

SUBMISSION FOR THE EIS FOR STONE RIDGE QUARRY (APPLICATION # SSD-10432) – EPBS 2022/ 09368

TRANSPORT AND TRUCK MOVEMENTS

It is the *cumulative* effect of 4 quarries within 10 minutes of each other that is not taken into account in this EIS.

ARDG's Stone Quarry's 344 truck movements per day COMBINED with Boral's East Seaham Quarry's current and future movements in relation to its application to extend its operations TOGETHER with the truck movements from Hanson's Brandy Hill Quarry (when it has business north of Raymond Terrace or Seaham Road is closed) will cause congestion; noise and pollution from diesel particulate. Eagleton Rock Quarry Pty Ltd on Barleigh Ranch Way off Italia Road has yet to lodge its application.

To get the trucks of 4 quarries (Boral's East Seaham, ARDG's Stone Ridge, Hanson's Brandy Hill and the proposed Eagleton Quarry) off Italia Road and the Pacific Highway there should be a freight only rail spur line installed between Hexham and East Seaham.

If the rail siding was south of Italia Road then ARDG could build a flyover over Italia Road for access.

The Government owns land from Hexham to East Seaham adjacent to the Pacific Highway which could be used for this purpose. The spur line could operate similar to the rail freight lines to and from the coal mines in the Hunter.

There is spare rail freight capacity into Sydney even more so when the Brisbane to Melbourne inland rail project is finished. Transport of quarry products in and around Newcastle and surrounding areas could be from Hexham which is designated an industry hub.

With the 4 quarries having a life of 30 or more years and making billions of dollars the cost of a spur line is affordable (especially as the land should not have to be purchased).

A bridge over the river at Hexham would be costly but such costs were paid for road intersections and flyovers by other extractive industries south of Sydney so they could get their licences as well as the coal mines in the Hunter. A bridge for a rail freight line has lesser structural/ engineering requirements than a public transport line.

Should a rail spur line not be feasible then, a question not addressed by the EIS is will the trucks involved in the 344 daily truck movements of ARDG's Stone Ridge Quarry be owned and operated by ARDG or contractors? *Experience with Hanson's Brandy Hill Quarry has shown that the most ill-feeling between the community and Brandy Hill Quarry has been created by contractors' behaviour regardless of whether the contractors have signed the Quarry's Code of Conduct or not.*

Italia Road is classified a local road by Port Stephens Council. As noted on the Port Stephens Council's website 2022-2023 "the current safety hazards evident on Italia Road:

- Pavement has deteriorated beyond normal maintenance
- lack or no shoulder width along Italia Road with trees lining the pavement
- current road width approximately 3m travel lanes
- table drains within close proximity of road edge and section with steep batters."

Council is spending \$550k to upgrade the central part of Italia Road. Italia Road is not meant for the traffic it is experiencing now or in the future. It is not fit for the purpose of either heavy truck movements or emergency access to the Pacific Highway for local residents.

From the entrances of Booral's East Seaham Quarry and ARDG's Stone Ridge Quarry there should be a four-lane road to allow local residents to move freely on this section of Italia Road and residents should not be stuck travelling behind slow moving trucks which can lead to dangerous driving trying to overtake trucks and cracked windscreens from gravel spilling from trucks. Trucks should have designated lanes.

Quarry trucks should not travel west along Italia Road and this includes those of Hanson's Brandy Hill Quarry which travel in both directions.

BOORAL'S EAST SEAHAM QUARRY

"Boral Resources (NSW) Pty Limited would like to introduce you to the proposed Seaham Quarry Project (the Project), which involves continued operations at the existing Seaham Quarry (the Quarry) site, on Italia Road, Balickera in New South Wales.

The Quarry has been continuously operating since 1995 and has a development consent, which allows it to operate until 2035.

However, it is now close to exhausting its approved hard rock reserves, both laterally and vertically. To secure resources in the short term and to allow sufficient time for assessment and determination of the Project, a separate application to Port Stephens Council will also be submitted to modify the Quarry's existing development consent for a small lateral extension to the Quarry pit floor (Modification 6). Modification 6 does not propose any additional disturbance or changes to operations.

Booral's East Seaham Quarry Project

The Project will propose a long-term plan for the site, with operations to continue for an additional 30 years, to 2057.

Key project elements (subject to change as a result of the environmental assessment process):

- increasing the extraction area from 26 hectares to approximately 64 hectares;
- maximum production rate of 2 million tonnes per annum;
- frequency of blasting will increase to one blast per week, between the hours of 9am to 5pm, Monday to Friday; and
- operating hours to be extended, to 24 hours, seven days per week (subject to noise assessment outcomes).

Approvals process

The Project will be assessed as a State significant development (SSD), under Part 4 of the NSW Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979. The Minister for Planning or the Independent Planning Commission is the consent authority for SSD applications.

A Scoping Report is currently being prepared which will be submitted to the NSW Department of Planning and Environment (DPE) along with a request for the Secretary's environmental assessment requirements (SEARs). An Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) will then be prepared, in accordance with the SEARs issued for the Project. As part of preparing the EIS the following studies and impact assessment investigations are anticipated to be required and are currently scheduled to be completed in 2023."

Booral's plan to extract 2Mtpa equates to +400 truck movements per day. This combined with ARDG's 344 truck movements per day together with Hanson's Brandy Hill Quarry truck movements and local truck traffic and the proposed Eagleton Quarry's truck movements could see +1,000 truck movements per day on Italia Road which is designated a local road. A rail freight line is preferred.

LOCAL FLOODING AND ROAD CLOSURES

The EIS for ARDG's Stone Ridge Quarry does not take into account that in 2007; 2015; 2016; 2021 and 2022 all roads to access Raymond Terrace and Maitland/ East Maitland except Italia Road were closed due to flooding. All roads but Italia Road were affected by major river systems in flood and low-lying topography. In 2015 the roads were closed for 6 days. It was longer in 2007.

According to Pt Stephens Council in July 2022 local roads were closed with water ingress on 10th July 2022 as follows:

"Road Closures

Newline road Eagleton
 Six Mile Road Eagleton
 High Street Hinton
 Old Punt Road Hinton
 Seaham Road Seaham
 Newline Road Seaham
 Clarence Town Road Woodville
 Italia Road OPEN"

And this was just 'minor' flooding of the Hunter, Williams and Paterson Rivers impacting the low-lying areas of Raymond Terrace, Seaham, Wallalong, Hinton and surrounding areas.

Again, flooding in March 2021 with flood waters impacting the same low-lying areas and Italia Road being the only road open.

On 6th January 2016 the Port Stephens Hunter Police District published:

“ Seaham Road closed
Newline Road Raymond Terrace closed
High Street Hinton closed
Clarence Town Road closed
Italia Road open”

In 2007; 2015; 2016; 2021 and 2022 the residents of East Seaham; Seaham; Brandy Hill; Wallalong; Butterwick; Woodville; Dunns Creek and Glen Oak PLUS trucks from Hanson's Brandy Hill Quarry and Booral's East Seaham Quarry were all trying to access the Pacific Highway from Italia Road. The cumulative traffic of two quarries; local residents; local emergency services; Council workers and two local plant hire businesses and the associated road safety was extremely bad.

Italia Road is the link to Seaham from the Pacific Highway to Seaham for those wishing to access local communities. When roads are closed Italia Road is the only way to access the Pacific Highway for residents to attend appointments; seek medical assistance; get to supermarkets and hardware stores; go to work, etc.

There will be more meteorological events resulting in flooding. The Hunter is prone to severe east coast lows.

When local roads are closed ALL truck movements from ALL quarries using Italia Road should cease for the duration of any road closures due to flooding or other emergencies such as fire and this should be a requirement of their Licence to operate.

HOURS OF OPERATION

There has to be a balance between the needs of industry and the needs of local residents for peace and harmony. 24 X 7 or even 24 X 5 operations are not conducive to the health of the community which is what Booral's East Seaham Quarry is seeking.

For quarries to operate within daylight hours is fair and reasonable. That's 10 hours (Winter) -12 hours (Summer) X 5 or 6 days per week, daylight hours only. This should apply to the ARDG's Stone Ridge; Boral's East Seaham and the proposed Eagleton quarries.

The cumulative effect of all three quarries operating beyond daylight hours, especially the noise of truck loading and crushing/screening, would be intolerable especially during enhanced meteorological conditions.

ALL quarries should operate within daylight hours.

OTHER USERS OF ITALIA ROAD AND WALLAROO STATE FOREST

The EIS does not take into account the cyclists, bushwalkers and motorcyclists who use the trails within Wallaroo State Forest and travel along Italia Road from the Pacific Highway.