

14th November 2022

Independent Planning Commission
Suite 15.02, 135 King Street
SYDNEY NSW 2000

Martins Creek Quarry Project – Application No SSD-6612

I OPPOSE THE MARTINS CREEK QUARRY EXPANSION

Dear Sir/Madam

I oppose the proposed expansion of the Martins Creek Quarry, as I believe the large increase of truck movements to 40 per hour, 280 per day (who will police this number?) for 25 years will impact on the natural beauty and rural amenity of the communities in the Paterson River Valley area and the health and safety of the residents and visitors to the area. Would trucks delivering any products to the quarry be included in the maximum number of trucks movements per day or would these be additional?

The increase in quarry extraction, which was carried out illegally for a number of years and was the subject of a court case with Dungog Shire Council, and the number of trucks over recent years has already impacted on the lifestyle and amenity of the Martins Creek/Paterson area and beyond.

If this proposal was approved what guarantee is there that the quarry will not operate outside approved tonnage, therefore increasing the number of trucks even further?

There are a number of school bus stops from Martins Creek and along the proposed route to be used by the large trucks, through Paterson, Bolwarra, Lorn, creating a safety issue for children waiting for school buses to local primary schools, (Paterson, Vacy and Martins Creek) and to Dungog and Maitland High Schools from Paterson/Vacy/Gresford/Martins Creek/Butterwick and Dunns Creek areas. Students are dropped off the school bus in front of the Paterson Café in the afternoon, and on streets where it is necessary for them to cross what would be an even busier and more dangerous road.

The proposed entry onto Dungog Road is a safety issue entering near a crest on a narrow country road in an 80kph zone, just out of a 100kph zone, when heading south. In my lived experience, this is a reasonably busy road used not only by shire residents in their day to day activities, e.g. travelling to and from work, visiting shopping centres, recreational activities, etc, school buses and also a large number of visitors to the area use this road travelling to places like Dungog and the Barringtons, not only in motor vehicles but also cyclists use this route.

Anyone wanting to visit Tucker Park coming from south, turning into the park would create a hold up to traffic, or even a collision if trucks were not able to stop in time, while waiting for trucks from the quarry and appearing from the dogleg intersection at Maitland Road and Prince Street, to pass enabling entry to the park. There is also a safety issue for local residents walking to Tucker Park and the children's playground, having to cross the road and no footpaths or pedestrian crossing on south side of the park.

My lived experience having travelled to Dungog for work for over 30 years I have noticed the deterioration in road surface due to ever increasing number of trucks. All roads in the Dungog Shire are local roads, we do not have any designated main roads, therefore Council (ratepayers) is responsible for repair to the roads between the quarry and Tocal Road near the college and of course any other local roads should the trucks deviate from main haulage route.

I have had windscreen damage due to trucks, have had a truck driver heading south force me to back up on Gostwyck Bridge, even though I had started on bridge before he reached the start of the bridge on north side. Gostwyck Bridge is also a safety issue and delays as a single lane bridge. My lived experience of traffic build up on both sides of the bridge is a safety concern, particularly on the south side as traffic heading

north comes over the crest and finds a bank of vehicles/trucks. I have seen near misses due to banked up traffic on the south side of the bridge.

My lived experience attempting to make a right hand turn from Duke Street into King Street Paterson to attend the Pharmacy or Medical Centre is difficult as the trucks cut the corner heading south, which is a bigger safety issue with the proposed number of large trucks through the town. During floods this is the only way residents can access their properties in King Street and Queen Street and the community can access the chemist and medical centre.

Daracon's proposal to change the road alignment at the Post Office corner, will detract from the village amenity, as well as eliminate parking for patrons of the Cafés, service station, Post Office, Chemist, Medical Centre, Hairdresser, Hotel, supermarket and butcher. When there is a funeral at the Anglican church parking is further impacted. Parking is already limited in the village. Further reduction in parking would have a great impact on the businesses in the village.

My lived experience of fog in the Paterson area often stays until mid morning which could create a dangerous environment with excessive trucks along with the school buses and other vehicles.

Increase in air pollution, including silica dust which is a carcinogenic and can cause irreversible lung damage, which still escapes from trucks even if they are covered, impacts on the health of residents especially those who live near the quarry and along the proposed route from Martins Creek, through Paterson, Bolwarra, Lorn, Maitland, East Maitland and any other suburbs the trucks may travel to reach their destination.

Damage to residents' property is already severe and would only increase if expansion was approved. The noise created by the large number of trucks through Paterson on already deteriorating roads, Dungog Shire roads are already regarded as the worst in the state, and would only get worse. Would ratepayers be expected to pay extra rates to have roads repaired? The speed which some trucks travel is unsafe, particularly on our roads that were not intended for large trucks, let alone the numbers as per proposed expansion.

I believe the existing rail corridor should be used to transport the quarry product but if train loading is 24 hours per day, 7 days a week, it could create a problem at the level crossing in Paterson affecting traffic flow and it could impact on emergency vehicles, a heavy vehicle bypass around Paterson should have to be put in place, if this proposal was to be approved, before any expansion begins.

Some form of indicator showing level crossing is closed as vehicles approach the intersection of Church St and Gresford Road, to avoid the possibility of a collision between trucks and/or cars if a number of trucks are backed up waiting for the train to pass the crossing.

If there is a flood, or any other reason, the road is cut at Tucker Park traffic is sent via Prince Street, very difficult and dangerous corner for trucks to navigate, Main Road, past the Railway Station, and Sloane Street, returning to Maitland Road near Stockers and Partridge. These residential streets are not meant for large numbers of trucks, and as there are no footpaths residents are forced to walk along the edge of the road creating an even more dangerous situation. My lived experience when this happened recently was I noticed that for two large vehicles to travel along Sloane Street one had to pull over to let the other pass, this would create a problem if there were 40 trucks an hour as well as other vehicles using these streets. This would also make it more difficult for residents in these streets to enter/exit their properties.

Exiting and entering streets and driveways anywhere along the designated haulage route, or any other 'local' roads. Access to and from Tocal College would be difficult for staff, students, the many visitors to the college, including volunteers who collect the meals for Meals on Wheels deliveries should the development be approved and the increase in trucks become a reality.

Intersection of Maitland Road and Prince Street with limited vision to the south for vehicles entering and exiting this corner. The intersection of Gresford Road and Church Street would be hazardous, with traffic not only from residents, but increased with traffic to/from Paterson Public School and Pre-school by parents and buses. Also traffic to the Cemetery following a funeral.

Intersections of Paterson Road and Tocal Road at Paterson, especially if trucks go over the bridge, intersection of Paterson Road and Tocal Road at Bolwarra with traffic, including increased number of trucks from Hanson Quarry and near the entrance to the Bolwarra lookout and playground.

My lived experience recently travelling from East Maitland on Melbourne Street, around 3.15pm, traffic was banked back along Melbourne Street from New England Highway to the roundabout at Morpeth Road and Cumberland Street, near East Maitland Railway Station. If large numbers of trucks are attempting to enter Melbourne Street from Pitnacree Road/Flat Road this would cause a major traffic jam and traffic would also be backed up along Pitnacree Road. I use this route to travel to and from East Maitland to shop and visit friends. I believe that trucks have been known to deviate from proposed main route along Melbourne Street and travel along Lawes Street before joining the highway.

During extreme weather earlier this year The New England Highway was cut and all traffic was using Flat Road, it took me over one hour to travel from Lawes Street, near George Street, to Paterson. If the proposed number of trucks were using this route also the traffic congestion would have been horrendous. We are told, by experts, that we should expect more extreme weather conditions in the future, so there is a strong possibility that this could happen again.

There have been numerous sightings of Koalas, this already endangered symbol of Australia, in the Martins Creek local area and would be even more threatened by removal of more of their natural habitat. Should this expansion be approved the bulldozing of further land will adversely impact on the local koala population and other wildlife that call this area home.

I understand quarries in the Marulan area have worked with the community in alleviating noise and light from the quarry and send material by specially built rail to a Sydney depot where trucks can access the stockpile why can't Daracon use existing rail to transport quarry product to a location closer to roads designed for heavier traffic.

Should this proposal be approved what guarantee is there that amendments to tonnage, travel route and the number of truck movements would not be increased during the 25 year period, I understand this can happen without community consult, and how would the conditions of the expansion be policed, as Daracon have not kept to previous agreements.

This development application should be refused.