The Waipawa site was formerly an unused logging yard having been decommissioned many years ago. This site was chosen as a location for a new sawmill which required investment to upgrade the existing mill site for log processing. The area has a soft underlying clay foundation and along with a high water table creates a major drainage issue for any new development.

Geofabrics was approached by the contractor to suggest a solution to the problem of developing a hardstand area capable of supporting heavy logging trucks over soft wet ground. The solution was in two parts, the first, considering a subgrade strength CBR of 3%, suggested the use of a layer of bidim geotextile for separation and Tensar geogrids to provide support to the granular fill. The second part of the solution addressed the drainage problem through the introduction of Megaflo® panel drains that offer high flow rates at low hydraulic gradients. The high crush strength of Megaflo® was well suited for this heavy loaded pavement.

Once the soft fill had been removed it was found that the clay foundation was firmer than initially thought eliminating the need for the geogrid. The contractor then focussed on draining the site with parallel lines of Megaflo® 170. Separation of the clay and imported 600mm river run was achieved by using bidim® A19 in 6m widths to minimise wastage.

Megaflo® 170 provided a fast response time for water removal and combined with bidim® A19 resulted in a cost efficient option. The best feature of the site was collecting water which once had nowhere to go, but by using Megaflo® 170 the site was quickly drained making it useable within 1 week for the 40 tonne logging trucks to access the new sawmill.