

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

Objection to Proposed Monaro Rock Quarry at Royalla NSW.

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Dear Minister Scully,

I am writing to register my objection to the proposed development of the new Monaro Rock Quarry at Royalla NSW.

I am a resident of Royalla, and I have concerns about the negative implications this project will cause to the community and environment.

My objection derives from the significant impacts outlined below:

1. Personal health safety can be endangered by silica dust. Silica dust can cause severe health implications including cancer, lung diseases, and respiratory problems. With Royalla experiencing constant winds, with wind speeds reaching up to 43km/hr, the amount of silica dust travelling to the wider community is inevitable. This enhances the amount of people and animals at risk of inhaling harmful respirable dust particles. Whilst the document Appendix B - Air Quality Impact Assessment suggests strategies to reduce the impact on air quality, it only provides ways to mitigate the effect the quarry will have on the air quality during working hours. This means that there are no strategies are planned to be implemented when the heavy vehicles are not operating, resulting in substantial amounts of time where nothing is being done to prevent the air quality from being compromised and causing long term health implications to people within the community.
2. Increased strain on water supplies to and around the ACT. In Appendix B – Air Quality Impact Assessment on page 96 it states, “Aim to have surface moist before the on-set of windy conditions.” As the winds around the area are constant and unpredictable, this strategy to mitigate dust in the air would require significant amounts of water to be used throughout the period of the project. This is a waste of water in an area that is prone to drought and will inevitably put a strain on the water supplies.
3. Additional chemicals added to the environment. The document referred to above also states that “Should chemical suppressant be the dust control method of choice, then its effectiveness would be reviewed and additional suppressant applied as required.” Needing the effectiveness to be reviewed implies that there has been insufficient research completed prior to commencement of the project. This raises many questions for me. Do you know the implications and health risks with using chemical suppressants? They include but are not limited to respiratory problems, nausea, cancers, reproductive harm. Are you willing to allow these chemicals to be used in an area where they can be inhaled by the wider community? What affect will these chemicals have on the flora and fauna? Do the project organisers and evaluators know the answers or will the review the consequences after the fact when it is too late to reverse?

4. Personal safety risks enhanced through the increased vehicles in traffic. The identified access point for the Quarry is in a high-risk accident area where multiple fatality accidents have occurred. The highway is already a safety hazard to travel on and cross over lanes. With the increased heavy vehicles loads, the already precarious travel into town will only be amplified and increase the risks of accidents.
 - a. The 4.12 Mitigation Measures in Appendix I – Road Transport Assessment practically states that the drivers of Project trucks abide to the road rules and respect other drivers – this is already an essential part of having a driver’s licence. This is no way mitigates any of my concerns on the safety of traffic and the increased risk I and many others will be put into while driving to and from work. The fact that the document also states, “no specific measures would be required to accommodate the Project’s traffic.” strongly implies that the safety of the community is not essential or taken seriously. This causes me angst in travelling to and from work and taking essential trips into the Canberra region. Whilst it is easy to analyse figures and statistics, it does not mean that it is practical or realistic, especially when every driver and vehicle drives at varying speeds based on driver competence and vehicle efficiency. Adding up to 100 trucks entering and exiting the highway will certainly create traffic implications and increase the risk of accidents.
5. Adding additional time to travel. My travel time to and from town for medical appointments, grocery shopping, and work commitments will be drastically impacted by the substantial increase of trucks entering and exiting the proposed Quarry site. It is inevitable that the trucks travelling up and down the hill on the Monaro highway will be a slow process due to the need for heavy vehicles to drive slower downhill. They also take longer to get up hills due to the size and weight. This will continue to have an effect on people travelling to and from town.
6. Impact to emergency services response time. As mentioned above, it is inevitable that the trucks will drive slower while going up and down the hill will impact traffic conditions. This can have an impact the time emergency response vehicles get to their destinations. This is extremely concerning for people needing to have emergency vehicles access their homes in a timely manner or to have quick travel into Canberra to access medical services.
7. Impact on cultural connection to land. As a proud Ngunnawal woman, I have been privileged to grow up on Country and be part of a community that values the environment and strives to increase the native animal and plant populations. With my parents, we have planted over 2000 native plants on our property. The impact the quarry will have on the native animals in the area is unfathomable. Malyian – the wedge tailed eagle and totem to my family is one of the many animals that will be impacted by the silica dust, blasts, and utter disturbance to their peaceful environment. The continued destruction to my ancestors’ home is a continuing and dishearten battle all for a financial gain.
8. Impact on the environment may cause native animals’ unrest and force them to relocate. With endangered species already struggling to survive and find a place to live, community efforts and focus on increasing native plants has seen an increase to the migration of the flossy black cockatoos and bogong moths. The disruption from the quarry will have a negative impact on the migration path for these animals.

The use of 'consideration' to the threat of vegetation communities and habitat for flora and fauna and 'considering Indigenous heritage, noise and dust generation' in the Monaro Rock Community Newsletter 1, does not provide any confidence for myself or my family in the validity of the proposed strategies in the quarries feeble attempt to reduce the negative implications on the environment, Aboriginal culture and the community.

In conclusion, this quarry affects me, the wider community and future generations who will have to work harder than before to repair the environment that has been destroyed. Help us protect what the Royalla community has strived to repair and preserve. I ask the Minister to:

- a) Reject the proposal for the quarry outright due to the issues outlined above.
- b) Recommend that area never be considered for a quarry.
- c) Hold an open hearing to allow transparency in the consideration process.

Regards,

A concerned Royalla Resident

ROYALLA NSW 2620