

I oppose the Martins Creek Quarry Expansion

I strongly object to the proposed changes for Martins Creek Quarry.

This proposal changes it from a ballast quarry to a mega general quarry and tertiary processing business. These changes will cause harm to residents, community and environment.

Daracon cannot guarantee or prove they will not cause harm or irrevocable damage to the health, environmental, historical significance, lifestyle, social amenity, and personal safety of residents through the use of such large numbers of trucks

Below I will set some of the issues that are relevant to the SSD6612 being rejected.

Pre-existing Land Usage.

I have lived at Vacy for over 24 years in the Paterson Valley Estate, (View Street & Wakaya Close). This is **zoned R5 Large Lot Residential** consisting of 32 lots with the first homes being built in 1980 when the quarry was solely a ballast quarry.

We could not hear or see the quarry (it was small and surrounded by trees) and I was happy knowing that the regulations of Monday to Friday with 70% of the Rail Ballast being transported by rail and 30% by trucks (24 trucks per day) at 300,000 tons per year as per Dungog Shire Council (DSC) 1991 Consent Conditions and Environment Impact Statement (EIS) July 1990.

The quarry has now completely changed and is now between less than 1 kilometre to under 2 kilometres from residents. Martins Creek Quarry does not reflect that of 30 years ago. Vegetation has disappeared replaced with fixed crushers, mobile crushers, pug mills, blasting, vibration, noise and convoys of truck and dogs.

A vastly different landscape exists from what was once attractive bush land. The comparison of 1992 to now is huge and out of step with the community. Having **no buffer zones** this threatens the health and safety of the community.

State Significant

1. Daracon I believe have overstated the significance of Andesite rock (which is not rare) from Martins Creek Quarry as a State Significant resource. Martins Creek Quarry is not the only hard rock quarry in the Hunter Valley. The quarries in the Southern Highlands can and do supply the Sydney market. Hard Rock (equivalent or similar) can be sourced elsewhere in more suitable and appropriate locations (away from harming residents, better transport access, buffer zones). Therefore Daracon's - Martins Creek Quarry should not be classed as State significant as alternatives are available.

2. I reference Geologist Dale Sims ABC radio Thursday 24th June 2021 who confirmed that there are plenty of quarries who can supply such product. These quarries eg Brandy Hill, have a large buffer zone and do not pass through heritage villages. These quarries have adequate access to main arterial roads and do not pass-through villages.

3. **I disagree with Daracon's statement:** *The Revised Project will also provide for secured availability of construction materials for local markets owing to the availability of hard rock from other quarries. Daracon/Umwelt SSD6612 submission*

4. It is clear Daracon could source their supplies for their developments through those other quarries and that construction has not stopped over the last 3 years.

Economic

The following negative costs outweigh any of the benefits that Daracon assert. Costs borne by the residents include:

1. Loss of property values, health, blasting/vibration damage to buildings. Vehicle damage. Road damage and repair.
2. Tourism: Expansion of Martins Creek Quarry will have a great negative impact to our local economy deterring tourism greatly and as a result hurt local businesses. A downturn in local businesses trading in goods & services, hospitality, tourism, cycling groups, motor bike and car enthusiasts and wedding functions along haul roads.
3. Tocal College has students that board on-site as well as those that attend on a day basis. It also has many support programs for farmers. Commercial activities include groups for weddings, Timbernook for children running all year round, local school cross country runs, church groups, swim club, season tickets for LGA residents to use the pool, swimming lessons, markets at Tocal homestead, Hunter & Coastal Regional Scouts Cooroboree 2021 , the list goes on. Tocal also conducts the biggest Small Field Farm Days in the Hunter Valley attracting over thirty thousand visitors. There would be thousands of locals and visitors attending each year that I have Witnessed. The safety of these events will be greatly threatened.
4. Human health and well-being will suffer and the costs to the state and federal governments will increase due to health, hospitalisation, increased rates of respiratory disease, dust caused diseases such as cancers. mental health due to noise, lack of sleep, loss of social amenity.
5. Truck movements will cause costs to roads, bridges, infrastructure, traffic delays, and road congestion.

My lived experience has shown **no** positive impact for economic advantage to myself or the community owing to the **negative** impacts on and to our community by Daracon.

Health, roads, safety, tourism, devaluation & damage of our homes, adverse visual & physical impacts on heritage, loss of social amenity and lifestyle difficult to quantify but is no less real.

De-valuation of homes.

There will be impacts on marketability if the quarry goes ahead with the proposed expansion and truck movements.

These impacts will be strongest around the quarry site and the haulage route but will filter out into the whole community. This will give the whole region a bad reputation and ultimately effect house and land values on a broad scale.

Transportation and Truck Movements

A maximum of 280 trucks per day for 50 days per year, and then 200 trucks per day. Note these are not just trucks but truck & dogs. This is also the initial stage of the quarry. There is some concern that Daracon will increase in the months and years to come.

Daracon/Umwelt SSD6612 submission.

Traffic and Transport

Daracon cannot minimise traffic safety issues and disruption to local road users. Further to this Daracon have shown that they do not want to minimise safety issues. This is including minimising potential for conflict with school buses. **I have photographic evidence of the danger with school buses.**

As a regular user of Dungog Road, Gresford Road, Tocal Road and Paterson Road through to Maitland I strongly oppose to the number of trucks in Daracon's submission due to unacceptable risks to myself, other motorists, truck drivers and the community.

1. Significant risks (especially to cyclists, horse riders and pedestrians) due to the narrow and poorly constructed roads carry school buses, cyclists, pedestrians and local traffic. These heavy vehicle truck and dog combinations are totally unsuitable on this road network.
2. It is an accepted fact that large volumes of trucks are not suitable for any local roads. Coal trucks in the Hunter were removed years ago off major roads but here is a proposal to flood a local road with heavy truck and dog combinations. The route includes a one-way bridge and main railway crossing.
3. Daracon has shown they will use local roads whenever possible. **I have photographic evidence** of their trucks using Horns Crossing Rd (which has a single way low level bridge) in convoy formation. Like many other roads it has concealed driveways, unmarked school bus stopping points, and sections of road with little or no markings. Daracon did not inform residents as it feels it does not have to cooperate or liaise with the community.

4. Damage to the road network has not been adequately addressed. This covers the number of potholes through to the ongoing maintenance of the one-lane bridge (Gostwyck Bridge).
5. Damage to vehicles of residents such as cracked windscreens and tyre damage due to potholes.
6. Driver behaviour is not able to be guaranteed. Lived experience has revealed drivers crossing to the wrong side of the road, driving in convoys and intimidating car drivers. Daracon stated at the very start it had no control over contract drivers and trucks.
7. Health effects of diesel exhaust including nitrogen oxide, sulphur dioxide, carbon monoxide, and volatile organic compounds. This will adversely affect the health of residents with 200 to 280 truck movements per day and is totally unacceptable.
8. Understated vehicle numbers. Service vehicles and deliveries eg fly ash, fuel will add to the truck numbers.
9. Much of the haulage route has been poorly assessed for such large volumes of heavy vehicles. This is from the quarry to the New England Highway.
10. Location of new exit onto Dungog Road is poorly placed at the top of a crest. It is also moving the problem of noise from Station Street to another location.

Paterson Village/Township

The village of Paterson is an integral part of the community. Paterson played an important role in the history of the Hunter Valley. This also reflects the start of colonization of New South Wales and Australia. This gives Paterson a strong connection with the past but also serves the current community needs in the following ways:

1. The Post Office is an essential service that includes a range of banking facilities, mail collection and parcel handling. It is essential to have safe access to a post office. Carrying parcels across the Road is unacceptable due to safety. The parking around the post office is regularly used for short durations and should stay.
2. Pedestrians are being put at risk. Trucks, especially truck and dogs pose a risk to everyone including the elderly, children & disabled. Heavy vehicles both loaded and empty cannot stop with a child that may run out on a road or an elderly person not quick enough to cross the road with the huge number of trucks at peak reaching 1.5 trucks per minute and that could change due to traffic build up and hold ups which we have seen in the past with convoys of trucks.
3. The history/rural village appeal is what makes Paterson so special and one which I am proud of is put at significant risk giving a negative **impact on social amenity**.
4. Making such changes also will affect tourism.
5. Cumulative impact of vibrating trucks causing damage to buildings. Vibrate or shake any structure (especially historic older buildings) long enough and something must give.

Air Quality

Crystalline silica & dust

This is the air that we breath. The dust that is visibly evident in our homes and the invisible dust that relates to health issues. The location of the dust monitor in View St was such that it minimised the results. Health complaints include increased eye infections, asthma and rhinitis. The dust modelling is based on traditional weather data. The weather is anything but predictable

Project is not expected to cause adverse air quality impacts with respect crystalline silica. Daracon/Umwelt SSD6612 submission

1. **One day testing** for Crystalline silica is unconvincing and does not stand up to good practice.
2. Random samples should be taken from all over the quarry including the pug mill, crushing sites, stockpiles, and dust deposited on buildings plus surrounding areas not just the boundary.
3. Fly ash is not being tested.
4. Dust does not stop at the quarry boundary.
5. Silica dust can become airborne due to its lightness and travel outside of the quarry boundary.
6. Crystalline Silica dust can kill and Exposure through quarrying activity is a known issue, with risks especially during rock crushing activities or after blasting.
7. Reference of dangers including quarries by Doctor Karl Kruszelnicki's short video (Safe Work South Australia) <https://www.safework.sa.gov.au/workplaces/chemicals-substances-and-explosives/silica>
8. During the crushing operation the greater the reduction in size the higher the emissions and therefore more dust.
9. Silica dust can lead to the development of lung cancer, silicosis, kidney disease and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease.
10. An example of the possible dangers is reflected in the case of Joanna McNeill a 34-year-old, who was diagnosed in 2019 with silicosis after working at Boral Quarry in Montrose in an administration office for 7 years and was only diagnosed through a medical checkup.
11. inadequate Monitoring Is alarming due to the physical evidence of dust that I have experienced in my home whilst Martins Creek Quarry was operating. There is no monitor in our estate.
12. Let this not be like asbestos. Action is needed now and that includes monitoring not only in the quarry but the surrounding areas.
13. Our nearest monitor is near the gully house and although approved by the EPA is hardly high tech putting residents at risk.
14. **Global Warming & Climate Change.** Daracon have based their outcomes on past weather conditions. Past weather conditions cannot be relied upon for forecasting weather eg wind directions and force due to climate change.
15. Summers have been unprecedented with extreme heat, so evaporation rates are high causing more evaporation and therefore more dust. This will impact

negatively on trucks which have their loads watered down not being able to keep down the impact of dust due to evaporation.

16. My lived experience and evidence of dust in my home when the quarry was operating proves dust does not stop at the quarry boundary.
17. My Social amenity is negatively affected as I cannot open my windows whilst the quarry was operating.

There is no assurance or guarantee that Daracon - Martins Creek Quarry will not harm the communities and residents' health (the words not expected) is no assurance. Global warming and climate change contribute to the uncertainty. I disagree that there has been a comprehensive assessment with only one day testing on Crystalline Silica which is both alarming and unacceptable.

Noise

Necessary maintenance activities and/or environmental management controls, including vehicles/trucks moving in and out of the quarry for maintenance purposes as required will be undertaken 24 hours seven days per week.

Rail bridge and associated works over the Northern Railway Line may be undertaken 24 hours per day, seven days a week to suit rail shutdown periods.

*Rail loading and transportation may occur 24 hours per day, seven days a week
Daracon/Umwelt SSD6612 submission*

Noise pollution at night

1. 24 Hours 7 days a week from industry noise especially at night is unacceptable.
2. Trains are noisy when shunting and loading.
3. Noise echoes in the valley and living in a two storey house I am more effected.
4. Lack of sleep or interrupted sleep due to Martins Creek Quarry night time operations can lead to many health issues resulting in
 - reduced decision-making skills, judgement, alertness, and involuntary micro sleep
 - interfere with speech
 - disturb sleep
 - interrupt work
 - anxiety
 - other health effects

Noise impacts from extraction, crushing and loading operations

Daracon does not deem that we have a noise problem. This is contrary to my lived experience which is not valued. Quarries are noisy. Rock and metal create noise. Noise from blasting, stone crushers, (including mobile crushers) haulage truck traffic, bulldozers, loaders, and general **noise** from the operation of multiple plants within the quarry operation. A recipe that does not agree with residential housing.

1. Daracon do not recognise the issues of noise to myself and family which we have lived through. I live just over the one kilometre from the quarry boundary in a two-story house.
2. Daracon cannot prove they will not harm myself or families health with not expected, not predicted and potential impacts relating to noise which is unacceptable.
3. Daracon have put a nominal 25 years for me to be subjected to constant industrial noise
4. I do not understand how they technically rate each resident, but my lived experience questions their methodology.
5. The use of mobile crushing exacerbates the noise issues.

Vibration

1. My home being two-storey would be more impacted by blasting. Therefore, the blasting/noise vibration results must be higher which has not been taken into consideration. I see no predicted ground vibrations. There is some data on a single hole they drill for a blast. Will it be only one or multiple?
2. My lived experience is that I can feel the blasting through my body (both inside & outside of my home), I can hear the rattling of windows and see vibration in my household items. It is not unusual for local animals to react to the vibrations; dogs bark and horses become skittish.
3. All blasts are NOT the same. I have personally lived through many to know this. If the quarry becomes larger (more blasts or bigger blasts will occur) there is no certainty that we will not be negatively affected and in fact one would expect more vibration. They only give us predictions. They cannot be certain.
4. The long-term cumulative impact and damage to our home which Daracon has not taken into account. Over time any object subjected to shaking/vibration will have damage.
5. Noise related to blasting DBA reading not listed but very relevant to what is audible to the human ear. This is not nuisance noise and should be considered.
6. My social amenity is negatively impacted by blasting. The noise, worry, damage, dust and loss of vegetation, safety and visual impact. Being outside in the garden is no longer a pleasurable experience.
7. There is no assurance or guarantee (Daracon's submission uses the words, mitigation, projections, unlikely or estimates) that there will no damage to our home or harm health as I have lived the experience before without satisfactory solutions and I find this unacceptable especially without a buffer zone.

Biodiversity

Environment

Whilst Daracon has strived to minimise impacts on biodiversity through the design process, not all impact could be avoided by the proposed design and a detailed assessment of the impacts was undertaken of the Revised Project. The Revised

Project will require the additional disturbance of approximately 21 ha of native vegetation from within the 127 ha of the Project Area. Daracon/Umwelt SSD6612 submission

Land based offsets through the establishment of new Stewardship Sites purchasing credits from the market, and/or paying into the Biodiversity Conservation fund Daracon/Umwelt SSD6612 submission

Disruption of local wildlife corridors, wildlife and vegetation life ecosystems both on land, watercourses, in and around the sites that immediately adjoins Martins Creek Quarry will not be helped by Land based offsets, purchasing credits or paying into the biodiversity conservation fund.

They Daracon admit it could not be avoided and again the phrase 'minimise impacts' so they are admitting to harm. This will also extend beyond the quarry boundary. The risks outweigh the benefits which is why I strongly object to any expansion of Martins Creek Quarry.

Koalas

Facts.

1. Koalas are fussy eaters.
2. A colony will only eat what food source they have grown up with.
3. Eucalyptus glauca (Slaty Red Gum) is endemic to Dungog Shire.
4. Lack of vegetative corridors put koalas at risk. Many of these corridors have disappeared.
5. There is not a viable escape route leaving the koalas on the ground for an extended period to try and reach a safe haven.
6. A koala on the ground is highly vulnerable to all sorts of predators including dogs.
7. Koalas under stress are prone to Chlamydia.
8. In my lived experience I have witnessed koalas of varying sizes crossing Dungog Road, traveling on the ground across Dungog Road, in View Street and Wakaya Close Vacy.

Spotted Tail Quoll or Tiger Quoll (Dasyurus masulatus)

Are known in the area

Ref: Koala Habitat & Wildlife Study by William M. Dowling April 1997

Sightings at Black Rock Road, Mt Douglas Martins Creek.

Spotted Tail Quoll being endangered needs protecting and will be adversely impacted by bulldozing of 21 hectares of its habitat.

I oppose clearing of land due to putting both the Koala and Spotted Tail Quoll at risk.

Historic Heritage

Daracon - Martins Creek Quarry give no guarantee they will not adversely affect or damage or harm the Historic Heritage with the words:

“unlikely that the Revised Project will result in any adverse visual or physical impacts to the heritage significance of the HCAs or individually listed heritage items.”

“The implementation of mitigation measures to address traffic impacts are expected to prevent any impacts on heritage values associated with quarry truck movements.” Daracon/Umwelt SSD6612 submission

1. Historic heritage and tourism go hand in hand along with the peaceful rural setting that makes Paterson so special and which the local community is so proud of are at risk.
2. Laden trucks/truck and dogs are not invisible and detract tourist, cyclist and take away the ambiance which will harm the Historic heritage.
3. Vibration from trucks/truck & dogs over a long time must add to the cumulative negative effect on old buildings. Eg post office and old CBC building. Shake anything long enough and cracks will appear.
4. The Heritage Assessment by Umwelt was not accurate. The Paterson Historical Society has esteemed members with numerous books written between them. These books are considered reference books for the history of Paterson, Hunter valley and early colonization. It is amazing that Umwelt did not seek opinion or refer to this source for quality information. They instead chose an outdated and irrelevant source for their data.

Loss of lifestyle and social amenity

Dungog Shire Council's vision for the Shire is:

"A vibrant, united community, with a sustainable economy. An area where rural character, community safety and lifestyle are preserved."

Below is a list that demonstrate the loss of lifestyle and social amenity:

- Decrease in our standard of living due to the devaluation of our homes.
- Noise, dust, light pollution, and traffic safety.
- The negative visual impact of industry at our doorstep and effects surrounding our region.
- Trucks are not invisible.
- Loss of feeling secure and protected due to the noise, dust, air quality, trucks, damaged roads and blasting.
- Loss of quiet peaceful nights.
- Uncertainty to potential health risk to our communities, including our children and visitors

- Unable to open our house windows when the quarry is operating due to noise and dust.
- Unable to cycle (which is a great joy to me) in my immediate and surrounding area due to trucks, & air quality.

The whole experience of travelling on the road network to the local village or further beyond will become a total nightmare. There will be no escaping these large truck and dogs from the exit/entrance to the quarry through our small and heritage village. These never-ending trucks will make life both dangerous and miserable especially for the young and old.

Peaceful regular local walking tracks will be no longer due to air quality, noise, dust, trucks, fumes and safety.

Unable to eat outside in a cafe or stand on the footpath and have a conversation in Paterson due to truck fumes, noise, and the negative outlook.

Fear due lack of safety whilst driving due to the potholes and being sandwiched between trucks and buildups of traffic causing delays.

Loss of tradition and facilities eg short parking in front of Post Office. Crossing the road carrying parcels is dangerous.

Mental Health

The Social Impact Assessment did not give adequate attention to the mental health issues related to the operation of the quarry. A host of issues arise that include anxiety and depression but not limited to these two. It causes immense strain on individuals and their families. Sleep deprivation has its own set of mental and psychological health outcomes. A quarry that operates 24/7 will cause sleep deprivation.

Driving along the haulage route with convoys of trucks is also a cause for stress and anxiety.

Lack of Community Consultation

Meetings with Umwelt

1. Too limited in numbers of attendees to reflect the general community concerns.
2. Many issues were rushed and limited time to discuss.
3. Late notification of meetings and general information.
4. Minutes were either not distributed or were sent many months after meetings and not an accurate representation of the meeting.
5. Information flyers were biased towards Daracon and often lacking true and current information.
6. Complaint handling was either inadequate, late or not taken seriously.

As a resident of 24 years now living so close to the Martins Creek Quarry, I ask the department to refuse this application due to adversely impacting on my family's quality of life and that of my neighbour's, & surrounding community with adverse health issues, safety and damage of roads with so many trucks, blasting noise and vibration, along with devaluation of our properties. There are alternative hard rock quarries available making Martins Creek Quarry not a State Significant resource.

That the environmental, personal, economic and social cost would be too high should the quarry expand any further. Daracon's measures to mitigate risk cannot be guaranteed our safety and therefore inadequate.

Daracon cannot prove they will not harm the residents, families, children, grandchildren and the community and environment that we love and care for will be destroyed.

Photos attached



2021 Horns Cross Road. Vacy Daracon Truck & Dog. Note narrow, no centre line.



2021 Daracon truck & dog on Horns Crossing Road Vacy. Photo taken from View Street Vacy note there were 4 truck & dogs in convoy.



2021 Dungog Road Martins Creek School bus plus 3 trucks



Above mega amounts of water released from Martins Creek Quarry near Gully House Dungog Road Martin's Creek

Below Mega amounts of water released from Martins Creek Quarry Grace Ave Martins Creek





Martins Creek Quarry view from Merchants Road Martins Creek property boundary.





Dust monitor View Street Vacy



Koala - Paterson Valley Estate Vacy

