversely affect the values of karst systems or features. As such, the Company seeks that where outright avoidance is not practicable, adverse effects are minimised, or that remediation or mitigation could be considered.

19. Quarrying limestone often has effects on the karst environment because karst is associated with limestone. Carrying out earthworks including overburden removal and placement, extraction of limestone and the possibility of adjusting how catchments drain could all affect the karst environment. At Oparure, we have a number of approaches that are used to minimise the impact on karst.
20. Earthworks from overburden removal generates sediment which can affect karst by impacting on caves that may drain the quarry. Graymont's Western Pit proposal includes ensuring that the main cave that drains the proposed pit will not be impacted, by carrying out surveys of the cave and designing the pit to avoid this. In addition, erosion and sediment control ('ESC') methods are used to retain sediment in any stormwater that sheds from overburden slopes.
21. Changes in water drainage can affect karst systems because water flow is a key component of karst formation. This can occur during overburden placement (infilling of water conduits) or by redirecting surface water as part of ESC measures. When designing overburden placement and ESC systems, Graymont has ensured that surface water drainage is not affected and continues to drain into the same catchment that it would have naturally flowed.
22. The Oparure quarry has an approach of environmental betterment, particularly in relation to water quality in the catchment it operates. Recent resource consent projects have assessed sediment loads in the catchment as a result of the quarry, and these have been offset and "bettered" by undertaking other sediment reducing projects in the catchment. These include reducing sediment runoff from land with high sediment generation potential, and retiring and planting ephemeral streams.

#### NATURAL CHARACTER

23. Consistent with the Company's concerns regarding the overly restrictive nature of the Natural Features and Landscapes provisions, Graymont has some concerns with the Natural Character provisions, as notified.
24. Graymont notes that NATC-P1 as notified, for example, requires the protection and enhancement of the qualities and values of wetlands and lakes and rivers and their margins, by, amongst other conditions, avoiding any activity, particularly earthworks and vegetation clearance, where this will adversely affect the qualities and values of the same.
25. We note that the Addendum to the Natural Character Section 42A Report prepared by Ms Cathy O'Callaghan (and dated 18 November 2024), recommends that NATC-P1 is amended to protect the '*natural character*' of wetlands and lakes and rivers and their margins from '*inappropriate subdivision, use and development*'. Graymont supports this amendment, while noting that the policy as amended by Ms O'Callaghan still requires 'avoidance' of a number of activities (within the conditions to the policy). As such, Graymont remains concerned with NATC-P1.
26. In this regard, Graymont notes that there is an underground stream that runs underneath the proposed Western Pit. As part of the Western Pit proposal, we propose to do earthworks and extract limestone above this stream. This work may not be

consistent with NATC-P1, if earthworks that affect the qualities and values of rivers and their margins are to be avoided, outright.

27. Further, we note that the Te Araroa trail runs alongside the Mangaokewa Stream, through Graymont land. Carrying out maintenance on the track including laying aggregates and trimming trees which we support, may have some adverse effect on the stream. Likewise, sediment retention ponds discharge into the stream - bringing about a negligible adverse effect, but arguably still an effect on the qualities and values of the stream.
28. Graymont notes that NATC-P1 also requires that developments are avoided in locations that are of significance to mana whenua. There is an urupa within 300 m of the Oparure quarry. Through discussion and engagement with mana whenua Graymont has been able to manage any effects to the urupa, as such, the outright avoidance premise in the policy causes concern. We seek that the policy provide for the management of any adverse effects, rather than avoidance outright.
29. Graymont notes that mineral extraction and associated quarrying activities are required to locate in accordance with the resource that they utilise, which may impact upon a wetland, lake, river or river margin. Given this, and while Graymont makes every effort to avoid adverse effects, this is not always possible. As such, Graymont considers that a balanced approach which allows for remediation, mitigation and offsetting, where avoidance is not practicable, may be more appropriate in some instances.

#### ECOSYSTEMS AND INDIGENOUS BIODIVERSITY

30. While Graymont supports the need to protect areas of significant indigenous vegetation and significant habitats of indigenous fauna, the Company is concerned to ensure that the provisions relating to indigenous biodiversity more generally still provide for 'appropriate' activities to take place. In this respect, Graymont is concerned to ensure that there is a pathway for assessment and management of effects that cannot be avoided outright, such as indigenous vegetation clearance that may be required for maintenance purposes.

#### CONCLUSION

31. Graymont is an important stakeholder in the Waitomo District, in that it undertakes specialist activities that are reliant on the natural resources of the District. Given the significance of having a sustained supply of minerals and aggregate within the Waitomo District and wider Waikato Region, the Company sought amendments to the proposed Plan to provide a balanced policy framework. The framework should allow for the protection of significant natural features and landscapes, natural character and indigenous vegetation in the district from adverse effects, including cumulative effects arising from inappropriate subdivision, use and development, while still providing the ability for Graymont to undertake its regionally significant and lawfully established activities.
32. Graymont remains concerned that the proposed Plan provisions seek to avoid effects on the values of karst systems that may be brought about by vegetation clearance and earthworks, including quarrying activities. We consider that this is not always practicable, and that the options of minimising adverse effects, mitigation, remediation and offsetting should therefore be provided for.
33. I thank the Hearing Panel for their consideration of this statement of evidence.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'BM' followed by a stylized flourish.

Benjamin James Murray

Asia Pacific South Corporate Affairs & Health Safety and Environment Manager, Graymont (NZ)  
Limited

21<sup>st</sup> of November 2024