

**From:** Marilyn Coakes <[REDACTED]>  
**Sent:** Saturday, 12 November 2022 11:19 AM  
**To:** IPCN Enquiries Mailbox  
**Subject:** Martins Creek Quarry Expansion - SSD6612

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
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Dear Commissioners,

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the proposed expansion of the Martins Creek Quarry to which I am totally opposed for numerous reasons.

I reside on a 6+ acre property at the bottom end of View Street on the Paterson Valley Estate and am impacted by dust and noise depending on quarry operations. Blasting in particular unsettles my livestock and sets my dogs and those belonging to neighbours barking. It is not unusual to see the neighbour's horses spooked by the blasts. Fortunately as my property slopes away from the ridge of View Street, I haven't experienced any cracks in my property although the vibrations from a blast can be felt underfoot outside.

My main concern however is for the impact the proposed truck movements of a truck&dog every 90 seconds through Paterson would have on the safety of myself and all other residents and visitors both young and old. You will no doubt have traversed the village roads from the rail crossing through the Gresford Road/Duke & King Streets intersection where we have on the one side the Court House Hotel, a drive in bottle shop, a barber and the Post Office while opposite is a hairdresser, a service station with the Riverview Deck Cafe, then the Country Cafe with Lottery facilities, all these businesses just a stone's throw from the rail crossing. There are parking spaces either side of the road enabling elderly or disabled people to park conveniently for access to these businesses plus pedestrians crisscrossing from one to another with the pharmacy and doctors' surgery slightly further down on the left.

I note that Daracon have acquired a vacant block just beyond the Country Cafe proposing a car park. What a joke - a steep block to the river which, if ever levelled significantly, is just about opposite the most dangerous corner in the village, and could offer no solution as people would still have to cross the road to get to the businesses on the Post Office side - no mean feat dodging a truck every 90 seconds. I myself am in my late 70s with arthritic feet that don't operate quickly any more and there are far worse than I.

The Paterson Lodge with its new patrons is now thriving again, they having purchased the property since the Dungog Council won the case against Daracon who were then forced to comply with the 1991 development approval of a maximum 24 truck movements a day. The previous patrons had wanted to retire but had struggled to sell their property for the many years that Daracon were illegally running up to 600 trucks per day. Who would want to stay overnight or sit outside with a coffee bombarded by truck noise and fumes.

Further along King Street just beyond the PO is a country clothing store, then the School of Arts which accommodates daily ballet classes, amongst other things - so children of all ages are being dropped off and collected at varying times in addition to several school buses morning and afternoon who pick up and drop off in Paterson itself, plus numerous stops all along the haulage route from East & Central Maitland & Bolwarra right through to Vacy, Gresford and Dungog. Imagine the risks to all these youngsters from Kindy to High School crossing the road to reach home or going to the cafe or shop for some sweets or an ice cream. Our traffic is heavy enough these days without trucks every 90 seconds - will common sense only prevail when a child or elderly person is severely injured or, God forbid, killed.

With the local IGA and the butcher catering to Paterson, Vacy and all the surrounding areas, the village Church opposite and Stockers further along the road, it is not hard to see just how vibrant this historic village of Paterson has become. Tucker Park attracts picnickers, mums with toddlers enjoy the covered playground, dog walkers, etc., enjoy the park throughout the week as well as at weekends, even the travelling fishmonger selling his wares once or twice a week at the edge of the park. All requiring safe pedestrian or vehicle access to and from yet turning onto the Maitland Road is not that easy from Tucker Park. There is a blind bend as Maitland Road meets the left hand Prince and Duke Street triangle, another acute danger spot as people head to the Tavern and Bistro (businesses that have also managed to change hands since Daracon was forced to conform).

There are numerous private houses either side of the main thoroughfare. I knew that they were badly impacted both mentally and physically when illegal truck movements were at their height but having listened to the livestream representations of many members of the community to yourselves at Tocal, I became even more aware and incredibly moved by what they had all endured through no fault of their own, and it was clear that it had impacted all ages. I am incensed that years of illegal quarrying, during which time the size of the area quarried was doubled illegally with no regard to flora, fauna or community, has resulted in little penalty to the perpetrator apart from the court costs once they were found guilty. For all these years MCQAG, the Community and Dungog Council have respectfully pursued all avenues to have their objections to Daracon's operations and its damaging effects on the village and community brought to the fore. Perhaps we shouldn't have put our trust in our democratic system, step by step believing that we would be heard and that honesty, fair play and the rights of the 'average individual' mattered. Maybe we should have demonstrated, called in the big media channels, called out the perpetrators!! Finally I have to say that I am disgusted that the Department of Planning has rubber stamped and recommended the extension to the Quarry irrespective of the Social Impact which they cited as "unquantifiable" and declared that the impacts are "of an acceptable level". Well not so if you or yours live on this nightmare route, not so if it's your small business that can no longer operate as its too difficult for people to access safely, not so if your mental health is severely damaged by the noise and pollution of trucks, your house actually shakes, your property depreciates and you are unable to sell even if you need or want to move. If "acceptable" denotes the quality of appraisal given to regional projects by the department then they should take a good hard look at themselves and their ignorance of social impact in general. At a time when people are being encouraged to move to the regions, as our cities become ever more crowded, shouldn't we be protecting those thriving small communities and their infrastructure that are waiting to welcome newcomers who are wanting to escape to the country with all that it has to offer (providing its not got a rogue quarry operator in close proximity)? Why would anyone allow these small thriving regional communities to be destroyed in the interest of a greedy private company when their product is easily obtained elsewhere from quarry sites with good road access? It's a no brainer!!

Personally as an older resident I am likely to relocate closer to family in the near future so I will not be exposed to a quarry expansion but for those that have been in the area for generations and newcomers alike their lifestyle has to be protected. They deserve nothing less.

In conclusion I implore you to refuse Daracon's application to expand Martins Creek Quarry for all the many reasons you have heard and seen regarding this proposed expansion; and although I understand that you might not normally take the historical data into consideration in this case it is imperative as it clearly demonstrates the 'lived experience' of the community since Daracon has operated the Quarry, the effects on the whole community and the village alike. Please don't allow this beautiful historical village and thriving community to die, please preserve it for future generations.

Thank you and kind regards,  
Marilyn Coakes

Sent from my iPad