



BERRIMA RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION

preserving Berrima's architectural heritage and natural environment

PO BOX 7188 BERRIMA 2577 | SECRETARY@BRA.ORG.AU | WWW.BRA.ORG.AU | PH 0409 823 861

Mr Shaun Williams
Major Projects, DPIE
(sent as Attachment to online submission)

25 August 2020

Dear Shaun,

Austral Brickworks New Berrima SSD-10422

We have a number of concerns with this development, namely the impact of dust and noise, the impact on the riparian zones that run through the site and the failure to provide for renewable energy or recognise climate change in a meaningful way in the plans. These are set out below in more detail.

Water Quality & Biodiversity

Wingecarribee is almost entirely in the Water Catchment Area and the brickworks site, which includes a major riparian zone along Stony Creek, is in need of special protection. We ask that it be a condition of consent that 30 metres on each side of Stony Creek be restored with native vegetation. In addition, the entire perimeter of the lot (Lot 1 DP785111) be planted out with a 20-metre wide planting of native trees and shrubs.

In the past the land has been largely denuded of native vegetation, and as a result the biodiversity of the land has been compromised. This is an important location, being close to the Wingecarribee River and the biodiversity hotspot around the Berrima Weir. The native plantings will act as wildlife corridors to and from the river.

This native planting will to some extent offset the massive carbon footprint the brickworks is to have (23,000 tonnes of CO² per year, in addition to the methane leakages).

Air and Noise Quality

Dust is a particular problem in this location, because of the proximity of the villages of New Berrima and Berrima and the heightened risk of silicosis. The impact of the dust will be cumulative and additional to the serious dust problem that presently exists with the adjacent Boral Cement Works. Similarly, the now approved Austral Masonry Plant will compound the dust problem.

It is imperative, therefore, that the crushing of the material both at the quarry and the brickworks be conducted in filtered closed spaces. Also, the conveyor belts from the quarry to the brickworks need to be covered.

As for the noise problem, it is essential to keep the crushing and conveyance of the material from the quarry to the brickworks under cover.

Climate Action

Mention of this has been made above, but it deserves special emphasis, because of the need for industry to play its part in reducing carbon and methane emissions. The project should provide for non-fossil fuels, if not now, then in the future. The use of natural gas needs to be adaptable to the use of hydrogen produced from water by the use of renewable energy. The brickworks is intended to last many decades, and the technology proposed will be well out of date and entirely inappropriate by the time climate change really starts to grip in a decade's time.

The land parcel owned by Austral is sufficiently large to accommodate a large solar array that can generate renewable electricity to run the lighting, vehicles, conveyor belts and other ancillary operations of the plant. Such a solar array should be made a condition of development consent for the project.

Similarly, the plant construction should use low carbon concrete, high level heat insulation and other measures to be as energy efficient as current technology allows.

Recent advances in technology make co-generation of electricity using the heat from the kilns highly profitable when the co-generated electricity is fed into the grid at peak times. This cogeneration of electricity should be made a condition of consent, thus creating an environmental benefit and making the multi billion dollar parent company (Brickworks Ltd) responsible for its climate actions.

Given the vast amount of greenhouse gases that will be created by the use of natural gas (CO₂ and methane), the company must be required to have extensive plantings of native vegetation around the perimeter of the lot and along riparian zones, to at least partially offset the climate damaging consequences of their operations.

Revegetation of the banks of the Wingecarribee River

Although this area of the land owned by Austral is not part of the brickworks site, it is part of the overall integrated project, which includes both the quarry and the brickworks (and in the future, the Austral Masonry Plant).


The appalling state of the completely denuded riverbank should have been addressed in the conditions of consent for the quarry, but it was not. DPIE now has the opportunity to remedy this and require that the bank of the river be revegetated to a depth of 50 metres (as per Clause 7.5(5)(a) of Wingecarribee LEP 2010). This will not only screen the noise and dust from the quarry from impacting on the river, but also provide valuable habitat for land animals, birdlife and aquatic animals (such as the platypus

whose habitat finishes abruptly immediately downstream from the boundary of the Austral land).

The importance of this revegetation of the land in the Austral parcel of lots must be emphasised. It will help offset at least some of the carbon emissions from the combined operations on the lots. It will also address the concerns over air quality, water quality, noise, visual impact, biodiversity and residential amenity for New Berrima and Berrima.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Development Application.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Eric Savage", written over a horizontal line.

(Eric Savage)
President, Berrima Residents Association