

In the Environment Court  
Christchurch Registry

under the Resource Management Act 1991

in the matter of an application by **Fulton Hogan Limited** for  
resource consent for a quarry (**Roydon quarry**) at  
220 Jones Road, Templeton (**site**), under section  
88 of the Act

and the submission of **Southern Woods Nursery  
Limited**

### **Evidence of Gareth James Mitchell**

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Dated: 9 October 2019

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AJS-876176-1-139-V1-e

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## **Evidence of Gareth James Mitchell:**

1. My full name is Gareth James Mitchell and I am employed by Southern Woods Nursery Limited (**Southern Woods**) as General Manager. I have been at Southern Woods since December 2018.
2. I have a Master's Degree in Applied Psychology from the University of Canterbury. I have 16 years' experience in senior and executive roles across several businesses and industries but predominantly agriculture and horticulture.
3. The purpose of this evidence is to provide some further background about Southern Woods' business, why we are concerned about the quarry application, and what is at risk for Southern Woods should impacts from, in particular, dust, be experienced.

### **Background to Southern Woods**

4. Southern Woods was established in 1987. Since that time it has grown into a successful business. It has also withstood disruptions, notably the Canterbury earthquakes and the Southern Motorway project. Despite these challenges Southern Woods has become a thriving business.
5. Currently, Southern woods employs 37 staff, not including seasonal variations. The business operates from a 7.2 hectare site, which includes a Retail Plant Centre and a Dispatch Shed, with most of the rest of the site taken up with production space including five tunnel houses. Recent turnover has exceeded \$4.5M.
6. Southern Woods Market is predominantly in Canterbury and the South Island. It also has a national presence due to online sales, which is an area of growth.
7. One of the factors, we think, in Southern Woods success relates to the things it is committed to. In summary we are committed to enhancing our customer's environments, and improving the productivity of their land, by using trees. To this end, we provide free advice and on-going support, coupled with high quality trees and tree planting products. All service staff are trained in horticulture and/or tree crops and are on-hand to provide informed advice to customers. In addition, all trees are conditioned and hardened to survive potentially harsh planting sites.
8. This dedication to quality and service has resulted in the development of strong customer relationships and a high level of referrals. Whether we thrive depends on the success of our customers plantings.
9. Southern Woods business practices also reflect our strongly held principles: we care greatly about our people, their families and our community; we want to ensure that the future of our environment is protected, revegetated and is cared for sustainably for future generations; we are heavily focussed on the quality of our plants and our site; and, we want to present the best site and the best plants grown by the best people.

10. Fundamentally, we are constantly looking at environmental sustainability and how we can do better.
11. It is for all of these reasons that Southern Woods decided to become involved in the Fulton Hogan quarry application.
12. Southern Woods acknowledges that Fulton Hogan have put significant time and energy into its project. It has also meet with us and listened to our concerns, which is appreciated.
13. We believe that should all of Fulton Hogan's proposed mitigations be in place and work effectively, we should not be impacted to a significant degree. However, we wish to emphasise that those mitigation methods must be robust and proven.
14. We simply could not afford for the impacts of dust on plants, as discussed in Devin Westley's statement, to come to fruition.
15. Because of this we would expect that, to the extent that any of the mitigation being offered is 'experimental' or otherwise unproven in Canterbury conditions, that a precautionary approach is taken.
16. In our view there cannot be too much monitoring or reporting and there needs to be specific and certain responses to any evidence of issues arising, even if that requires the shutting down of the extraction activities while issues are being remedied. I note that Southern Woods have expressed an interest in being involved in any proposed community liaison group that is established if the quarry proceeds.
17. We also acknowledge the community concerns with the project and the need for any impacts on the local community to be kept to a minimum if the quarry proceeds. It will likely be different climatic conditions that will cause effects on the local community and the conditions of consent (if granted) need to adequately reflect those potential variations. The same goes for robust conditions to ensure no adverse effects on groundwater.

Gareth James Mitchell  
9 October 2019