



New South Wales Government
Independent Planning Commission

TRANSCRIPT OF MEETING

RE: EAGLETON QUARRY PROJECT (SSD-7332)

COMMUNITY STAKEHOLDER MEETING

PANEL: ADRIAN PILTON (CHAIR)
ALISON MCCABE
JULIET GRANT

OFFICE OF THE IPC: BRADLEY JAMES
TAHLIA HUTCHINSON
STUART MORGAN

SPEAKERS: CR GIACOMO ARNOTT
MARGARETE RITCHIE
CHARLEE CONNOR
VINCE FURLONGER
ANNA KERR

LOCATION: SEAHAM SCHOOL OF ARTS
SEAHAM ROAD, SEAHAM

DATE: 11:00AM – 12:35PM
FRIDAY, 31ST MAY 2024

<THE MEETING COMMENCED

MR ADRIAN PILTON: Okay. Good morning. Welcome. I have to read a statement first. Before we begin, I'm speaking to you from Worimi land. I
5 acknowledge the traditional owners of all the countries from which we meet today. I pay my respects to the elders past and present and to the elders from other communities who may be participating today. I'm Adrian Pilton and I am the chair of this panel. Joining me are my fellow Commissioners, Alison McCabe and Juliet Grant. We're joined by Bradley James, Tahlia Hutchinson and Stuart Morgan
10 from the Office of the Independent Planning Commission.

As you're aware, due to the low number of registered speakers, the Commission has cancelled the public meeting for the Eagleton Quarry Project, SSD-7332, which is currently before this Commission panel for determination. Excuse me.
15 The Commission thought it was appropriate to meet separately with those who had registered to speak at the public meeting to hear their views on the application.

In the interests of openness and transparency and to ensure the full capture of information, today's meeting is being recorded and a complete transcript will be produced and made available on the Commission's website. We've set aside 15 minutes today to hear your views, so please begin.
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CR GIACOMO ARNOTT: Sure.

MS ALISON MCCABE: Before that, Adrian, just for the record, I'd like to note that I know Giacomo Arnott in a professional capacity in my role as the chair of the Hunter and Central Coast Regional Planning Panel and we sit on a panel, not regularly but occasionally over the years.
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MR PILTON: Thanks, Alison. Okay, over to you.
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CR ARNOTT: [unintelligible 00:01:46].

MR PILTON: It's recording, yes. I hope it is.
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CR ARNOTT: And I'm assuming that [unintelligible 00:01:51].

MR PILTON: Understood, understood.

CR ARNOTT: Well good morning, Commissioners. Thanks for providing the opportunity to address you today on behalf of my local community. I'm a Councillor on Port Stephens Council, however I note that my submission today is being done in my capacity as a public official and not in my capacity representing Port Stephens Council or any other organisation. So everything I say today is on
40 behalf of myself and I believe on behalf of my community.
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I'm speaking in opposition to this DA being approved in its current form. The reason I am here addressing you today is because unusually this is a development

application that I don't have any decision-making authority on, either through Council or through the planning panel, which if it was, if one of those two were involved in the decision making on this, obviously I wouldn't be able to be opposed because each DA needs to be assessed on its merits.

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It is very unusual that I can be open and frank about my thoughts on a development application, so I'm taking the opportunity and making sure my community's views are represented here today. And because this DA is somewhat similar to other DAs, I just wanted to make it clear that all of my thoughts today relate only and specifically to this DA and shouldn't be taken as a reflection on any other DA or any other aspect of any other DA, of any other proponent, of this proponent or anything else. All of my thoughts are specific to this DA only.

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Local residents have contacted me about this proposal in their droves. While the number of registrations today potentially doesn't reflect that, this session is in the middle of a working day, as I'm sure you can appreciate, and the Eagleton and East Seaham area, their demographics are just full of working families who probably would've found it very hard to get along here today. So that's why I thought that I'll make use of my day at work and come in and put their views forward.

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So I want to recognise the economic need and imperative for rock related products. The state and federal government's going bonkers with their housing targets and infrastructure projects, all of which need rock relate material.

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What isn't so clear to me thought is that local residents here in Port Stephens and road users of Italia Road and the M1 motorway should bear the brunt of Sydney's population crisis for completely unreasonable impacts on local roads. Locals deserve to feel safe when they drive through our suburbs on residential roads and on to the M1 motorway as they travel to work, take their kids to and from school, go and do their shopping or for any leisure related travel. This proposal will have a major impact on road safety, both on Italia Road and on the M1 motorway.

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The latest traffic management proposal suggests that all vehicles, all trucks coming from Italia Road will turn left on to the M1 motorway and enter the motorway via an extended acceleration ramp and then travel north to Tarean Road and then turn around in that spaghetti junction of roads and end up coming back southbound on the M1 motorway.

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I question whether any of the consultants who prepared this plan ever actually has travelled on Tarean Road and followed the path that these fully laden trucks would need to take. The local traffic to and from Karuah or Swan Bay would be put at risk every single day from these trucks following this ridiculous proposal to go via the Tarean Road intersection.

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It's well known, locally at least, that Karuah is the next frontier of housing in Port Stephens. Two recent planning proposals have been recommended for resubmission, which, if that goes ahead, would unlock literally thousands of new

homes in Karuah, if not tens of thousands of new homes in Karuah. How will the thousands of cars generated from this future residential development interact with the hundreds of trucks every day moving through a maze of on and off ramps? I'm sure that the current residents of Karuah and Swan Bay would be sounding the alarm bells when it comes to new residential developments.

The kind of outcome that the proponent is putting forward will have a perverse outcome on housing generation in Port Stephens. We've just gotten our new housing targets in the last few days, Karuah's a big part of reaching them and if we can't get past the traffic and the danger that's posed by the trucks going into this intersection and this off ramp and these on ramps, it's not going to happen, in my view.

The obvious solution in my mind is to impose a consent condition that requires the construction of a flyover over the M1 motorway to allow the trucks to go over the motorway, straight into the southbound lanes through a southbound acceleration lane. This Tarean Road exit proposal, which is clearly, in my view, been thought up by a bunch of consultants who think they've hit a masterstroke to avoid paying their fair share for infrastructure that would keep several Port Stephens –

MR PILTON: Sorry, can I just ask a question? You're talking about the flyover off Italia Road –

CR ARNOTT: In my view, that's what the –

MR PILTON: Thank you.

CR ARNOTT: – consent condition should be.

MR PILTON: Okay.

CR ARNOTT: So, sorry, the Tarean Road exit proposal, in my view, has been thought up by a bunch of consultants who think they've hit a masterstroke to avoid paying their fair share for infrastructure that would keep Port Stephens' community safe. There's no way to enforce these trucks going north only. There's no way to do it and even if they did go north only, the impact on traffic and community safety is impossible to support. Residents have advised me that getting planning Department enforcement for breach of consent conditions is extremely difficult, if not impossible.

If the temptation to travel south is removed, then the problem's removed completely. I'm sure it's in the planning documentation that every single truck wanting to travel southbound will need to travel an extra 23 km just to get back to the same intersection that they're travelling north out of if they go north through Tarean road and back down south. Twenty-three kilometres. The amount of emissions that are being generated from each truck travelling an extra 23 km is enormous. The cost of fuel and truck repairs for the proponent and road repairs over 23 km of road for the taxpayers of New South Wales, surely significant

enough to justify the Planning rejecting the traffic solution put forward and imposing the logical solution of a flyover.

5 Separately, the Department has assessed biodiversity impacts of this proposal as acceptable, despite the noted effect on our endangered koala population, native vegetation and southern myotis breeding habitat. Anyone who has looked into Port Stephens would know that we really care about our koalas here.

10 The Port Stephens Koala Hospital works every single day to try and preserve the species through a bunch of dedicated volunteers who literally volunteer every single day to look after koalas, respond to koala strikes, respond to habitat destruction and clearing and make sure that they're being looked after and able to survive, for future generations to be able to see a koala in the wild.

15 Projects like this that clearly haven't done everything possible to reduce the impact on local biodiversity to zero is making the job of these environmental warriors even more difficult. All of this environmental damage just to supply some rock products to an unsustainably growing Sydney base. The consent conditions should be amended to reflect a zero impact outcome on native vegetation, the
20 southern myotis breeding habitat and our endangered koala population. We cannot allow those who have no voice to be victims of this proposal when it can and should be designed in a way that has zero impact.

25 If that means a few less dollars to the pockets of the big corporates in exchange for saving our biodiversity and our local environment, then that is an outcome that I'm extremely comfortable with and I think you should be comfortable with as well. Local residents who I represent are relying on you to make the right decision.

30 Locals in this area aren't unreasonable. They're generally very educated people, who have professional careers, who have brought families up in the area, they know the area well, they care about their area. They're not unreasonable. They're happy to coexist with this quarry, with other quarries, with whatever needs to be done to support the state's growth.

35 But if they are to coexist, they must be protected. The safety of their families must be the number one priority and the local environment they live with and that they bought into has to be protected as well. You have the power to amend the conditions of consent to better reflect the needs of the community.

40 Two of the most important ones that I think will make the biggest difference are to enforce a flyover at the Italia Road intersection and to reduce the biodiversity impact to as close to zero as possible. Seventy-nine percent reduction in impact with koalas is not close enough to zero for my liking and I'm sure it's not close
45 enough to zero for the liking of the community and especially the environmental groups.

I'm confident the other submitters today and the written submissions will propose a bunch of other amendments to the consent conditions and I ask you to consider

those favourably alongside my proposed to changes to consent conditions. I want to thank you for your time and your patience. Please make sure my community isn't the victim of the relentless pursuit of corporate profits. Prioritise their safety and the continued existence of our local environment. Thanks.

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MR PILTON: Thanks, Giacomo. Any questions, Juliet?

MS JULIET GRANT: Yeah. Thank you. The point about the flyover is very clear. The conditions that you're talking about that require – or suggested amendments to protect the biodiversity, are there specific conditions that you're referring to? Or using the term "condition" generally?

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CR ARNOTT: Just using it in a broad term, as in like I would like you guys to potentially go back with a request for information or work with Council to work out what conditions of consent can be applied to reduce that biodiversity back to as close to zero as possible.

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MS GRANT: Okay. Thank you.

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CR ARNOTT: Thanks.

MS MCCABE: So just following up on that. I suppose any development will have an impact. What you're looking at or what you're saying to us is that you don't think they've gone far enough in terms of mitigating – there will be disturbance, there will be some impact, you just want it to be a lot less than what's been put in front of us at this stage.

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CR ARNOTT: That's exactly right. I think the development application is submitted, as you say, there will be some impact on, you know, whether it's grass or bush or forest or whatever it might be, there's always going to be an impact and the job of the consent authority is to try and minimise that impact as much as possible and from my look at the DA documentation, I don't think it's gone far enough.

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And, as I said, if that means a reduction in quarry area or changes to access or changes to the footprint or whatever it is that needs to be done, I think that should be done and sometimes it is very easy to get large chunks of reduced impact for modest changes. So if that's at all possible, I think that should be followed.

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MS MCCABE: Thanks.

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MR PILTON: I don't have any other questions.

MS GRANT: Yes, nothing further.

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MR PILTON: I would just – if any of your constituents would like to submit, they can submit in writing until next Friday.

MR JAMES: Yes.

MS HUTCHINSON: 5 pm.

5 **MR PILTON:** So I encourage them to write in if they feel that way.

CR ARNOTT: [unintelligible 00:13:30]. Thank you.

10 **MR PILTON:** Yes, thank you very much and it was nice to see [name redacted].

CR ARNOTT: Yeah. You were good, weren't you? Yeah.

MR PILTON: You were very good.

15 **CR ARNOTT:** Thanks for your time, guys.

MR PILTON: Thank you. Thanks.

20 **MS GRANT:** Thank you.

MR PILTON: Statement. Good morning and welcome. Before we begin, I'm speaking to you from Worimi land. I acknowledge the traditional owners of all the countries from which we meet today. I pay my respects to their elders, past, present and to the elders from other communities who may be participating today. I'm Adrian Pilton and I am the chair of this panel. Joining me are my fellow Commissioners, Alison McCabe and Juliet Grant. And we're also joined by Bradley James, Tahlia Hutchinson and Stuart Morgan from the Office of the Independent Planning Commission.

30 As you're aware, due to the low number of registered speakers, the Commission has cancelled the public meeting for the Eagleton Quarry Project, SSD-7332, which is currently before this Commission panel for determination. The Commission thought it was appropriate to meet separately with those who had registered to speak at the public meeting to hear their views on the application.

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40 **MS MARGARETE RITCHIE:** Okay. Well, you know my name and I am here representing VOWW. Now, VOWW is a community organisation for the west of Port Stephens and we look after the problems that people have, bring them to attention of Council etcetera. And I'm not just to be here to be difficult to the proponent, by the way. That would be a waste of my time and of course there's other things we could be doing.

45 All the residents want is a fair resolution and that's been the case with lots of

quarry problems. Problems for the existing residents and to the future residents in the locality, residents who will see no financial gain or benefit, as the proponent surely will. All residents can see is the change to the character, the ambience of the area and possibly changes that they would have to make to their lifestyles. I can speak from past and present experience, as I live about 40 minutes from Brandy Hill Quarry, just down the road on Brandy Hill Drive, which is the main haulage route for that quarry. I'm also a member of that CCC.

So I'm well acquainted with problems because they come in all the time and we hear them from CCC members and we find out how the quarry management deals with them. The main complaints that come to CCC are noise of road haulage, the noise of crushers and other equipment, the dust, the light, the vibration of the blasting, broken windscreens from gravel that's deposited and loss of habitat for the local koalas, phascogales and some bird species.

So that in consent for the expansion of the Hanson quarry has not yet been adopted but we're waiting to see if any of those issues will be more resolved. However, they have voluntarily made some changes already and we see the difference. The first issue I'd like to bring to your attention is the lack of strategic planning for quarries in this area. There will potentially be three quarries within close proximity to each other and they'll be using Italia Road for access to the Pacific Highway. I'm not going to discuss the strategic planning today but I do have a document that was put together by a whole lot of community groups and I'll leave that with you.

MR PILTON: Thank you.

MS RITCHIE: You may have seen it already, I'm not sure. But that's for you to read if you haven't and it's a collaboration of a whole lot of groups throughout Port Stephens because there are big issues with quarries, trucks, sand quarries, you know, proliferation of this all within one area. So state ministers have seen this now and we're waiting for their replies. All quarries apply for different operating and dispatch hours. They have different interpretations of noise and dust and abatement. The DPE assesses these individually rather than applying the same conditions for everyone.

So there should be a best practice policy and we don't believe that Eagleton is following any kind of best practice. At present, the Boral owned Seaham quarry is at response to submission stage and Eagleton and Boral share a common boundary, which makes it almost like a super quarry with dust and noise from the quarrying of over two and a half million tons a year. Yet no cumulative impact has been applied. It's all just assessed individually. The same applies to hours of operation and haulage and the combined effect on the surrounding residents has never been considered noteworthy.

The IPC's conditions of consent for Brandy Hill applied conditions that were fair to most residents and did not impact on the overall operation and profitability of that quarry owner. Haulage from 6 am to 6 pm means that the company trucks will

be loaded the evening before, ready for dispatch in the morning and therefore will not wake up people at ungodly hours as empty trucks rattle up at 4.30 to 5 o'clock. So that has already stopped voluntarily. It's not – condition hasn't been [unintelligible 00:05:30].

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So the other thing too was a decision that the 6 am to 6 pm means that local wildlife isn't going to be impacted on that road or any of the other [unintelligible 00:05:47] which is all through rural area, as is Eagleton. And again, voluntarily, 6 am is what they're now doing and we've found that dead wallabies, koalas, we've found dead koalas in the past, has almost stopped. So it shows that if you have those operation hours, it's not just for the residents but also for the wildlife, which in most people's eyes these days is important.

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We suggest that Eagleton should have similar load and dispatch hours to protect wildlife that will be impacted with quarry operations and also loading, not 5 am for loading. It should be a 6 o'clock start for everything or seven, whatever you decide. Best practice for noise and dust suppression must be imposed. The surrounding residences are all reliant on rainwater tanks and therefore excessive dust settling on rooves can cause health problems. With the cluster of quarries that may be operational, this could be exacerbated.

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Research has shown that the rock being excavated is highly prized because of its hardness. However, this ignimbrite rock, while it may be excellent for road surfacing, is silicic. From research, we're told of the health implication of silicates and therefore the potential harm to residents as well as workers on the site. Every part of the quarrying process creates dust, every single bit.

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To this end, the quarry operator, in executing his duty of care, must make all necessary efforts to eliminate the serious health potential and to protect all surrounding neighbours by way of information and actively striving to create a safe environment. A natural barrier only goes part way to solving this issue. If quarry is approved with housing in such close proximity, practices must be modernised and best practice applied to avoid harm from the dust generally and silica in particular.

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We submit that the proponent encloses all equipment, crushers, the lot, to avoid dispersion and the added benefit is it would also suppress noise. It's essential that all possible measures are adopted before the quarry begins operations. Best practice should be the norm. Therefore, in the instance of dust and noise suppression, all equipment should be enclosed. Brandy Hill conditions of consent mandates that there must be a noise management plan, including the enclosure of all fixed processing equipment and partial enclosure of the mobile crushers to ensure compliance with noise criteria, best practice management and no commencement until all that is done.

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Now, there's comparison between Brandy Hill Quarry and Eagleton and I'm referring to Brandy Hill because it's a good example. I know all about it. Brandy Hill has a significant hill behind it. Its quarrying is down here somewhere, the hill

is here and then there are residents further along down and up the next hill. It's called Brandy Hill. People complain about dust and noise. They monitor their water tanks for dust, whatever the dust is that is washed off the rooves. There's constant complaints about noise and dust.

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Up until this stage, Hanson has not had to enclose anything. Now they will have to and that consent will be taken on very shortly because they've just almost finished some of the other things they had to do. So we don't understand how Eagleton can say, "Oh, we've got a ridgeline." Well, Brandy Hill has a ridgeline and a hill and it doesn't work.

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The other thing is that it's really inappropriate for a quarry to be operational and have these minimal noise and dust mitigations and only employ them quarterly. By the time the data is collected, analysed, the damage has been done. Complaints made, logged with the quarry and the EPA but what's going to be the outcome? Are there consequences? We never hear about consequences of exceedances. Right. And even if it's a fine, that's no consequence to a quarry that's annually going to make millions of dollars of profit and that's not an exaggeration. No mention has been made of the potential of increase in population between Eagleton and Raymond Terrace.

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However, the Port Stephens Council has assessed a development called Monarch's Rise, which sits at the bottom of the ridge below Eagleton and along Six Mile Road. At present, the DA is for a hundred houses with another 600 to follow incrementally over the next few years. In addition to that, there's a development between 2,000 and 3,500 homes that's been planned for Kings Hill Urban Release Area. And already first two DAs have been submitted to Council for two precincts with over 150 homes. Now, that is still before the Land and Environment Court because there was an appeal against the decision made by the Commissioner of the Land and Environment. So but this is going to go ahead.

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We know, it doesn't matter how much we fight for environment, there will be housing. Now, that is considerable and they are below the ridge of Eagleton. Noise travels, dust travels, vibration travels. So we know people who are kilometres away from Hanson, when Hanson blasts, the other side of Seaham, one resident gets the vibrations every time. And it's because that rock strata happens to run that way under that particular house. So it happens. In truth, we question whether the quarry is actually appropriate this close to proposed urban release area.

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Haulage, we know most of the product is to be hauled to markets via Pacific Highway. However, there will be no doubt there will be deliveries that will be deemed local and this is a concern with a definition for local having to be actually mandated. Otherwise, it could mean anything. Martins Creek Quarry tried this on, when questioned to the IPC for Martins Creek, the quarry manager said, "Oh, local can be actually any."

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Well, that for us is a real problem in Brandy Hill because they would come down Brandy Hill Drive to get to some of the markets in Williamtown, Airport or

whatever and cumulative impact for us could be over a thousand trucks a day. It happened before, 2014, we had 1,200 trucks a day because both quarries were servicing a great big contract over in Williamstown. That's local. So we're saying you cannot say local deliveries can just wander down Italia Road, for example, which is a very substandard road.

So and I'll mention Italia Road in detail. It is has been slightly improved just recently in sections but it doesn't comply with any Austroads standards for heavy haulage. There are no verges, there are deep taper grades, the road is narrow, winding, numerous driveways and some on dangerous curves. Residents are aware of the dangers turning in and out of their driveways and the real danger of a truck driver not reacting quickly enough when they have to slow down to turn. That's really in everyone's minds, one of the big concerns.

And of course there are the animal strikes on the road that is through quite an environmentally sensitive area. Therefore there have to be strict rules about trucks using substandard roads for their deliveries and there has to be a way of monitoring which way those trucks are turning once they come out of the quarry and enter Italia Road.

So I've mentioned the cumulative effect of three quarries in such close proximity and then the potential cumulative and combined effect of haulage from three trucks, three quarries, using the intersection on the highway. And then combining with those from Karuah and Deep Creek, because the Karuah cluster, there are four or five in that Karuah cluster, and then of course the other traffic that is on the highway and Transport for New South Wales say that that's what highways are for or to accommodate this kind of traffic.

But we're also talking about the combination of the diesel particulates that are coming out of those trucks and recently there's been a lot of research into that and what it actually does to the local environment and to the people who live in that area. They're saying that the diesel particulates when trucks, for example, the Hume Highway, negate everything the government's trying to do in reducing that impact on climate change. So that has to be thought about.

In peak, there could be over 5,000 truck movements per day along that bit of highway and a little bit more because Italia Road, all movements have to be left-turn at Tarean Road intersection and come back. That means double duty on that section of road. Years ago now, early 1990s I think it was, might've been a bit earlier, there was a tipping point for dangers on the New England Highway from coal trucks. There was just relentless coal truck traffic going to – from the Upper Hunter down to the Port of Newcastle. And eventually they said, "Okay, we've got to do by rail." Now, instantly the highway was clear.

Now, it's full now with gravel trucks and sand quarry trucks. I drive the area and it's frightening. You get to the roundabout at Heatherbrae and you sit there and you wait and wait and wait and I know that improvements are being made but there will still be that many trucks on that bit of road. And then of course there's

5 all the gravel that comes off trucks. Now, they maintain that they've got all the truck shakers and they've got to broom the trucks off before they leave. Well, that's no longer the case because there are now occupational health and safety rules that say that they can't get up on their trucks and broom away any excess that falls onto trucks when they're being loaded.

10 So we've seen it, we actually did a part of pictorial thing when we were doing the submission against Deep Creek. We took photos on sides of the road near Tarean Road and also on the road and you see bits of gravel for over a kilometre and the side of the road has got great big lobs of gravel. Brandy Hill Drive, either end of Brandy Hill Drive is the same and quarry operators will say, "But no, we have all the measures in place." Well, no, you don't because it's evidenced there.

15 So one of the other problems is that Eagleton, we assume, does not have its own fleet of trucks. It's not one of the big businesses like Boral, Holcim, Hanson. Their trucks are whisper quiet, they go past our place, you wouldn't even know that a Hanson truck's passed. They don't engine brake, they don't have squealing brakes, so we're okay with that. But subcontractors are a different kettle of fish. They are cowboys on the road, they have poorly maintained trucks but they are essential to getting the product out.

20 Now, quarry operators have to be able to say, "Look, you have to – we're not going to use you anymore if we keep getting complaints about you using engine braking." Hanson did that once. The backlash to the community was horrendous. I had to stop Facebook from Brandy Hill Seaham Action because the wife of the driver who constantly used engine braking, constantly.

25 There are six signs on Brandy Hill Drive saying – big signs saying, "Do not use compression braking. This is a residential area." Paid for by Hanson, put up by Council. The wife said, "How dare you people put my husband out of work. We've got a family, now we're destitute, blah, blah, blah" and all the language that went with it. And I thought no, we didn't do the wrong thing, your husband did. Use the proper measures. So anyway, that's just another story.

30 So noise carries, engine braking carries, these trucks will be coming from the south, they'll have to slow down to get into Italia Road on a slight downhill. They will be engine braking and that noise will carry [unintelligible 00:19:52].

35 Now, I've got a few things I'd like to say about the issues that have come up by reading the transcripts from the proponent to you just recently. And I was really surprised that they talk about Transport for New South Wales with regards to being able to turn right from Italia Road on to the highway and they say, "But that's okay. We just have to wait for an appropriate gap. You know, the highway is not at capacity yet.

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45 Transport for New South Wales have said so." Oh my god, that is ridiculous. I cannot believe that they are saying – that Council has said since 2017, "This intersection is dangerous. We do not want trucks turning right." And they've said

it all the way through to 2024. And the proponent has said, “But it’s okay, we’ll just pick a gap.” During school holidays, it is bumper to bumper traffic on that section of road. People have to be able to get out on to the road themselves, just ordinary commuters. Other trucks, other quarry trucks wanting to turn – do the right thing and turn left because they know they’re not allowed to cross. The line up behind while they’re waiting to get out will be phenomenal.

I know it’s not a busy road but it is used. We use it. All of Seaham uses it to get out to the highway. So why do they think they can create a line of traffic behind them just so they can get out and dodge out between the traffic. I just find that is gobsmackingly rude, dangerous, it’s an unacceptable delay for everyone else and there is no turning lane from Italia Road out at the moment and there won’t be until that intersection is resolved and you know all about what they’re trying to do there with [unintelligible 00:22:02] intersection. So that is one issue that I think is a disgraceful suggestion from the proponent.

Contributions is another issue but I might have to get you to read that yourselves because I’m running out of time, I’m assuming.

MR PILTON: A couple of minutes.

MS RITCHIE: Couple of minutes, thank you. I’ll still allow you to read that one but two things. There was a comment referring to blasting and what the best time to do a blast and that they’ve been negotiating with the respite centre about how to eliminate that problem of noise to people who are really susceptible to noise. And they’ve said there’s a four hour window of opportunity they’ve been told that that’ll be okay.

Now, not so long ago at a Brandy Hill CCC meeting it was explained why it was difficult to pin down an actual blasting time and that was in response to a resident who was suffering mentally from blasting that was happening and shaking her house. She wanted to know when are you going to blast and they said, “We can’t tell you. We can call you just before.” And she said, “Well, you must know” but they said, “No, we can’t know because it depends on the blast operator is not a Hanson person,” nor will it be with Eagleton.

It is an independent person qualified in that field. They have to look at the weather, they have to look at inversions, they have to look at at the last minute where they’re putting down the – you know, making the holes to put the blast into, was there any kind of stability that they didn’t think about. Sometimes it can be delayed, it can be brought forward or it could be delayed for days. So you can’t just say there’s a four hour that is going to be achievable most days because that’s not going to happen and that was explained to us.

That person that I was talking about did eventually have a nervous breakdown over this and left the area. She was very susceptible to noise. Very, very susceptible to vibration. Children on Brandy – up at the top of Giles Road from Brandy Hill Quarry are so concerned about vibration because they’ve heard on the

news about blasts overseas in wars and things like that. They have had to be spoken to by their parents about “No, look, it’s okay, it’s a blast from the quarry.” But they visibly shake when it’s happening. So it’s not just an incidental thing. It does affect people.

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And the last thing is the comment that they made about how they’re going to fix up in the last stage of the quarry the noise problem because they have to remove the last ridge and they’ve said they’re going to put up – a possibly, we might put up a row of shipping containers. We might even double them up. That is so simplistic. Absolutely simplistic.

10

MR PILTON: We’re aware of that issue, I think.

MS RITCHIE: Yes. So you’ve heard that. The conclusions are there for you to see and I’ll leave you this because I’ve left bits out.

15

MR PILTON: Thank you.

MS RITCHIE: And that.

20

MR PILTON: Just before you finish, can I just ask if any questions?

MS GRANT: No, no, thank you. That’s very –

25

MS MCCABE: I just had one. You talked about the Brandy Hill approval and operations and you’re very familiar with that and did I understand that their conditions of consent and we can check this ourselves, that are actually 6 am to 6 pm or is that a – for haulage?

30

MS RITCHIE: For haulage, 6 am to 6 pm.

MS MCCABE: Yes.

MS RITCHIE: They can operate I think it’s until 8 pm on some nights. They’re allowed to haul 20 nights a week until 10 pm – sorry, 20 nights a year until 10 pm.

35

MS MCCABE: Right.

MS RITCHIE: But only 20 nights, once they’ve done their 20 nights –

40

MR PILTON: Do they have any controls on blasting hours?

MS RITCHIE: Blasting hours, yes, they do have controls. I can’t tell you what they are.

45

MR PILTON: We’ll check it.

MS RITCHIE: Yes, just check that.

MS MCCABE: But I'm just trying to pick up on your point. You said there was a change from something about – did I misunderstand, you said it voluntarily or doing – there was a change when they went to 6 am to 6 pm with –

5

MS RITCHIE: Yes. Their haulage.

MS MCCABE: With their haulage. So the 6 am to 6 pm is their condition?

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MS RITCHIE: Yes, it is.

MS MCCABE: Yes, so –

MS RITCHIE: But they actually – they had an old condition of consent.

15

MS MCCABE: Right. There was an old –

MS RITCHIE: That was written by Council and the Council, it was a bit ambiguous, they felt, we argued that it wasn't ambiguous. It was an argument over a number of years over that but eventually when the new conditions of consent were published, they actually just automatically went to 6 am to 6 pm.

20

MS MCCABE: So took up the consent [unintelligible 00:27:22].

25

MS RITCHIE: Even though they don't have to formally take it up yet because they've still got to do the pathway down Brandy Hill Drive, they still have to make six bus bays they can't – except but they can't – I don't know what the word is – take on the conditions until all of those things are done and then they can operate to the conditions that were set out.

30

MS MCCABE: Right. So they've done – what you're saying to us is they've taken up the compliance with that condition perhaps earlier –

MS RITCHIE: Earlier, yes.

35

MS MCCABE: – and that the point that you were making, that you've noticed a difference in the number of [unintelligible 00:28:03] animals that are being –

MS RITCHIE: Absolutely.

40

MS MCCABE: – on the side of the road that might've been hit.

MS RITCHIE: Yeah. We used to have them daily and weekly, I'd call the Council and say, "Can you please get the poor, you know, wallaby, kangaroo on the side of the road, even [unintelligible 00:28:16] which is near us and because it was a bit of a corridor and perhaps there aren't as many wallabies around but we used to have them coming through into our yard. But we just don't see it as much anymore and we believe it's because they are mainly out dawn and dusk but and

45

therefore [unintelligible 00:28:38].

MR PILTON: Well, thanks, Margarete. Sorry to wrap you up but few people to get to.

5

MS RITCHIE: Look, no, that's okay. I've been working on this and you get all these notes and then you put it together and you think, "Oh my gosh, that's more than five minutes" and then at 15 [unintelligible 00:28:54].

10

MS GRANT: No, thank you. Really appreciate that.

MR PILTON: Good job. yes, thank you.

15

MS HUTCHINSON: Can I just check if you are happy for both your notes and that document to go online?

MS RITCHIE: Yeah, that's fine. That's not a problem. And I haven't put my name on the – except for my name there, but that's great.

20

MS HUTCHINSON: Thank you so much.

MS RITCHIE: Thanks very much.

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MR PILTON: Thank you.

MS RITCHIE: Thank you.

MS GRANT: Thanks very much.

30

MR PILTON: Before we begin, I'm speaking to you from Worimi land. I acknowledge the traditional owners of all the countries from which we meet today. I pay my respects to their elders, past and present and to the elders from other communities. I'm Adrian Pilton. I am the chair of this panel. Joining me are my fellow Commissioners, Alison McCabe and Juliet Grant. We are joined also by Bradley James, Tahlia Hutchinson and Stuart Morgan from the Office of the Independent Planning Commission.

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As you're aware, due to the low number of registered speakers, the Commission has cancelled the public meeting for the Eagleton Quarry Project, SSD-7332, which is currently before this Commission panel for determination. The Commission thought it was appropriate to meet separately with those who had registered to speak at the public meeting to hear their views on the application.

45

In the interests of openness and transparency and to ensure the full capture of information, today's meeting is being recorded and a complete transcript will be produced and made available on the Commission's website. We have your submissions to the Department in front of us and we've set aside 15 minutes to hear your views today, so please begin.

MS CHARLEE CONNOR: Okay. So thanks for allowing me to speak today. My name's Charlee Connor and I'm not representing VOWW. It was on the agenda that I was but I'm not. So I'm a resident on Italia Road. I'm representing myself
5 but also I'm the founder of a group of residents on Italia Road called the Italia Road Action Taskforce or IRATE because we're kind of irate. And it's actually brought us together a little bit, so there's a number of us now.

I started that a couple of years ago. It's just a Facebook group and a Messenger
10 group but we just kind of chat about different things and so I've got to meet a lot of people, which is nice. But it was all bound from – it all started from our frustrations and the road itself and then along came the quarry, so it's just got – yeah, anyway. So that's kind of my background. So I do get to speak to a lot of residents but I'm not representing them, I'm not [unintelligible 00:02:11]. So it's
15 really –

MR PILTON: So how long have you lived in Italia Road?

MS CONNOR: Twenty years, nearly 20 years.

MR PILTON: Thank you.

MS CONNOR: Yes. So apologise for not having slides or anything properly prepared, I just haven't had time.

MR PILTON: No, no.

MS CONNOR: So I'm going to probably just read. So myself and other residents of the local community, especially those, you know, Seaham and Balickera, we're
30 not just quarry fatigued, we're quarry exhausted. There seems to be a never ending stream but documents of hundreds to thousands of pages to which we have to read them, we have 28 days to make a submission or even we don't even find out about a lot of this stuff. We just don't even know about it.

So it's up to a lot of us – well, I've been trying to communicate to other people in
35 the community, trying to do that while I work, I care for my elderly mother, I have a family. It's exhausting. So and we're just tired and we're frustrated. We don't have the resources to do much, we don't have the time, we don't get paid but it seems like the quarries have this endless resources and time to get things done, so
40 we're pretty frustrated with the process itself.

So further to what you asked, I moved here about 20 years ago, nearly 20 years ago with my husband and two young children. I probably look older than I am, it's
45 the quarry trucks, I'm telling you. So we purchased our first acreage with the dreams of ourselves and our children living a more rural way of life with country atmosphere, where the kids could have their own ponies and bikes and there was good schools nearby, the University of Newcastle, the road was a little bit busier than we would've liked but it was the best we could afford at the time in the area.

So I'd managed to secure a job here in veterinary pharmaceuticals, it was the only one in the area, and my husband decided he would be the stay at home person for a little while while the kids were so tiny. Anyway, so we did that for a little while.

5 So but had we of known what was to come, I don't think we would've purchased where we are but there's no way to predict the changes that happened over that time and it's not just the quarries but they're a pretty significant part of what's happened.

10 So there was very few services, there still aren't any services or infrastructure to what we previously had. There's no town water, there's no sewerage, there's no mobile phone service, no gutters, no footpaths, not very good internet. We need satellite internet to get decent internet but we're thinking it's the price you pay living in the country. But so we were okay with that at the time.

15 So at that time Boral Seaham Quarry was still at the end of Italia Road, where it is still now and there were the odd quarry trucks that you used to come down the road and as I said, it was a little bit busy but it wasn't distressing. Around 2009, they replaced the little bridge at Caswell's Creek with a concrete bridge and the trucks used to have to go around that bridge but then they could go straight across and slowly trucks started coming and it got worse and worse and worse and yeah, fast forward to the last couple of years and it's basically insufferable now.

20 But that's because of a few reasons, not just because of Boral Seaham but there's also been like a bridge closure, which stops quarries going from that direction and there's been a weight limit on another road that they probably would've used that [unintelligible 00:06:00]. So and then there's the increase in quarries, which I think you might have a document, but I'll get to that later.

25 So every morning we see a stream of quarry trucks and utes lumbering past our house and every afternoon and evening is much the same. During the day, I've occasionally had to leave my home office and go to the local park to get some peace and actually be able to focus on my work. I'm not doing much home office stuff now, so I work in town. But at the time, it's just like, "Oh, come on. Give us a break."

30 So don't let the numbers that they give you fool you. They're only taken from a traffic meter that was up near Pacific Highway. It certainly doesn't reflect the rest of the road. The rest of the road's nearly 9 km long. So they claim that the rest of Italia Road is barely affected but that's absolutely not true. One of my neighbours, who's approximately 4 km west of the quarry, so coming this way rather than going towards Pacific Highway, he put up a trail camera and he recorded 140 quarry truck movements within five days, which is an awful lot of truck involved movements.

45

MR PILTON: Going west?

MS CONNOR: Going west. You know, and that was – I can't remember, last

year some time. So it's not true that we don't get traffic. We get quite a lot and that was just one week that we picked randomly. So he also has a photo of a quarry truck and dog overtaking a garbage truck completely on the wrong side of the road. So completely over the double yellow lines on a slight crest.

5

If a car had of been – I mean, I'm guessing they probably thought, "Oh well, we can see. We can see because we're high up" but quite frankly it's inexcusable to go completely on the wrong side of the road because they're in such a hurry to get down Italia Road to overtake a garbage truck. I mean, how often that happens I hate to think really. They didn't see it happen [unintelligible 00:08:08] we couldn't get the number plate unfortunately. So dodging quarry trucks on Italia Road is a regular occurrence for those of us who are frequent users. So the picture that the report paints is very far from the reality of the impact of the quarries.

10

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So we have all the inconveniences of the country life that we once considered a small price to pay yet we have all the inconveniences of traffic noise, air pollution and safety issues that people in the cities have due to the quarries surrounding us. The reality of our lives now is a metaphor for the lyrics of Joni Mitchell's song "Big Yellow Taxi." They paved paradise to put up a parking lot.

20

So with the Boral Seaham Quarry looking to close within the next few years, we were hoping to return to less traffic and their site being returned to nature, habitat and us reclaiming a little bit of our rural lifestyle and also to recoup some of the relative value of our real estate because it certainly hasn't gone up in relation to areas around us. So we kind of got trapped in a way. So anyway, the reasons I object specifically in this meeting about Eagleton Quarry are as follows.

25

Sorry, I think I've got my things out of – so firstly, the number one key theme in the analysis of submissions which is this document that I'm sure you have, is that traffic road conditions and safety conditions of the road. In table 2, page 6 of the project amendment, dated 22 December 2023, it states as an objection, "This DA (to upgrade to the intersection of the Pacific and Italia Road) has not yet been lodged with Council. Given the Eagleton Quarry and other quarries seek to rely on this intersection upgrade, determination of the Eagleton Quarry should be deferred until the intersection DA has been determined."

30

35

The Applicant's response to that is "Eagleton Rock Syndicate would accept the recommended condition." So I'm a little confused. So the intersection upgrade DA has now been lodged with Council but there's no determination of that DA yet. So I'm questioning why there's a need for this meeting if Eagleton Rock Syndicate has already accepted that they're okay to not be approved until that's actually –

40

MR PILTON: Processed.

45

MS CONNOR: Yeah, processed. I'm questioning the process, I suppose. I didn't know how to put it. So shouldn't the meeting be held after the DA has been approved? So that's where I get – so secondly, on page 8 of the same document, it speaks about the proposed intersection upgrade and apologies if I don't word this

well but I quote, “No quarry product is to be transported from the site until the Italia Road-Pacific Highway intersection works are completed to the satisfaction of Port Stephens Council / Transport for New South Wales.”

5 The response from the Applicant is “Eagleton Rock Syndicate would accept the recommended condition.” So that means that the intersection upgrade is to be funded by the Applicant. So that’s what it’s talking about in that area. And it’s not just the Applicant, it’s not just Eagleton Quarry. So they’re going to be funding it with Stoneridge Quarry and the expanded Boral Seaham Quarry.

10 So it appears that it’s a package deal because nowhere have they said that they will fund that DA or that upgrade to the intersection on their own. So I can only assume that for them to go ahead, all three of them go ahead. That’s the way it appears to me and I think Anna expands a bit more succinctly than I can say it today. I’m a bit tired. So Boral Seaham Quarry is right next door to them. Stoneridge Quarry will be directly across from Boral Quarry in state forest.

20 So I don’t see how we can accept – sorry, let me go back to how I’ve worded this in reading it. So as Eagleton Quarry, who is the first cab off the rank in terms of development approval, we can only assume that they are part of the package deal of three quarries, one of the other beings immediate neighbour, and that only the cumulative impacts of all three quarries really should be assessed for approval of one of the quarries, if all three of them have to go ahead. Whereas, everything’s just relating to – they very rarely talk about the cumulative impact.

25 They don’t address it at all really, if you read carefully, and they talk about their singular impact and I can’t see how it’s going to be singular. It just doesn’t make sense to me. So how then is the true impact of the quarry assessed to be approved and how are their mitigation measures even relevant if we’re not looking at the whole thing together?

30 So given that they only address their individual impact on the following issues raised in submission against the quarry, these are increased noise, dust and vibration, social impacts, impacts to the environment and biodiversity, impacts to water supply and quality, heritage impacts and lack of consultation. So this is relevant to all three quarries, not just Eagleton. And each of these points deserve discussion, even if it was only the impact of Eagleton Quarry, but I don’t have time to cover that.

40 So but what I would like to point out is if that we are to consider that the three quarries are a package deal, that Eagleton Quarry is the smaller of the three. So they are going to extract 600,000 ton per year of hard rock, ARDG and Boral will be extracting 3.5 million ton of rock per year. So Eagleton’s going to only be small, so the cumulative impacts are going to be huge compared to what they’re saying in here because all three of them are going to go in. Like, we can’t see any different, the way everything is unfolding.

45 So furthermore, the Stoneridge Quarry proposal falls within a state forest that will

need to be cleared, about 90 hectares. And the cumulative effect of this, another five operational quarries and a further five new proposals for quarries, all within a close geographical area of myself, roughly 20 to 30 km radius. So to that end, I agree with the Lower Hunter. Now, I don't know if you've seen this, did
5 Margarete give you this? So I agree with what this says and it's been presented to key ministers.

10 Thirdly, I would like to address the increased traffic and safety concerns on Italia Road. On table 3, page 9 in the submission report from Eagleton Hard Rock Quarry, I quote, "Eagleton Quarry Trust would only use a very short section of Italia Road." Now, I do question that, with what I've told you before. So many quarry trucks are contractors and they use Italia Road to access not only the Boral Seaham Quarry and they will use it to access these other two quarries, but they also use it to access Karuah and other quarries within the area.

15 So and no matter what the quarries say, because they say, "Oh, we've got rules and regulations" as to where they go, they cannot control what they do in the mornings when they're driving to their site empty and when they're going home. They can only control what they're doing within the hours of operation. So they don't address that at all. They just kind of say, "Oh, we just use a bit of Italia" but
20 no, they might but the contractors don't. So it's not quite what it appears.

25 So over the years, as I said, the quarry traffic has become worse and worse, with quarries being expanded and developed. So particularly early mornings and after 4 pm. It is no easy feat to sleep through a thunderous empty quarry truck and dog on a potholed road every few minutes starting at 5 am or earlier in the morning. It has come to the point where some of us have sold to escape the noise and several of us are considering it.

30 The only problem with that though is that if we were to sell, we need to downsize dramatically because the property prices on Italia Road have not increased at the same rate as properties that are located on a road that is safer and less noisy. Most of us moved here for reasons that haven't changed, so as residents we are effectively being forced to either change our lifestyle or increase our mortgage to
35 maintain the lifestyle we moved here for, which is also not feasible because we are trying to save for retirement, not spend more money on somewhere to live. So all while the quarries are approved around us so they can profit with no compensation to us at all.

40 I personally find that abhorrent, especially when so many of us maintain the habitat and biodiversity around us. We do on our property, there's a large part of it that we don't clear, we keep it for koalas. We have koalas come to our place and other animals. And to be honest, we wouldn't even be allowed to knock down that habitat even if we wanted to, yet the quarries are allowed to come in and clear
45 hundreds of acres, willy nilly, of that same habitat and biodiversity.

Last but not least, the damage to the road caused by the quarry trucks along with the narrowness of Italia Road in some areas makes it an extremely precarious road

to travel. All of the residents I have spoken to are very concerned about the safety of the road and drive carefully. I did note recently in Boral Seaham's proposal, which is not this one, they did say that they wanted to – that we had some unfounded fear of safety. Am I getting to time?

5

MR PILTON: I think you're – I mean, try and wrap up [unintelligible 00:18:43].

MS CONNOR: Yes, yes. So Eagleton Rock says in response to that that they'll pay local contributions in accordance with the haulage levies but that's not the consequence to us residents because Port Stephens Council doesn't have to spend it on Italia Road and they don't. So it doesn't fund it. So I understand that there's a need for hard rock but I also believe that there is a way to move forward more harmoniously with residents, nature and quarries and that is not the way that is currently in operation. However, I believe I've used up my allocated time and I thank you and welcome any questions.

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15

MR PILTON: Thank you. Any questions, Juliet?

MS GRANT: One question. There have been discussions about the intersection with Italia Road and the potential dangers of trucks turning right.

20

MS CONNOR: It's terrible.

MS GRANT: And the alternative approach proposed.

25

MS CONNOR: Yes.

MS GRANT: How do you find as a local resident – and if that right turn was to be banned, presumably the only way, as you say, to police the trucks from not sneaky doing a right-hand turn would be a physical barrier, that would then mean local residents could likewise not to turn right. Do you have a view on that solution?

30

MS CONNOR: Look, to be honest, I avoid the intersection like the plague because it's so dangerous. I think a lot of us like self-exclude ourselves when we can. So yeah, I think it would be pretty inconvenient because a lot of people do use it. I mean, because I live further down this end, I kind of zip in through Raymond Terrace. But it would be nice to be able to use the intersection.

35

The trucks turning right, yeah, it adds a bit of a problem but it's not the whole problem. It's the traffic itself. It's so fast and the trucks – so you kind of get there and then you're trying to see around the trucks coming this way. So if they approve this and you've got nearly a thousand extra quarry trucks a day, so you're going to have 500 coming back up this way that you've still got to go like this and get around. I know that they're talking about extending it but it's hard to know without some sort of model, you know, like pictures.

40

45

So you kind of go like that and then you think, "Oh yeah, I've got a break" and people are coming at 100 kilometres, 110, "Oh yeah, I've got a bit of a break" and

then you go to pull out, “Oh hang on, here’s a car coming up this little bit and they’re going to turn across here” or a truck or whatever. That intersection only addresses the quarry trucks. Everyone else can use it as they want.

5 So then someone – and then you go – and you’ve got to pull up. It’s really dangerous. So I don’t think – I mean, look, it’s hard to know from what they’ve said on the DA but I don’t think it’s really a solution. That’s my personal opinion but I don’t have the resources to pay for – I do know other residents have just gone [unintelligible 00:21:25].

10 **MR PILTON:** Understood. Alison?

MS MCCABE: Just on Italia Road, you mentioned I think speeding trucks and the amount of trucks, is it signposted for 100 ks on Italia?

15 **MS CONNOR:** Ninety.

MS MCCABE: Ninety.

20 **MS CONNOR:** Yeah, and they do at least 100.

MR PILTON: Did I understand you right to say the empty trucks are worse than the loaded trucks noise wise?

25 **MS CONNOR:** I would say so. We predominantly get the empty trucks because of where we are.

MR PILTON: Yeah.

30 **MS CONNOR:** But we do get some loaded truck [unintelligible 00:21:56] it’s pretty loud. It’s really loud. And because it’s interspersed, like if the trucks aren’t there and there’s no [unintelligible 00:22:02] it’s quite quiet. Like, it’s just like the country. So you’re just like – it’s like it’s not a steady stream. So it’s quite alarming. I mean and it’s just getting worse and worse really. It’s so bad.

35 **MR PILTON:** Okay. Understood. Sorry to cut you off. We’ll keep moving.

MS CONNOR: No, that’s fine.

40 **MR PILTON:** And we’ll see you again shortly.

MS CONNOR: Yes.

MS GRANT: Thank you very much.

45 **MR PILTON:** Thank you very much. Thanks, Charlee.

MS CONNOR: Did you want any – I’ve got another copy of that if you want.

MR PILTON: We've got that one.

MS GRANT: Yes, perfect.

5

MR PILTON: Thank you.

MR VINCE FURLONGER: No dramas.

10

MR PILTON: Good – I was going to say good morning but it's good afternoon now. Good afternoon and welcome.

MR FURLONGER: It is too, yes.

15

MR PILTON: Before we begin, I'm speaking to you from Worimi land. I acknowledge the traditional owners of all the countries from which we meet today. I pay my respects to their elders, past and present and to the elders from other communities. I'm Adrian Pilton. I am the chair of this panel. Joining me are my fellow Commissioners, Alison McCabe and Juliet Grant. We are also joined by
20 Bradley James, Tahlia Hutchinson and Stuart Morgan from the Office of the Independent Planning Commission.

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35

MR FURLONGER: Thank you very much, Adrian. Okay. Eagleton Ridge Disability Services was formerly known as Eagleton Ridge Respite Centre. It's existed at its location in Six Mile Road for a quarter of a century. It provides a service not only to the disabled community but also the general community through employment and other ancillary services. Pre-COVID, Eagleton Ridge
40 Disability Services had over 2,500 clients on its books. This number is now slowly returning.

45

In the history of Eagleton Ridge Disability Service's presence at Six Mile Road, there has never been an unknown entity apart from one with the capacity to compromise the environment of this property and thus disrupt the service ERDS provides. Unfortunately, the proposed Eagleton Quarry has now become an entity with the capacity to compromise our existing environment and thus possibly disrupt our service. Because this proposed quarry is an unknown entity, no one can

know with certainty what its impacts will be on its neighbours until it is in operation.

5 Once this occurs, all mitigations proposed by the proponent of the quarry to alleviate negative impacts on the surrounds are not guaranteed to be 100% successful. This simple fact unfortunately will be an issue to the integrity of the environment which ERDS has operated in at Six Mile Road for the past 25 years. To have absolute certainty that ERDS activities cannot be compromised or
10 diminished in any way from this proposed unknown entity, we would have to prefer that it does not gain the chance to operate and have the capacity to test this scenario.

MR PILTON: Thanks, Vince.

15 **MR FURLONGER:** Okay. That's pretty much it in a nutshell.

MR PILTON: We understand. Yes, we understood most of the meeting yesterday outside.

20 **MR FURLONGER:** Sure, sure.

MR PILTON: Do you want to –

25 **MR FURLONGER:** Sorry, I might – like I've told you, I've spoken to the proponent, Mr Darren Williams.

MR PILTON: Yes.

30 **MR FURLONGER:** And he's been very amenable, he's been very forthcoming. He has acknowledged to me that this quarry has the capacity to earn a lot of money for him. Irrespective of that, that is why, if he's earning a lot of money, that is why he can spend money to mitigate certain circumstances, i.e. like we spoke about yesterday, the windows, clients going about – blah, blah, blah, blah, all that sort of stuff.

35 However, even when that's all said and done, there are still unknown factors involved. It's an unfortunate thing because I know that quarries are needed but personally and all of us at Eagleton Ridge agree, that basically if he wanted an in, should've started back in 2013 rather than – for us anyway, from 2013 to our
40 current time now, we've – back then I think we employed 20 people. Now we employ just over 60 people, it's 65, not to mention all the contractors, there are dozens of contractors that work with us. So probably would've been less of an impact on us then.

45 Now, 2024, it's going to be – it's a different ballgame for us because the property we have now, as I think I've mentioned to you, has become a jewel in our crown. Simple as that. It was respite, which is temporary accommodation, but now it's permanent accommodation but we have the capacity to involve temporary

accommodation, as in day activity centres, which we've started. So currently it's become an important thing for us.

5 But my wife and I have no children and so what we plan to do is when we can't continue on with Eagleton Ridge anymore in an administrative capacity, we will turn it into a not for profit organisation and we'll have a board of five directors and those directors will have a mission statement and that will be in perpetuity. Cannot deviate from that mission statement and they'll continue with Eagleton Ridge as it's –

10 **MR PILTON:** You mentioned yesterday at least one of your residents is unlikely to ever leave the centre. What's the position of the other residents? Are there some that will come and go or –

15 **MR FURLONGER:** Okay, so all the residents bar one that have been since it became permanent accommodation and what we term in the disability organisation we call it SIL, which is supported independent living. Although they can't be independent, it's permanent accommodation for them. Five of those people can be relocated. It would be very disruptive to their carers and disruptive to them
20 considering that I don't think any one of them have lived there for less than 10 years.

MR PILTON: The carers being your staff?

25 **MR FURLONGER:** Yes. Yes. And their parents.

MR PILTON: Yeah, sorry.

30 **MR FURLONGER:** Yeah, and their parents. So all bar one, [name redacted], he is severely autistic and everything has to be, like I told you, the same every single day, can't change otherwise there's behaviours, there's issues, possibly – well, there is self-harm but as long as he knows what's happening, as long as there's everything okay, everything is fine. To relocate him, I wouldn't want to try it. We wouldn't want to try it.

35 It's never happened before and it took a while for him to relocate from his parents' house. His mum and dad separated, it became too much for them, caused issues, there were some issues. So now his parents visit him separately at our centre and his grandmother, who's become his primary carer. So yeah, the others could be
40 relocated but [name redacted] would be a big problem. But having to relocate others, yeah, I think it would be extremely –

MR PILTON: The other people, no matter where they lived, they'll still have to be in permanent care for the rest of their lives?

45 **MR FURLONGER:** Yes, yes. Yeah, for example, and they're all in their thirties pretty much, most of them are in their thirties, so they've still got a fairly long life to lead because of the medications and everything's involved now. But most of

them are wheelchair bound to start with and one girl has Rett syndrome, which I don't know if you've ever heard of. Okay, it's a genetic syndrome and there's no cure for it, currently anyway. But no, they're very high needs. High needs. In fact, sometimes it's two to one.

5

MR PILTON: Okay, thank you.

MR FURLONGER: Okay, so with personal care, it's two to one. But as I said, on the property, through the 24 hour shifts, there is 28 staff allocated to that property. Okay, so it's not an inconsiderable amount of people involved in that property alone.

10

MR PILTON: Thank you. Alison?

MS MCCABE: Yes. We heard yesterday on the property and the Applicant has also made some reference to offers to you about potential measures that may go some way to mitigating impacts.

15

MR FURLONGER: Yes.

20

MS MCCABE: Is that – have you got a list of anything or in writing what they've actually offered you?

MR FURLONGER: Yes, I have. I sent that to you.

25

MS MCCABE: We've got that?

MR FURLONGER: You should have that and that's from his –

30

MS MCCABE: That's all right.

MR FURLONGER: You've got it?

MR JAMES: Yes, we have got that.

35

MR FURLONGER: From Jonathan Berry.

MR JAMES: You've sent me a description of your discussion with Jonathan, is that correct?

40

MR FURLONGER: With Jonathan? Should have Jonathan Berry. He's the consultant for the proponent, Wedgetail Consultancy. You should have that. I can send it through to you again but I did send it through to you.

45

MR JAMES: Yeah, I've got it here, Vince.

MR FURLONGER: You've got it? Perfect.

MR JAMES: Confirming we have received that. Yes.

MR FURLONGER: Thank you.

5 **MS MCCABE:** And that covers everything that you've said to us about, for example, double glazing, I think that was first we heard of that yesterday but, you know –

10 **MR FURLONGER:** Yeah. There was a couple of other things like I probably didn't mention, which you can see there. There would be on site monitoring of vibrations.

MS MCCABE: Yes.

15 **MR FURLONGER:** There would be dust monitoring for dust issues. Sure, I mean, we appreciate all this, what has to happen anyway because it just has to happen. It's what we do and even our surrounding neighbours, but I guess single biggest issue is the proximity that's proposed. It's now closer than what has already been there, which is Boral, and because of where it's proposed, you'll find
20 that the ridge that we walked up, okay, that drops. That ridge slowly drops down to [unintelligible 00:12:14] complex and as it drops down, what's proposed to come close to us has less protection for us.

25 That's the simple fact of the matter. We don't have as much protection behind the ridge and we do with Boral in another 1,500 metres away. So yeah, like I said, yeah, we've considered everything the proponent –

30 **MR PILTON:** I'm just thinking should we hold off until that plane goes away because of the recording? Sorry, keep going, sorry.

MR FURLONGER: Yeah, no, no, no, no. Since Darren Williams has visited us and since I've spoken to him a couple of times, I've thought about everything that he's offered and having – we have thought about everything that he's offered and having looked at everything that he has offered, even he admits there can't be any
35 guarantees that what he's offered will still totally mitigate what's being proposed. He understands that but he said he can do his best and with modern technology now, things would have a better chance of being mitigated than they would 20, 30 years ago.

40 Okay, now we understand that but there's no 100% guarantee. Once the operation starts, that's what we're really worried about. Like I told you, we don't want to go to Land and Environment Court, we don't want to go do legal stuff. We've got enough on our plate to go down that path and I'm sure he doesn't either. I'm positive he doesn't.

45

MR PILTON: Yeah.

MR FURLONGER: But as I said, if he could cocoon us, as in totally cocoon us

with a dome of some description, hey, there wouldn't be an issue. But that's an unreality. In that particular area, you can't do anything like that. And like I said, we're also different in the fact that we are on tank water, so the dust would be an issue, considering our clientele.

5

So yes, and now that we've built our entertainment complex, which you saw yesterday, that is now gaining momentum and we have another NDIS service provider, Songbird Homes, who are now looking to actively use that for their clients and booking it out for movies, their own discos, all that sort of stuff too. So that's coming to fruition. And obviously being an outside complex, noise obviously would be an issue, dust would be an issue, vibration would be an issue. Yeah.

10

MR PILTON: Juliet?

15

MS GRANT: Thank you. And thank you again for allowing us on site yesterday. That's enormously valuable. My question was going to be similar to Alison's and I guess maybe I'll just prod a little bit further in the sense that okay, so thinking about those lists of potential mitigation measures, accepting that there's no 100% certainty because none of us have that ability, but is there anything else that could potentially be done that may assist if this was to proceed?

20

You've talked about the glazing, you talked about the monitoring and obviously it would be the follow up from whatever the outcomes of that noise and dust monitoring. Are there any other elements that would assist your operations, acknowledging that it's such an important service that you provide? Is there anything else that's perhaps come to mind that's not been suggested or raised yet?

25

MR FURLONGER: No. That's pretty much everything that's been raised and quarrying is what it is. A quarry is a quarry, so any quarry, no matter where it's located, still has the same impacts on the surrounding environment. So it is what it is. So Mr Williams has proposed – my understanding is, I think he's told me this, he actually has – I think he has other quarries elsewhere.

30

MR PILTON: A sand quarry –

35

MR FURLONGER: A sand quarry, he did mention –

MR PILTON: – in Williamstown.

40

MR FURLONGER: Yes, exactly. And I'm not sure if there's been any issues with residents in those areas, I don't really know.

MR PILTON: Gather not.

45

MR FURLONGER: Yeah. However, our service is slightly different than just being –

MR PILTON: You don't have the blast sand out of the ground for a start.

MR FURLONGER: Sorry?

5 **MR PILTON:** So you don't have the blast sand out of the ground for a start.

10 **MR FURLONGER:** No, you don't. And I can tell you from speaking to Boral and I was in constant contact with a manager from them for 10 years, the kind of rock that they're quarrying is a really hard – I think it's igneous or ignatite or something.

MS HUTCHINSON: Ignimbrite.

15 **MR FURLONGER:** That's the one.

MR PILTON: She's a geologist.

20 **MR FURLONGER:** Okay. It is a very sought after rock, very sought after rock and the manager of Boral did tell me that the blasting can be very intrusive to try and loosen or get that rock out of the ground. It's just been fortunate for us that we've been hidden behind a ridge.

MR PILTON: Yeah.

25 **MR FURLONGER:** Very fortunate for us. Unfortunately, my neighbour, as I've told you about, that's not been the case for him. I'm surprised he hasn't elected to speak but I spoke to him a few days ago and he said that he and his wife have purchased another property.

30 **MR PILTON:** Can you tell him that he still has another week, he can put a written submission if he wishes –

35 **MR FURLONGER:** I will ring him again but in his exact terms to me was "Vince, whatever I say and whatever you say, it's a done deal." I can't sway that opinion but he said – so he and his wife only in the last two months have purchased another property and they will look at possibly selling their property should they need to and they'll relocate to this other property.

40 So that's their escape hatch, I guess. That's their out in case this proposed impact impacts on him and judging from what Boral does on his property, I would imagine that this proposed quarry is probably going to do as much, if not more, considering what he's getting from Boral. So yeah, but anyway, apart from that –

45 **MS GRANT:** Thank you.

MR PILTON: Sorry, Vince, we're going to have wrap up time wise.

MR FURLONGER: No problem.

MR PILTON: But thank you very much again for yesterday afternoon and –

MR FURLONGER: You're very welcome.

5

MR PILTON: – coming in today.

MR FURLONGER: Yes, you're most welcome.

10

MR PILTON: And this will all be online eventually.

MR FURLONGER: Sure.

MR FURLONGER: Sure, okay.

15

MR PILTON: Thank you.

MR FURLONGER: No worries.

20

MS MCCABE: Thank you.

MS GRANT: Thank you very much.

MR FURLONGER: Thanks very much.

25

MR PILTON: Okay. Good afternoon and welcome. Before we begin, I'm speaking to you from Worimi land. I acknowledge the traditional owners of all the countries from which we meet today. I pay my respects to their elders, past and present and to the elders from other communities. I'm Adrian Pilton and I am the chair of this panel. Joining me are my fellow Commissioners, Alison McCabe and Juliet Grant. We are also joined by Bradley James, Tahlia Hutchinson and Stuart Morgan from the Office of the Independent Planning Commission.

30

As you're aware, due to the low number of registered speakers, the Commission has cancelled the public meeting for the Eagleton Quarry Project, SSD-7332, which is currently before this Commission panel for determination. The Commission thought it was appropriate to meet separately with those who had registered to speak at the public meeting to hear their views on the application.

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In the interests of openness and transparency and to include the full capture of information, today's meeting is being recorded and a complete transcript will be produced and made available on the Commission's website. We have your submission made previously and we've set aside 15 minutes today to hear your views. Please begin, Anna.

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45

MS ANNA KERR: Thank you. So I'm here today as a representative for Save Balickera Incorporated and our group has a mailing list of about 50 individuals and I can assure you the small number of speakers registered today is not

reflective of the strength of opposition within the community to this development. Instead, it reflects a feeling that the approval of this and the two other quarries is inevitable and that resistance is futile and in view of the inequity in the process and resources available to the community versus that of the Applicant, this pessimism is understandable.

5

The Italia Road community has been called upon to produce at least five submissions opposing quarry projects in just the last year and on this screen are some of the photos from our submission, which I understand you have before you. And they've yet to receive any feedback to indicate that their voices are being heeded.

10

There's a sense of exhaustion and hopelessness. There is a feeling that the resources commanded by the quarry developers are such that no amount of opposition by the local community will have any impact. There is a lack of faith in the system to deliver the right outcome, despite the significant efforts of residents and environmental activists to oppose these inappropriate developments. Next slide, please.

15

So instead, some people are making plans to leave the area, with several properties already for sale on Italia Road because of the already unbearable levels of truck traffic on what used to be a peaceful country road. The potential for a catastrophic accident at the intersection with the Pacific Highway is simply unacceptable and the plans put forward to address this safety concern are manifestly inadequate, but apparently seem likely to receive government's approval.

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This is despite the fact there is nothing in the plans for the intersection that make it safer to execute a right turn on to Italia Road and we all know that self-monitoring will be inadequate to ensure that the trucks do not turn right off Italia Road rather than adding many extra kilometres to their trip. And as suggested by one of the members, one alternative is to stop all traffic from turning right and I think you'll find that most residents would be extremely unhappy about that for obvious reasons. Next slide, please.

30

There are three quarries proposed to be right next to each other, which will have the effect of turning Italia Road into a major haulage route and transforming Balickera into a primary industrial area. So that map shows the areas that will be taken up by the quarries. It also has a few areas that are also owned by Boral, which already have sort of licences which indicate that in future they may expand even further.

35

40

Each of these three applications currently hinges on a joint application in relation to the Pacific Highway intersection and yet there is a failure to have the three applications considered together, even though their cumulative effects necessarily must be more closely considered.

45

We also note that there are 10 other existing or proposed state significant hard rock quarries in the Hunter region within a 15 km radius. And yet there's been a

failure by government to engage in strategic planning in relation to quarry developments, despite calls for this from the community. Unless of course the strategic plan is simply transform our area into a super quarry for Sydney, which some of us suspect. Next slide, please.

5

In the case of my own family, our ancestral home is within about 2 km of the proposed Eagleton Quarry site, with only Boral Seaham Quarry between us. We weren't even aware of the application for Eagleton Quarry back in 2017. We've only become recently aware of it at all.

10

The Applicant has chosen to largely ignore our existence in the EIS process, totally cropping maps where possible to exclude Balickera House. There's been no attempt to consult with us or to have any receivers at our property or to conduct investigations into the impacts of noise, dust and vibration on our house by the existing quarry. This is even though Balickera House and Farm was heritage listed and our family has lived there for five generations.

15

The Applicant seems to assume they are freed from responsibility by the closer proximity of Boral Seaham Quarry, even though Boral's quarry is due to wind up in 2025, should their applications to deepen and expand that quarry not be approved. Our feeling is that Boral has overstayed its welcome and in fact none of the three quarry developers has chosen to consult with us about their applications or to visit our home or offer monitoring at our location, even though we have raised concerns in multiple submissions now about the structural damage to the house, which we believe is attributable to the vibration caused by Boral's existing operations.

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25

Instead, these quarry developers have chosen to ignore and minimise the heritage significance of Balickera House, despite the fact that it is a stone built house, built by convicts in 1830 and shares its long, rich history with Tanilba House, which has a state heritage listing. Happy to answer questions on any of that.

30

MR PILTON: Sorry, the damage that you think has been caused, that's blasting vibrations, is it?

35

MS KERR: Yes, I think so. I mean, those cracks, they've only come in the last – really since my father's death that we've got these sort of cracks and one of those is in my bedroom, for instance. I can tell you they weren't there before. They're really quite recent. I mean, unfortunately I don't suppose there was any survey done of the house at the time. My father wasn't particularly vigilant in holding Boral to account. I mean, my parents are very elderly. My mother owns the house. My brother and I have power of attorney. My mother's 95 and has dementia.

40

So it's all in a bit of limbo for us. But you can see that there's going to be a need for quite a lot of money spent to restore the property and if there's just going to be nothing but encircling by quarries with more and more blasting, it's very hard to decide to pour that sort of money into the restoration of the property. I'll keep going. Next slide, please.

45

5 There are about a dozen other reasons to refuse this quarry from going ahead and these have been raised in the many submissions and I won't have time to expand on them all now. I am terribly disappointed, for instance with Hunter Water's efforts because I really do believe they should be blocking the quarries, but that's just one of many issues.

10 So there's catastrophic impacts on the environment, biodiversity, the intolerable dust, noise and vibration, impacts on health and safety, devastation of cultural heritage, adverse impacts on drinking water quality, like in our water tanks, but also of course not just for the local residents but for the entire Hunter region because there's an open canal which is proximate to all of these quarries and that feeds into the Grahamstown Dam and provides the drinking water for the entire Hunter region.

15 And there have already been incidents by businesses in that proximity that have resulted in pollution into the Hunter region catchment from that garden place, which is right next to Eagleton Quarry. So it's not something that hasn't happened. There's been plenty of things like that happen already. So there's also the impact on property values, which I think you've heard about from Charlee.

20 And just generally there's been a complete failure to conduct adequate community consultation. I think they've consulted with some of the neighbours on Six Mile Road but the Italia Road community and the Balickera community, we haven't had any consultation. We didn't even receive notice of the application originally. So it's a mystery to me how they can claim to have done any. Next slide, please.

25 So in recent weeks, there has also been extensive coverage in the media of the fact that Australia's environment offset scheme is riddled with breaches and is nothing more than a scam. That's just some of the headlines. There's been plenty of coverage.

30 Other media reports have also recorded – have documented that a record number of mammals, frogs, plants and birds were added to the national threatened species list last year, the new additions totalling 144 species, five times more than the yearly average and double the previous record set in 2009 and clearing of habitat is a key factor.

35 This list includes threatened species in the proposed site of Eagleton Quarry, including of course the iconic koala, and environmental groups would be represented at this meeting today, were it not for the fact that they are stretched unbelievably thin and unlike the quarry developers, do not have unlimited resources to fight their cause. They have of course made written submissions and I understand you can expect more of these by 7 June deadline.

40 And if you really would like to hear from a local naturalist, I have one living on Italia Road who's not keen on navigating technology or bureaucracy but is extremely well-informed on local flora and fauna and had this been a public

meeting with more than 15 minutes at my disposal, I would have brought her along to address you today on behalf of our community. She's been keeping the most intricate records. She's been living here for decades and has extremely intricate records if anyone would like to know more about flora and fauna. Next slide, please.

The demand for rock aggregate is really the only argument in favour of the quarries proceeding, despite the many undeniable negatives. We all drive on roads and we occupy buildings and the construction of this is dependent on sufficient supplies of rock aggregate.

However, the Department of Planning admits that it cannot quantify how much hard rock material is required over the next few years and it simply relies on the multiple applications for quarries as evidence of demand, when in fact this may largely indicate that companies are aware that the process is about to become more fraught because of increasing concerns about the environmental cost of this activity and increasing regulations.

Instead of strategic planning, taking honest account of the environmental imperatives and needs of local communities, there would appear to be significant efforts by government Departments to minimise concerns about the negative impacts and accommodate quarry developers no matter what. This is no doubt a concern that a shortage of rock aggregate could otherwise impede urgent road infrastructure and housing construction projects with knock on electoral impacts.

So thank goodness we have a body tasked with independent planning because that is what is needed now more than ever. In Australia, the construction and demolition industry generates almost 3 tons of waste per capita and spends about 2 billion on collection, treatment and disposal. However, I've spoken to EPA staff and industry professionals, who tell me that material that could be recycled is still going into landfill or sometimes being just illegally dumped and that there is not so much a shortage of recycled material to replace rock aggregate but just that it is far more expensive.

So in short, chopping down forest is still cheaper than recycling demolition and construction waste for use in road base and other construction. So I'd suggest that much more needs to be done by government to increase the economic incentives to recycle rather than continue destroying the environment. Next slide.

So there's a failure to genuinely explore the alternatives to this planned devastation of forestry and environment and community in the Hunter region. This approach by government Departments is simply inexcusable, given the Australian government's recent international commitments to cease deforestation to meet its net zero targets by 2030. Currently Australia is the only developed nation on the World Wide Fund for Nature's list of global deforestation fronts. There is more than ever a need to think globally and act locally and in the context of this application, there is a need for courageous decision making to protect the vulnerable from corporate interests.

And the vulnerable I refer to, not only the koalas, gliders, birds, orchids and other threatened species, but as you've heard from the previous speaker, there is a respite centre for the disabled, whose existence is threatened by this project. This is a service that is much needed and employs more people than the quarry is projected to employ. But more importantly, it provides a safe space for some of the most disadvantaged members of our community. Unfortunately, the sound of explosive blasting is simply not conducive with providing care to vulnerable individuals.

I've heard that parents in the vicinity of Brandy Hill Quarry are reporting that their children are traumatised by the sound of blasting, which they equate with news reports of war or earthquake. My own brother, who is intending to move his family to Balickera, has a profoundly disabled child and he reports that loud sounds cause her to become very hyper or distressed, sometimes inconsolable or both in quick concession and this can lead to her having seizures. He was hoping to relocate his family here shortly and is very disturbed by the prospect of our family home being surrounded by expanding quarry activity. I could say a lot more.

My other brother is running the farm. For instance, he's concerned about the impacts on cattle. I mean, obviously this is not what any of us had hoped for the future of our home. There's 15 grandchildren in my family and we all have a continuing attachment and interest in the property and we'd like to do interesting things with it in the future. But all of it is compromised by this.

So I do hope for the sake of my family, the community and the environment that you do not approve this application. Please at least defer its consideration until more information about the related applications is available. Thank you.

MR PILTON: Thanks, Anna.

MS GRANT: Thank you.

MR PILTON: Juliet –

MS GRANT: No, I don't have any questions.

MS MCCABE: Probably just a slightly broader question, does your property experience noise or dust impacts arising from the Boral quarry?

MS KERR: So when there's big blasting –

MS MCCABE: Yes, the blasts.

MS KERR: So my brother is the one who at the moment is – I've got three brothers, so it gets a bit confusing, but there's one brother who's a vet and actually didn't know this was on today or probably would've come and spoken. But he

runs the family farm there at the moment and he stays there and yes, they tell me that the buildings do shake sometimes. Not every time, it depends on the blasting, I gather. But yeah, the buildings shake, so that's noticeable.

5 In terms of dust, this is an interesting question that I obviously can't – I haven't got experts, I haven't got any monitoring or anything but I mean I can't help but be conscious that my father died from chronic pulmonary – what is it – obstructive disorder. He had been a lifelong asthmatic and I mean I've got two brothers who tell me they have that as well.

10 Now, admittedly there's various factors, one of them is a tradesman, so there's other – but I'm conscious, I know that I also experience a lot of respiratory symptoms when I stay at the farm, which it's funny because in the city I have less. And so I don't know and I do think that they – when I was door knocking Italia Road, I got lots of reports about bleeding noses, I hear from some people that there are – and I also have a lot of trouble with bleeding noses as well. So I don't know, that's all anecdotal, I appreciate that there's not much you can do with that.

20 **MR PILTON:** Is that related to blasting?

MS KERR: Sorry?

MR PILTON: Is it related to blasting, having sort of pressure or something?

25 **MS KERR:** I think it's related to fine dust, personally.

MR PILTON: Okay.

30 **MS KERR:** I mean, I can't prove this, so it's anecdotal, but I mean I don't think that anyone's doing any research. No one's taking note to see whether people who live in the vicinity of quarries, like mines, whether they're having these kind of respiratory symptoms.

35 I'd like to see the health Department do a proper study on this and see whether there is a correlation between some of those conditions and living close to a business like that which produces a lot of fine dust, which you can't necessarily see. Yes, residents report they have a lot of dust accumulating. Like, for instance, the Lees family, which I talk about in our submission, who, like my family, have been there like five generations. There's kind of long connections between the two families. There's a photo I think of their gutters, they're just completely filled with dust.

40 So anecdotally, yes, I can tell you people find a lot of – even people further along tell me that they have a lot of dust, which you might not expect otherwise in a country area, not that sort of level of dust. The water tank water, the Lees, for instance, have told me they haven't been able to drink their tank water for years. They have been buying bottled water. Boral hasn't even offered to pay for that. One of their tanks has actually cracked from the vibration.

Again, Boral's made absolutely no approaches to them and they're not particularly educated or in a position and they haven't made a lot of fuss about that. I think they used to work for Boral, driving their trucks. But that's a family that's been there for generations and frankly can't drink their own water anymore. They're having to pay for the consequences of the blasting on their own structures. They're the closest I think to Boral. They're the direct neighbour. So yes, there are impacts of dust, vibration and noise of course. Yes.

10 **MR PILTON:** Thank you.

MS MCCABE: And the photographs that you've provided in your submission, you said they're recently but –

15 **MS KERR:** Yes, I took those.

MS MCCABE: – in the last number of years?

20 **MS KERR:** Yes, in the last year when I took them for the purpose of the submission.

MS MCCABE: Yeah. And as far as you think that's occurred in the last say five years?

25 **MS KERR:** Well, I couldn't say – yeah, yes, maybe 10. Last 10. I mean, definitely since Dad's died that those cracks have really developed like that. My father was always very worried about the expansion of the quarries. He was always very unhappy, they used to give him a bottle of whisky at Christmas and that was it.

30 But he was always very worried that they'd want to expand. I remember he often talked to me because having kept the farm, because it was – I mean, he had sold lots of – a lot of the land along Italia Road was originally part of it but the Hunter Water of course had resumed a huge amount of the original property. So it kind of encircled a lot of these developments, yeah.

35 **MR PILTON:** Okay. Thank you very much for coming in, Anna.

40 **MS KERR:** Pleasure.

MS CONNOR: Thank you. Thank you for having us.

MR PILTON: Charlee and Vince. We will be making our decisions in due course and –

45 **MS KERR:** Yeah, is there any timeframe?

MR PILTON: Within weeks rather than months, yeah.

MS KERR: Hard to say. Weeks rather than months, okay.

MR PILTON: I can't give you a final date as of now but –

5

MR JAMES: Submissions until next Friday, 5 pm.

MS CONNOR: Yeah.

10

MR PILTON: Then we have to read them and –

MS CONNOR: Of course.

MR JAMES: Yeah, go to the panel to make a decision.

15

MS KERR: Great. Thank you very much.

MS CONNOR: Thanks so much for your time.

20

MS GRANT: Thank you.

MS MCCABE: Thank you.

MS GRANT: Thanks for coming.

25

>THE MEETING CONCLUDED