

I am a retiree owner of a property identified by the Monaro Rock Proposal, Social Impact Assessment (SIA) located in the Local Study Area (LSA)

“the area which the project is expected to have the greatest potential to affect residents and land users’ experience of their living environment”.

As my property is located in the SIA it is reported that

“residences and properties in the LSA will experience low to high noise, dust or traffic impacts based on the technical modelling”. I

object to the MRP because of the negative impacts it would have to my life and the lives of the residents of Royalla and the surrounding region. I also object as the need for an additional quarry in the Royalla area has not been adequately demonstrated.

The future negative impacts of this proposal on the Royalla community are well known to the applicant and documented in the SIA. The MRP should not be allowed to proceed and negatively impact the health and desired life style of Royalla residents, in order for the applicant to make a financial gain.

This type of development may have been acceptable in the past, but in 2025 it is not acceptable to create the proposed industrial site adjacent to residential areas, particularly when the many negatives impacts of the proposal are known as documented in the SIA.

Prior to purchasing a property in Royalla I carefully researched the real estate options that were available at the time. I selected a rural residential property at Royalla where I would be able to build a home and pursue my equine interests in a peaceful rural environment. I selected the property knowing that it was adjacent to other properties zoned as rural residential and the larger properties over my back fence were zoned as rural I achieved my life time dream in 2004 when I moved into my new home. This was achieved through a lot of hard work, over many years and helped to secure my financial future.

Over the last 21 years I have enjoyed the life style I have chosen and financial security, but this is now threatened by the MRP.

Need for additional quarry

The need for an additional quarry in the Royalla area has not been adequately demonstrated in the MRP. The MRP finds that another quarry is required to meet future hard rock requirements but it is in the interests of those funding the proposal to make this finding. An independent assessment of the need for the quarry should be conducted to ensure that Royalla residents are not unnecessarily exposed to the risks posed by another quarry.

Social impact

The threats include adverse social, health and financial impacts as discussed below. Social impacts of the quarry and processing plant would include a change of lifestyle from rural to a life adjacent to an industrial site. This would bring significant additional heavy vehicle traffic, noise and dust.

The tone of the SIA is that because Royalla residents already experience truck traffic and quarries in their local area, then what could be the harm in a little more. This is quite presumptuous as residents I know are sick of the amount of existing heavy truck traffic and the damage to the roads that we must tolerate because of these vehicles. With the development of Googong this heavy traffic has significantly increased something we understand has to be. When I purchased my property all those years I was fully aware of the environment I was moving into. If I had any thought that today's situation would arise where I was to have a quarry at my back door there would have been no way that I would have purchased my property.

Health impacts

Particular matter PM 2.5

Quarry activities will increase the levels of other particular matter in the air. This will decrease the air quality of Royalla and the surrounding areas. The increased levels of particular matter including fine particles with a diameter of 2.5 micrometers or smaller PM 2.5 pose a threat to human health because their small size allows the particles to be deeply inhaled into the lungs and enter the bloodstream leading to serious health problems like heart attack asthma and decreased lung function (source Asthma Australia). Personally my health has been affected by asthma for my whole life. My respiratory specialist has advised that exposure to increased dust levels created by the the quarry and increased traffic will increase the risk of more frequent asthma flareups.

Silica dust

Of concern also is the increased risk of exposure to crystalline silica dust (CSD).. CSD is invisible to the naked eye. It is so light it can remain airborne for a long time. Because it can travel long distances in the air it can affect human populations not otherwise considered at risk. CSD is toxic to humans when inhaled because of how it damages tissues in the lungs. There is no safe level of exposure to CSD, even low levels pose a risk especially with prolonged exposure (source Safe Work Australia). The mitigation strategies proposed by MRP will not eliminate CSD particles from the air. For the reasons outlines above no level of increased CSD exposure is acceptable. The MRP trivialises the risk to human health. If no risk was present then the MRP would not propose air quality monitoring and education of the community.

The Air Quality Impact Assessment by Northstar 21.1038.FR 1V3 notes *“the assessment presents a conservative assessment of potential impacts”* In other words the impact may be greater than noted in the assessment. This assessment was funded by Monaro Rock, the applicant and is not impartial.

Impact on property values

The MRP Social Impact Assessment Report (SIA) notes that “it was assumed there would be an impact, even if it could not be quantified”. The impact would be negative, personally as I am retired I have no capacity to recover from the negative impact on the value of my property. A real estate agent who sells properties in the Royalla area and has decades of experience has advised me that the property values located in the Local Study area have devalued by \$200,000.00. It is unreasonable that the value of my property should I decide to sell in the near future, would have a decreased value caused by the future profits of the applicant.

Community resilience

The SIA states that *“Given the resilience of the Royalla community and the absence of any significant vulnerable cohorts, no irreversible or unacceptable social impacts were anticipated, provided that mitigation measures were properly implemented and monitored”*. It is abhorrent that the resilience of the community and lack of vulnerable cohorts is used as an excuse to enforce the MRP on this community.

In Summary

Whilst we are all aware of existing quarry’s in the area and the need for this industry, for the supply of rock for roads and building cement that the submission highlights as essential These have been created in decades past.

In 2025, with today’s scientific understanding of the impact of silica dust on humans it is quite unreasonable this proposal would be allowed to go ahead because it is situated so close to, not only Royalla residents but also those at Googong, Fernleigh Park and Tuggeranong. The wind in this area is regularly North West, Westerly, South West and Southerly.

The SIA makes assumptions about the future sensitivity of residents to the MRP

“some level of future habituation is anticipated based on evidence of acceptance and adaptation to co-existence with other nearby quarries”.

In other words the residents will get accustomed to it over time. This finding is particularly offensive as it implies that it is acceptable to enforce the MRP on this community, against their will, because in the end it will all be okay and they already co-exist with other quarries. The creation of this industrial site over my back fence which I strongly believe will have a negative impact on my health, enjoyment of my home and a financial burden, will never be acceptable to me.