

To The Hon. Paul Scully MP - NSW Minister for Planning and Public Spaces

Objection to Proposed Monaro Rock Quarry at Royalla NSW.

To The Hon. Paul Scully MP - NSW Minister for Planning and Public Spaces

Dear Minister Scully

I wish register my objection to the proposed new Monaro Rock Quarry at Royalla NSW.

My objection is based on the following reasons:-

- 1) Personal safety is not guaranteed safe from cancer caused by silica dust. Silica dust is classed as a carcinogen that causes cancer. Silica dust from the quarry will be significant and Royalla experiences high levels of wind which will distribute silica dust across multiple properties including ours. It will impact a number of other areas including schools. The cancer may not occur for a long time in people meaning any health-related issues may not be immediately apparent and as such my personal safety and that of my family cannot be guaranteed through any mitigation put in place by the quarry.
- 2) Personal safety compromised through increased traffic risks. The point at which the proposed quarry road will connect to the Monaro Highway is a high-risk accident area where multiple accidents have occurred. Apart from vehicle accidents a cyclist was killed very near to the proposed access road connection point to the highway. Over winter, we limit our travel to town as the snow traffic makes the highway a safety hazard to cross and travel. Having up to 500 extra trucks, which move slower, getting onto the highway will add to an already difficult and at times unsafe trip to town. My wife was almost killed in 2015 while travelling the highway into Canberra.
- 3) Blast impact. We are high on a ridge and sometime ago a not so clever person near the quarry site throw an empty 9kg gas bottle into a bonfire that resulted in a significant blast felt across Royalla. This could be verified through the local fire brigade and police as they were called out to it. Fortunately, there were no injuries but the shockwave from the blast shook our house enough that I thought a car had run into it. We have direct line of sight to the quarry location and shockwaves from any blasting at the quarry will directly impact our house, our animals and health through stress it will cause.
- 4) Loss of cultural life. As a proud Ngunnawal man I have watched Royalla grow from a sheep farm into an environmentally strong corridor for native animals to

travel and use. This rejuvenated landscape has allowed me to enjoy a more culturally significant life on our property. Some of the wildlife will be impacted by the quarry which will negatively impact my cultural ties to country, include:-

- a) We have turtles in the dam on our property. Turtles are highly susceptible to silica dust as it can block their eyes and can block their organs if ingested.
- b) I have seen Maliyan (wedged tailed eagles) that visit our property grow from 2 to 5 over the 21 years we have here. The impact of silica dust and blasting will make it no longer a comfortable environment for them to visit. Maliyan are the totem of my people and any impact on them will be highly painful to me and my people.
- c) My wife and I have planted over 2000 native plants on our property where many birds and animals have made homes. These birds will be impacted by the blast and also the dust that will blow across our property.
- d) The Royalla area is also a corridor for migrating black cockatoos moving to and from the coast. I sit and wait for this annual event as it helps me reconnect with country. Knowing the hard work done by us and others in the area to enhance native corridors for native fauna is something I am very proud of.
- e) The area proposed for the quarry is a native corridor that allows local native animals to migrate and live in safety. Creating such a large barren area will severely impact this corridor. Animals impacted include but not limited to echidnas, pink legless lizards, snakes, turtles and various bird life.
- f) Royalla is a major migration path for Bogong moths. The migration paths for these moths has diminished as Canberra has grown reducing their access to/from the coast and mountains greatly. The Bogong moths will be further disrupted by the dust created from the quarry. Over the last five years I have witnessed increased numbers of migrating Bogong moths and am now disheartened at them being hurt by the proposed quarry. It is important to note the Bogong moths are on the endangered species list and any proposed project that would impact them should not be allowed.
- g) Recently there have been sightings of goannas in Royalla including one documented on our property. It is rare to see these beautiful creatures here, I myself have not seen them in Royalla, and it would be a shame to cause damage to their environment.

- 5) Loss of visual amenity. We brought our property knowing it was well away from the unsightly industrial areas of Canberra and Queanbeyan. While we expected other houses to be built on nearby rural residential properties, we did not expect a large quarry to be built where we enjoy some of the amazing views that our house allows us to view. I will be able to see the quarry from our dining table which will be disappointing. This will create me to stress even when I sit to have my morning coffee, lunch and other meals when I look out the windows or from my deck and see the quarry. It is not acceptable to allow the homes people have built in a rural environment to have their views degraded by such a large environmentally unfriendly hole in the ground.
- 6) As well potential loss of wildlife, loss of knowing significant cultural sites will be impacted will further add to the pain I will feel. I notice that multiple organisations claiming to be have cultural claim over the land have been consulted for the Aboriginal Impact Statement. How were differing advice/opinions from the different groups treated? I.e, did the quarry owners consultants cherry pick the bits that suited the best outcome for the developer? I do not believe that the 10 metre and 20 metre exclusion zones around cultural significant sites, as per the consultant's documentation, will be sufficient to protect the significant sites from the impacts of any blasting that occurs. Who will be involved in any approval process for removing and storing items of cultural significance?
- 7) Financial impact. I expect the proposed quarry will have a severe impact on the value of our property through the impacts outlined above which is very concerning to me. Royalla and other nearby properties that will experience health impact, sound and shockwave impact and visual impact will be severely affected in the value of their properties. This project will cost many residents while benefitting very few people. The real benefit will be more money for the quarry owners at the very real cost to myself and all others affected by the proposal.

I would also point out some things I believe are not addressed or incorrect in the Impact statements provided by the company proposing the quarry.

- 1) Economic statement states that this quarry will increase competition and therefore lower prices in the construction industry.
 - a) This is a statement that is not supported by any independent advice from industry experts or factual information which proves that new competition in this field lowers prices. I worked in the construction industry and believe this to not be true and no benefit will flow through to consumers.
 - b) This quarry will take business from already existing quarries that currently meet demand of the local areas for up to 26 years. This gives more than

ample time for the proposed quarry owners to investigate more appropriate locations for a quarry.

- c) The proposal estimates thirty jobs are going to be created. According to the wages figures provided by them, there is in fact only thirteen new jobs being created. Appendix M Economic statement table number 5.1 "Analysis of direct jobs and income".
- 2) There are various, health, safety, financial, environment, cultural and social impacts of this project that will directly impact many residents in the Royalla, Burra, Googong and south Canberra areas with a net gain of 13 actual new jobs. This proposed development is in no way a project of significance that benefits NSW as a whole. The people that will benefit are the quarry owners who will not be held accountable for the concerns I have raised above. This development should not have been considered a project of significant importance to NSW.

In summary, this project has severe impact on a lot of residents, environment and cultural sites through health, safety, financial and cultural degradation with little to no benefit to NSW as a whole. There is ample time for the developer to find a more appropriate location for a quarry before current stocks from nearby mines run out of supply. There no reason for this quarry to be approved in the location proposed.

I urge the Minister to:-

- a) Reduce this proposal from a 'Project of Significance to NSW'.
- b) Reject this proposal outright due to the various reasons outlined above.
- c) Recommend that area never be considered for a quarry.
- d) Hold an accessible open hearing to allow transparency in the consideration process.

Regards

Michael Mudford

[REDACTED]

ROYALLA NSW 2620

Ph: [REDACTED]

Email: [REDACTED]