**IPC Submission**

**Ref SSD6612**

**Objection to SSD6612**

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As a resident that has lived in the Paterson area for over thirty years until recently, I take this opportunity to object to the SSD6612 that is proposed by Buttai Gravel (Daracon) and presented to the Department of Planning by Umwelt.

In 2013 it was hell when the Daracon group flooded the quiet Paterson Valley with large numbers of truck movements showing contempt to the local community which included me.

The many court cases that ensued and in which Daracon appealed, all ruled in favour of Dungog Shire Council, showing that the operation was illegal. Due to the court being in Sydney I did not attend all but did attend on several occasions giving evidence of my lived experience during this time. There were five (5) hearings and further appeals which indicates the level of animosity shown by the Daracon group. Again all ruled in favour of Dungog Shire Council.

The first SSD6612 through the consultants, Monteath and Powys, had significant SEARs attached through Department of Planning. Many residents including myself made submissions. Another version of the SSD6612 was developed by the consultants Unwelt. This has been underway for several years and I have participated in the process. At the creation of the new submission, I revised and submitted a new objection.

This latest submission by Umwelt has many flaws that were not addressed through the review process and ultimately the SSD6612 was recommended by the Department of Planning for approval. As part of the process, I lodged an objection with many questions on the SSD6612. The RTS (Response to Submissions) was cursory and dismissive. I attended all public meetings and participated in many of the *Community Consultations* organised by Umwelt and previously by Monteath and Powys. Voicing my concerns at these meetings has been shown to be fruitless. The community input has not been addressed.

The reason behind my reaction to the submission is that there is an excessive amount of content that is either inaccurate or missing. The areas that were of greatest concern was the transporting of product from the Martins Creek Quarry and the impact on the community in and around the Paterson district.

Specifically, in the SSSD6612 the following areas have been ineffectively addressed:

**The Historical Study of Paterson**

The data and information used by Umwelt in this submission was outdated and totally inaccurate. At the time I was the owner of an historic building. The Paterson Historical Society has some highly qualified members, including Dr Cameron Archer, who have published books on the history of Paterson and the Lower Hunter. As pointed out in my objection they were not consulted and instead outdated and irrelevant data from other sources was used. This suited the purpose of Umwelt and did not address the issue of historical significance of Paterson and the therefore Umwelt were able to dismiss any impacts of excessive heavy vehicles travelling on the haulage route.

**The Traffic Study of Haulage Route 1**

This contentious issue was glossed over in both the SSD6612 and the RTS. Umwelt used consultants to provide data that did not address the key issues. Whilst the pavement condition and shoulder widths have relevance the key absence of addressing the intersections were missing. There are several key intersections and I feel these require immediate addressing:

* Post Office corner—King St and Duke Street
* Rectory corner—Duke Street and Prince St
* Tocal Agricultural College various entrances
* Bolwarra Service Station

***Post Office Corner***

Due to the business activity and road design this is a very busy and crowded intersection. Three cafes, a Post Office that also serves as a bank, service station, hotel, adjacent chemist, and a doctor’s surgery that has a 50 km catchment. Pathology services are also provided within this practice. Combine this with a set of railway gates in constant use and this intersection is extremely busy.

The set out of the intersection was not designed for long and large heavy vehicles. This was explained in many of the objections to Daracon and Umwelt and **no feasible solution has been provided** too date.

***Rectory Corner (Prince St, Duke St and Main Road)***

I provided several photographs in my submission addressing the unique problems of this three-way intersection. I have also spoken to several Umwelt representatives on location so that the noise and safety issues were recognised. There is considerable foot traffic at this intersection as it borders John Tucker Park, a very popular tourist destination. A combined toilet block and undercover BBQ facility close to the intersection increases foot traffic from the village centre as well as the park.

The Paterson Tavern is a popular hotel and restaurant facility that generates a lot of vehicle movements. All of this is combined with an off-camber blind corner on a crest that is the intersection. A significant review of this intersection was outlined in my objection. Locals named this intersection ‘Russian Roulette’. In the RTS Adam Kelly (Daracon) dismissed the objection stating that his 280 trucks per day would observe 40km speed limits. Daracon would self-regulate their fleet vehicles and make contractors sign a Code of Conduct. Experience has shown this is inadequate. I provided photographic evidence to support my assertions.

Further to this is the aspect of road closures due to wet weather and flooding and were not addressed.

Minor flooding on a regular basis closes Main Rd near John Tucker Park and traffic is rerouted through Sloane and Prince Streets not designed for heavy vehicles and large volumes of traffic. This issue was not addressed in SSD6612 nor in the RTS despite being raised at several consultative meetings conducted by Daracon and Umwelt and was ignored. Data is freely available on the number of road closures due to wet weather. The type of road construction combined with wet weather causes significant pavement damage. It astounds me that this intersection was not addressed in their report, and it further astounds me that the **Department of Planning did not raise this intersection.**

***Tocal Agricultural College***

This facility is one of the major agricultural educational facilities in the State. The NSW government has several advisory and research services based at Tocal. There is a large conference facility that is commercially available. The historic homestead has large coaches bringing tour groups and uses access form Tocal Road. Attached is a function centre that caters for mid- week weddings and other functions. It has an operational diary that is accessed directly from Tocal Road. Hence there is considerable light and heavy traffic generated by students, visitors, service vehicles, guests, and staff. Add all the quarry vehicles without adequate analysis and this remains is a recipe for disaster.

**There was scant attention paid to the issues highlighted above in the original submission uopu**

***Bolwarra Service Station***

This lies on the route to the Melbourne St, East Maitland intersection which itself will become a bigger bottleneck. The junction of Paterson Rd and Tocal Rd will see heavy vehicles from Martins Creek Quarry and a large percentage of trucks from Brandy Hill Quarry unite. Both Tocal and Paterson Roads are roads that bring large volumes of traffic from outlying feeder areas with hobby farms, small hamlets, and outlying farms. Maitland is the centre for most high- level medical services, high volume retailers and service centres. This is also the major route for all school buses for both private and public schools**. The potential for an incident is high and the SSD6612 did not adequately address any of these issues and the RTS was dismissive in its response.**

**Economic study**

The report from ***Ernst and Young*** was supportive of the economic benefits as asserted by Umwelt. The issue that concerns me is that all the data used to formulate the report and reach these conclusions was unsubstantiated data supplied by Buttai Gravel/Daracon.

These are companies that are privately owned and there is not any publicly available data to substantiate the claims. Ad hoc research from quarries in the Southern Highlands (similar products with similar outputs) presents a different picture. The caveats by Ernst & Young in their document reflect this flaw.

Specifically, the economic impacts in relation to employment and returns to the local community cannot be substantiated. Benefits to the broader Hunter Community are vastly overstated as there are several quarries servicing both the Hunter and Sydney markets. This proposal is an example of vertical integration that improves profits at the expense of community.

The caveats that Ernst & Young attach to their assessment indicate that the data cannot be substantiated at an independent level. I feel that the economic study cannot be included in the SSD6612 due to its limited investigation.

**Social Impact Issues**

After attending all of the Community Consultative sessions on the social impact aspects of SSD6612 it was concluded that the community input was not what Umwelt wanted to hear.

This explains the late and distorted minutes from these meetings. The Umwelt social scientist, Karen Lamb, steadfastly refused to accept any of the ‘lived experiences’ of the community and instead doggedly relied on her own modelling.

My memories of 2013 are still vivid, and I can recall the impact on community. This modelling by Umwelt had the outcome of predicting no negative impacts on the community re the excessive heavy vehicle truck movements. Those community members present provided differing experiences in direct contrast to this modelling. Any contrary opinion based on ***lived experience*** has not been given the credit it deserves. By ignoring residents lived experiences and by limiting input from community members it was my impression that the modelling had been tailored to produce a favourable outcome. Other submissions by community to the SSD6612 reflect the same feelings

In conclusion I feel that SSD6612 does not represent a project that will value the community and in fact is very destructive and very damaging to the specific communities of Vacy, Paterson, and Bolwarra. There is much of the SSD6612 that needs scrutiny and to me it is **extremely disappointing the Department of Planning did not recognise the extreme shortcomings of this proposal.**