

I am a retiree and husband to my wife who owns 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 our home 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 proposal because of the negative impacts it will have on our lives and the lives of the residents of Royalla and the surrounding region because:

- the applicant has documented in the SIA the negative future impacts on the Royalla community and particularly that of my wife’s property and those in her close proximity.
- that even though the proposal suggest that the company can manage and monitor the air quality including the silica dust, science is conclusive that no amount of silica dust can be considered safe for humans therefore how can this be acceptable in close proximity to residential areas.
- the need for an additional quarry in the Royalla area has not been adequately demonstrated,
- land values have been effected and there is no suggestion of any compensation for those in the immediate area
- of the huge increase in volume of the heavy vehicle traffic, the road damage and associated traffic hazards. Already existing road damage takes weeks or months to get repaired,
- low to high noise, dust and traffic impacts as identified in the proposal

### **Need for additional quarry**

The need for an additional quarry in the Royalla area has not been adequately demonstrated in the MRP. The proposal discusses that another quarry is required to meet future hard rock requirements. This finding would be expected, because it is in the interests of those funding the proposal. I have been made aware by a Royalla citizen that other quarry operators do not share that view. Of course other quarry operators may say there is no need because they would see this proposal as competition. The conclusion in the proposal is a conflict of interest. Therefore 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. The proposal identifies that 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 I and other residents now 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.

Regularly frequent damage to the roads which makes the road hazardous takes weeks and often months to repair. The increase in heavy vehicle traffic will exacerbate this problem.

## 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). For chronic asthma sufferers this is quite alarming. My wife's respiratory specialist has advised that exposure to increased dust levels created by 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 **not** visible 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 outlined 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 negative impact on the value of my wife's property is quite alarming because being retired there is no capacity to recover such set back. A real estate agent who sells properties in the Royalla area and has decades of experience has advised that property values located in the Local Study area have devalued by \$200,000. It is unreasonable that the value of her property identified in the SIA having decreased by so much would have no offer of compensation in the proposal by 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

We are all aware of existing quarries 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. However, these quarries were created in decades past before the communities were developed and grown to what they are today.

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.