

## IPC submission Stone Ridge Quarry Project Proposal

I have serious concerns, not only with the implications should this project go ahead, but also with the limitations of the planning assessment process to consider the broader issues and cumulative negative impacts it will have on the wider community and environment. I am hopeful that the IPC will make a holistic assessment of this project beyond the constraints of the planning process, which by design are focussed on project specifics as a stand-alone entity rather than how it will fit in with the wider community.

We are advised through the EIS and Responses to Submissions, that after extensive consultation, the project footprint has been reduced to 69HA. The negative environmental impacts will be cancelled out by bio-diversity Offsets that will be actioned prior to the project being carried out. Offsets are problematic at the best of times, and are not a feasible strategy for this project, in particular. The location of the site is as significant as the diverse flora and fauna it supports. It is an integral part of a broader eco-system that is already under stress. The notion that a replacement can be established and integrated into the existing eco-system is totally unrealistic. It takes years for an eco-system of this complexity to develop and to suggest that the offsets can be actioned, within the 30yr project life, is fanciful.

The proponent confirms, that adverse consequences of the site clearance are inevitable. We as members of the NSW community will be sacrificing 69HA of State Forest, a community asset which has been entrusted to Forestry Corporation of NSW to manage on our behalf.

The Forestry Corporation Website outlines their principles of ecologically sustainable forest management. Their dedicated team permanently protects a million hectares of land for wildlife and conservation. "Forestry Corporation has been appointed to manage state forests for multiple uses, including conservation, tourism, regional development, renewable timber production, in line with policies and regulations established by State and Commonwealth Governments."

Let us look at how this project aligns with the principles and policies.

There is nothing remotely sustainable about clearing the forest back to the bare bedrock.

All the previous conservation efforts will be pushed aside by big bulldozers. The viability of the fauna and flora listed as vulnerable will be compromised. How can that be compatible with longer term conservation and Koala management objectives?

Tourism and recreation are not compatible with mining operations. The predicted volume of heavy truck movements on Italia Road will make access to adjacent forest and community areas a nightmare for potential tourists, visitors to adjacent sporting amenities and local-residents.

Regional Development. The proponent outlines perceived benefits arising from the project in terms of employment opportunities, satisfying market demand for construction consumables and generating State Revenue. I contest that none of these benefits are specific to the selected site. **The losses are irreplaceable, the potential benefits can be sourced from elsewhere.**

The land is currently designated for sustainable timber production. This comes with its own compromises but one that the community accepts provided it is operated in line with policies and regulations established by State and Government agencies to meet community expectations.

The decline in Koala population has been identified as a significant National Issue. The Federal Government has actioned a National Recovery Plan to stop the trend of decline in Koala population by having resilient, connected, and genetically healthy metapopulations across its range, and to increase the extent, quality and connectivity of habitat occupied.

The NWS Government has committed to the joint delivery of the recovery plan and allocated M\$80 towards Great Koala National Park in Northern NSW. Basic risk management points to the necessity to have dispersed viable populations, **which Wallaroo State Forest has**. We cannot rely on Great National Koala Park being the sole solution. Put all your eggs in one basket, and what happens when a bush fire goes through (which it most likely will), you end up with a basket of fried eggs.

**That** the Forestry Corporation as a State entity, would collaborate with the proponent on a project that will have significant adverse impacts on an established Koala population, in apparent contradiction of both State and National Policy, quite frankly is beyond belief, and I consider represents a cross breach of community trust.

The site has been selected as it was the best identified to access rock resources, no viable alternative sites, we are told, were identified. I seek to challenge this assertion.

From my observations there is an extensive rock resource running from North of Raymond Terrace up as far as Karuah. Existing quarries already access this resource; Eagleton, Seaham, Karuah Quarry, all of which have, or are seeking approval to extend operations for up to 30 years and 150 Million TPA. Brandy Hill Quarry is also planning to access the resource for a similar duration and volume. The other Quarrying entities have been able to locate viable sites, maybe ARDG should be talking with them about a joint development, sharing the risks and the rewards.

**It would appear there is adequate viable resource to satisfy the market without the need to trash 69HA of State Forrest and decimate crucial habitat for at risk species of fauna and flora.**

Thank you.

*Allan Evans*



### STONE RIDGE QUARRY PROJECT (SSD-10432)

Date: 10:00 AM Thursday 14 November 2024

<b>Opening Statement</b>			10:00
1	Dr Justin Meleo (10 mins)	Australian Resource Development Group Pty Limited	10:07
2	Allan Evans (5 mins)		10:19
3	Megan Benson (5 mins)	Gloucester Environment Group Inc.	10:26
4	Neil Turner (5 mins)		10:33
5	Margaret Keast (5 mins)		10:40
6	Garth Nagle (5 mins)	Forestry Corporation	10:47
7	Debbie Lees (5 mins)		10:54
8	Graham Lee (10 mins)		11:01
9	Rebecca Beetson (5 mins)		11:13
<b>Morning Break</b>			11:20
10	Anna Kerr (5 mins)	Save Balickera Incorporated	11:40
11	Bruce Lyon (5 mins)	Hinterland Port Stephens Town Team (an unincorporated local residents group representing the 12 villages of West Ward of Port Stephens LGA)	11:47
12	Carmel Northwood (5 mins)	Koala Koalition Econetwork Port Stephens Inc	11:54
13	Johanna Lynch (10 mins)	Hunter Community Environment Centre	12:01
14	Steven Larsen (5 mins)		12:13
15	Charlee Connor (5 mins)		12:20
16	Damon Bird & Justin Meleo (10 mins)	Australian Resource Development Group Pty Limited	12:27
17	Jessie Evans & James McDonough (10 mins)	Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure	12:39
<b>Closing Statement</b>			12:51

**Please note:**

1. Only those who have pre-registered with the Office of the Commission will be permitted to speak at today's hearing. The Chair will enforce the speaking times that were nominated, in this instance, by each speaker. However, the Chair also reserves the right to allow speakers additional time to clarify information and/or provide further technical material. The Commission also reserves the right to terminate speakers before their speaking time is complete if the speaker is disruptive or irrelevant. The Commission already has copies of all written comments made to the Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure in response to the public exhibition of the proposal, and comments made directly to the Commission. The purpose of this meeting / hearing is for the Commission to hear views on the Department's assessment report. The assessment report and recommended conditions are available on the IPCN website: [www.ipcn.nsw.gov.au](http://www.ipcn.nsw.gov.au). If you have registered to speak but your name is not on the list, or if you have any other questions, please call (02) 9383 2100 or email [ipcn@ipcn.nsw.gov.au](mailto:ipcn@ipcn.nsw.gov.au). Those registered to speak are requested to familiarise themselves with the Commission's Public Hearing / Meeting Guidelines prior to presenting to the panel.