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18 July 2021

Ms Jessie Evans  
Director, Resource Assessments  
Planning and Assessment  
Department of Planning and Environment  
Locked Bag 5022  
PARRAMATTA NSW 2124

To Jessie Evans, Director of Resource Assessments.

**Re: STONE RIDGE QUARRY PROJECT SSD-10432 EXH-59321711**

I am opposed to the quarry as I have read the information in the Environmental impact statement and I will be astounded if the authorities ignore such a comprehensive study of the significant destruction of both flora and fauna habitats, for short term monetary gain.

I am equally bothered about the pollution of the ground water. Being that the Quarry is in such proximity to the nearby dam. Many toxic chemicals that are banned for human consumption will no doubt enter the water supply. If the authorities that approve this development are happy to have a lifeless and dead dam, I guess then they are happy for all the litigation that will take place from the many environmental organisations.

I am distressed to think that the authorities haven't thought about the harm of this poisonous water on the human population. I believe that it is a crime to murder someone with Arsenic in their cup of tea. There is no doubt that this isn't just about a hole in the ground. The very processes used to extract will mean that arsenic will be a product that will end up in the dam water. I wonder if the authorities that approve this development are prepared for the long-term consequences of sick people and the litigation that will follow.

When I was a Girl Guide, I used to spend weekends walking with compass and map through this area. It was as close as pristine that we can experience these days, (1975). I remember that the trees in the gully were so thick, so many and

so tall that you couldn't see the sky in the daytime. The old logs, covered by moss on the ground were so huge that I managed to lay under a log and was fully enclosed. What a habitat for animals it was then.

It has been quite a miracle that this land hasn't been destroyed by fires over and over again. Yet you want to destroy a priceless heritage for generations.

The DPIE determination needs to consider the impacts of this quarry on future generations of children who will not be able to walk through the forest and learn about nature if the quarry is approved. Children are anxious about their environments being over developed leaving them to live in a lifeless concrete world with no trees or wildlife. I appeal to your humanity in giving value to an environment which will sustain our wildlife, our children, and the health and well-being of our Society.

I include information below that is significant that represents the research and concerns of a great many people and organisations:

Detailed environmental information on Stone Ridge Quarry is given in the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS), and the Biodiversity Development Assessment Report (BDAR) that includes the Matters of National Environmental Significance (MNES) Report. These are long documents prepared by Umwelt. Some information from those documents is provided for your quick perusal.

The Development Footprint is located on land managed by Forestry Corporation of New South Wales (FCNSW). ARDG has held a Forest Materials Licence (FML) since 2018. FM includes soil, rock, etc.

Construction of a weighbridge and associated administrative buildings combined with the installation of onsite processing plant and associated equipment are also required. The Project will be assessed under the Bilateral Agreement between the State and the Commonwealth.

ARDG's own assessment of Matters of National Environmental Significance (MNES) listed under the EPBC Act has identified that the project is **likely to have a significant impact on the Koala due to the clearance of 79.02 ha of suitable koala habitat.**

\* Koalas, squirrel gliders, brush-tailed phascogales as well as threatened species of birds, bats and orchids have all been identified on/near the development site.

\* **two threatened ecological communities** (TEC) listed under the BC Act will be cleared.

\* **one nationally listed endangered ecological community**, Subtropical eucalypt floodplain

forest and woodland of the NSW North Coast and South East Queensland bioregions will be cleared.

**The proposed entry road cuts through this threatened forest, that was not burnt in the 2019-2020 bushfires.**

The claim that the “Project [will] significantly ameliorate the existing and forecast medium to long term supply-side pressures of quarry materials for the LHCC region, as well as provide direct access to the Sydney market if required” has not been substantiated and cannot be justified with so many other quarries in the pipeline in our area.

Stone Ridge will add to the cluster of quarries converging on roads in the Italia Rd area:

1. **Stone Ridge** quarry (proposed 1.5mtpa)
2. **Seaham** Boral Quarry (proposed to double extraction to 1.5mtpa and operate 24/7),
3. **Eagleton** quarry (proposed next to Boral Seaham quarry 0.6mtpa),
4. **Brandy Hill** quarry in operation and approved to expand to 1.5mtpa on meeting conditions,
5. **Hillview** on Maytoms Lane in Booral (proposed 1.5mtpa)
6. **Deep Creek** Quarry at Limeburners Creek 0.5mtpa application is pending determination,
7. **Maytoms Lane, Booral** (proposed 1.5mtpa)
8. **Karuah East** Quarry was approved to expand in May 2023 to 1.5mtpa, and Karuah Quarries has several other quarries operating in the area,
9. **Martins Creek** Quarry 1.5mtpa was recently refused but developers could propose another variation. A possible solution here is a nearby rail line instead of road haulage.

The amount of heavy haulage truck traffic these quarries will generate to extract about 10 million tonnes per annum (mtpa) is phenomenal. Estimated broadly at 1000 trucks per week per 1million tonnes per annum; and concentrated between 7am and 5pm Monday – Friday, that is 200 trucks per hour; about 30 per minute!

Further **cumulative impacts to connectivity of wildlife habitat and increases in residential traffic**, is the potential impact areas associated with the **Kings Hill Urban Release Area** (not yet approved) and the M1 Motorway Extension to Raymond Terrace, to the south-west of Italia Road. These were cursorily mentioned but not examined in detail as requested by Port Stephens Council.

The **entrance to Stone Ridge quarry is proposed to be opposite the Boral Seaham Quarry**. All traffic is to turn left out of the quarry onto Italia Rd, then left again onto the Pacific Highway and turning again at the **Karuah interchange** if they want to travel south to markets (most likely doubling traffic).

**The following BC Act listed threatened species were noted during surveys:**

- Rusty Greenhood (*Pterostylis chaetophora*)
- *Corybas dowlingii* (orchid)
- Squirrel Glider (*Petaurus norfolcensis*)
- Brush-tailed Phascogale (*Phascogale tapoatafa*)
- Koala (*Phascolarctos cinereus*)
- Potential calls of the Southern Myotis (*Myotis macropus*) were also recorded and the species is known to roost and breed in the Balickera Tunnel.
- Powerful Owl was heard but not seen.

The purpose of the Forestry Corporation of NSW (FCNSW) is sustainable forest management [to manage state forests as forests]. How is it that a quarry could be authorised where the outcome would be permanent destruction of that portion of the forest? The site is unsuitable for a quarry even though FCNSW has written to advise they are a “willing partner” in the project, they have a clear pecuniary conflict of interest since they will benefit income from it.

The Forestry Act defines multiple objectives for the FCNSW which each have equal weight, are:

- to be a successful business operating at least as efficiently as any comparable business, and maximising the net worth of the State's investment in the Corporation
- to have regard for the community in which it operates
- where its activities affect the environment, to operate with the principles of ecologically sustainable development [eg, precautionary principle, intergenerational equity principle, conservation of biological diversity and ecological integrity, incorporating environmental factors into pricing and valuation, such as polluter pays, full environmental lifecycle costs etc.]
- to contribute to regional development and decentralisation
- to be an efficient and environmentally sustainable supplier of timber from Crown-timber land and land owned by it or under its control.

In the interactive Sustainability Report posted on the FCNSW website, the latest report says 211,253 tonnes per annum are being quarried in state forests, with an additional 150,000 tpa when the Bago State Forest quarry becomes active [total ~360,000 tpa]. Note that the Stone Ridge Quarry is requesting approval to quarry 1.5 million tonnes per annum, a significant scale difference and 'order of magnitude' higher environmental and community impact coming from a single quarry.

Cumulative impacts have not been addressed sufficiently; only traffic has been mentioned briefly in the EIS. The detailed habitat and genetic connectivity assessment for Koala and Brush tailed Phascogale requested by Port Stephens Council (PSC) has barely been addressed and doesn't cover genetics at all. PSC required assessment against the CKPOM and a statement of commitment that included hollows, site rehabilitation and a biodiversity monitoring plan, that has merely been mentioned as being intended to be prepared as a Construction Environmental Management Plan.

The Assessment for Serious and Irreversible Impacts on Biodiversity Values in the BDAR, concluded that none were seen. However, koalas were observed and recorded during surveys. The first principle for determination is whether "The impact will cause a further decline of the species or ecological community that is currently observed, estimated, inferred or reasonably suspected to be in a rapid rate of decline". The koala is in a critical phase, and koalas in Port Stephens are believed to be in urgent need of rehabilitation because they are in a rapid rate of decline.

**Stone Ridge quarry is not a sustainable development**, as is claimed, because the economic advantage of creating 10-15 jobs won't outweigh the cost to the local communities of Balickera, Nine Mile Creek and surroundings, or the impact on threatened species. The site is unsuitable.

Yours Sincerely,

Jennifer Wilson,

**Table 2.1 Summary of Key Aspects**

Aspect	Proposed for the Project
<b>Project life</b>	30 years.
<b>Limits of production</b>	Up to 1.5 Mtpa of quarry product/sales per year.
<b>Project Area</b>	Approximately 139 ha (including extraction, processing and stockpiling area and buffers), with a disturbance footprint of approximately 79 ha.
<b>Extraction method</b>	Drill, blast and haul.
<b>Material processing</b>	Processing on site with provision for both mobile crushing and screening plant, as well as modular / fixed processing plant.
<b>Overburden management</b>	Overburden will be minimal and any topsoil and overburden will be stockpiled on site for use in rehabilitation.
<b>Product</b>	Concrete, asphalt and sealing aggregates, gabion and crushed rock, armourstone and roadbase.
<b>Product transport</b>	Road transport of up to 1.5 Mtpa of product via the Pacific Highway.
<b>Site access</b>	Single access point on Italia Road. No trucks will turn right out of the site onto Italia Road towards East Seaham. No trucks will turn right out of Italia Road onto the Pacific Highway.
<b>Employment</b>	Construction: 10 to 15 full time employees. Operation: Up to 10 full time employees, 3 to 5 part-time employees.
<b>Hours of operation</b>	Construction: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 7.00 am to 6.00 pm Monday to Friday</li> <li>• 8.00 am to 1.00 pm Saturday</li> <li>• No work on Sunday or public holidays.</li> </ul> Operation: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Quarrying and processing – 7.00 am to 6.00 pm Monday to Friday, and 7.00 am to 3.00 pm Saturdays</li> <li>• Truck loading, product transport and maintenance – 6.00 am to 10.00 pm Monday to Friday, and 7.00 am to 3.00 pm Saturdays.</li> </ul> No operation on Sundays or Public Holidays apart from maintenance activities as required.
<b>Rehabilitation and final landform</b>	Rehabilitation will be undertaken progressively where appropriate in the context of further resources remaining available in the Project Area at the end of the planned 30-year approval life. A conceptual final landform will be prepared for the Project.