

# Wait for dust results before requiring quarry buffers - AQA

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*Eamon Rood* - Thu, 31 May 2018

The quarry industry and its health and safety organisation say the findings of a dust monitoring programme should inform whether quarries require buffer zones.

Christchurch City Council wants it made **mandatory** for new quarries to be kept at least 500 metres from residential areas to protect them from silica dust.



That would require amending its district plan, which it cannot do under legislation governing regeneration of the city following the 2011 earthquakes. Canterbury Regeneration Minister Megan Woods says she is considering a request from Christchurch Mayor Lianne Dalziel to revoke this restriction.

Aggregate and Quarry Association chair Brian Roche says it is disappointing not to have been consulted prior to public comment.

“That is especially so given we have been working with central and local government agencies on a dust monitoring programme in Canterbury, the results of which will be announced next month,” Roche says, referring to Environment Canterbury’s [monitoring programme](#) in Yaldhurst.

Wayne Scott, CEO of the extractives health and safety council MinEx, says everyone will be better informed by waiting for those results.

“No one faces more risks from any dust from quarries than their workers and we work alongside Government agencies including WorkSafe and councils to ensure the health and safety and resource consent conditions are met.”

## Legal status

Mayor Dalziel is asking Minister Woods to rescind the 2014 Christchurch Replacement District Plan Order early.

The Order in Council, due to expire in 2021, puts the power to amend the district plan to fast-track certain projects in the hands of the Minister. These powers have been used just once, when Woods recently approved the relocation of Redcliffs School.

Woods has confirmed she is considering the mayor’s request and thinks it has merit. However she has not committed to this course of action, and is exploring other options.

She is required by law to consult with strategic partners on revoking the order. The decision would then go to the Governor General.

## Results due in July

ECan’s dust monitoring programme is checking the air quality in Yaldhurst, where several large quarries are operated by Road Metals, GBC Winstone, and Fulton Hogan. It focuses on respirable silica and was established last year in response to resident complaints about dust and fears it was affecting their health.

ECan says the findings will be released in late June or early July. Roche says his industry is happy to engage with the Government and Canterbury councils in any discussion once the monitoring results are released.

“We’d hope to be able to confirm for the Government that quarries can be managed to acceptable limits in urban fringe areas and if quarries end up being pushed well away from cities, that will simply hike the price of every home, building and road through increased trucking costs.”