

Good morning, my name is Michelle Toews and I am 12-year resident of Paterson village.

Thank you to the Commission for hosting this Public Meeting and I note I have read through the Department of Planning's Assessment Report of the Project and the recommended Development Consent, as well as reading transcripts of separate video conference meetings the Commissioners held during October with each of the Applicant, Dungog Shire Council, the Department, and Maitland City Council.

As a resident within 100 metres of the main road through Paterson, the issues that most impacted my household in past years were around traffic noise, and road and pedestrian safety. I provided written submissions in both 2016 and 2021 objecting to the proposed expansion, outlining my lived experiences. As well as speaking here today, I shall be submitting a fuller written objection to the IPC.

This morning I requested an extension to my speaking time which was granted and I appreciate that, so in the interest of trying to keep to my allocated time, please be assured my past concerns relating to impacts in Paterson remain, despite proposed mitigation strategies.

My daughter attends All Saints College in Maitland, mostly catching school bus number 2251 at 7.53am opposite Stockers & Partridge. Several local students utilise this bus service, with the majority getting on at 7.52am opposite the Post Office. There are other southbound and northbound school buses which depart from Paterson in the morning.

In my 2021 submission, I noted road safety concerns in Bolwarra Heights, including where vehicles exit the BP Service Station, and the merging traffic from Paterson Road, which includes trucks servicing the Brandy Hill Quarry.

In Bolwarra Heights on the main road, there is a reasonably new pedestrian island in close to a sheltered bus stop near Canna Street. On Friday 28 October, while driving my daughter to school I was behind a school bus which indicated to stop at this Canna Street bus stop. I very quickly realised the bus was unable to pull off the road completely and I slowed down substantially to negotiate between the end of the bus and the pedestrian island. I don't drive a big car so I imagine something like another school bus or quarry truck would nearly have to stop completely to avoid a collision with either the stopped bus or pedestrian island.

Bolwarra Heights is within Maitland City Council LGA and the only particular reference I can see in the Assessment relating to road safety in that LGA is item 91 on page 23, which provides for road pavement contributions by Daracon.

I also note from the meeting transcript between the Commissioners and representatives of Maitland City Council, the Mayor states the level of complaint they receive about trucks from the Quarry is significant and the level of concern about this proposal is probably one of the most prominent issues in their community today. The Mayor goes on to refer to population growth in Maitland alone over the past five years of 17%, bringing with it raised impacts particularly around traffic. But the very interesting point the Mayor makes, and I will now quote directly from the transcript '... with the pressure that we are being applied – being applied to us by the State Government for that growth, and to make our land available for residential expansions, the impacts are already significant...'. You can very easily see examples of such housing

development if you travel pretty much in any direction from Maitland, whether that be west toward Lochinvar, south to Kurri Kurri, or east along Raymond Terrace Road or the New England Highway.

Moving on, one of the contentious issues raised by our community over many years has been the volume of trucks travelling to/from the Quarry, when the understanding of the community was that a substantial portion of extracted material was supposed to be transported by rail.

In the proposed Project, the Applicant has sought a maximum of 500,000tpa transported via road, with the balance of 600,000tpa transported by rail, as noted at item 68 on page 18 of the Assessment.

On page 29 of the Assessment, items 99 to 102 discuss feasibility of maximising use of the rail network, with item 103 noting the Department accepts Daracon's position that it is not feasible to solely rely on the rail network.

Item 104 discusses 600,000tpa being transported via rail subject to market demands and network availability. That item also notes approval being sought for 24/7 train loading and extension of the existing rail siding by 360m to enable loading of longer trains.

In item 105 the Department acknowledges the constraints associated with the use of rail transport by the Project and recognises the efforts made by Daracon to maximise use of rail transport, wherever feasible.

Within the Executive Summary of the Assessment Report, reference is made to the timing of the rail siding extension or rail spur, being that it be commissioned within two years' of an approved Development Consent, rather than four years as previously proposed. This two-year timing is also referred to on page 39, in item 135 but that item also notes a contingency on the timing due to several factors outside Daracon's control, which may extend the timeframe.

In the transcript of the meeting held between the Commissioners and the Applicant on 19 October, the Applicant mentions the rail spur extension requires extraction of 800,000 tonnes, noting that limiting actual production from the quarry will delay the ability to extract the resource which in turn may delay the rail spur, further saying the planned four-year timeframe will be difficult to achieve. When asked by Commissioner Sykes what the expected timeframe would be if not the four-year timeframe, the reply given is 'probably one to two years after that'. So if I am reading all of that correctly, the Department's Development Consent condition that the rail spur be built within two years could actually push out to six years according to the Applicant.

So whilst ever the rail spur is not in place due to factors noted above, there are limits on daily loading of trains and therefore extraction moved by rail will be substantially less than 600,000tpa. In the meantime, if the new access road is completed within its two-year timeframe and all the other various road upgrades have been completed, then those of us on the haulage route will be seeing 500,000tpa moved via road.

Once we start having 500,000tpa moved by road, my concern is if the rail spur has still not been commissioned, will there be the potential for the Applicant to seek a variation or amendment to

the Development Consent to increase tonnage transported by road, based on concerns around the feasibility of 600,000tpa being moved by rail.

And finally, in yesterday's sessions, I heard questions asked by the Commissioners around timing of tourism visitors. With all due respect, it seems partly academic whether tourists predominantly visit on weekends because while many of the events our community offers, such as the annual Paterson Fireworks, the Vacy Village Carnival, the Gresford Billy Cart Derby occur on weekends, these events take months of organisation by volunteer residents who live in the community 7 days a week, year in year out and they get sponsorship from businesses mostly run by the same type of residents i.e. local people. These same people who year on year keep on giving are the same people who have been impacted by the past operations of the Quarry and will continue to be impacted if the Project is approved.

As mentioned earlier, I shall lodge a fuller written submission but that concludes the comments I wanted to make in person today and again, I thank the Commissioners for this opportunity.