

This submission which opposes the request by Multiquip Quarries to access local roads in the Windellama, Tarago and Bungonia area is based on the growth in heavy traffic movements, lack of proper assessment of economic, social and environmental costs, lack of community consultation and concerns about road safety issues.

Traffic growth

Approval to allow Multiquip Quarries to use “local roads” is of serious concern to many residents in the area. As a result of the approval it is expected that there will be a substantial increase in heavy traffic movements on local roads in the Windellama and Tarago area. These roads are not constructed or designed for heavy traffic.

Such an increase in heavy traffic use will be additional to an already substantial growth in vehicular growth over recent years. There are three major factors that have caused, and are continuing to cause, this increase in traffic:

1. The opening of National Road 92 from Nowra to Nerriga. The volume of traffic is continuing to steadily increase as more drivers become aware of this alternate route to the South Coast. The major roads affected are the through roads Oallen Ford Road, Windellama Road, Sandy Point Road and Cullulla Road with increased car, trailer, and caravan traffic moving between the South Coast, Canberra, Queanbeyan and Goulburn areas. The impact of National Road 92 is clearly demonstrated by the substantial decrease (estimated at 60-70%) in traffic, when the low level bridge at Oallen Ford is closed because of the level of the Shoalhaven River.
2. There is an increase in population, caused in part by rural subdivisions in the area. This increase has seen both an increase in the number of residents commuting to Goulburn and Canberra areas and in the number of school children using primary and secondary school buses as well as increased normal residential and social activity.
3. Use of some of the roads by Hi Quality Waste Management Pty Ltd to move waste to the Minda Quarry on Oallen Ford Road. The issue of increased heavy traffic movement from Hi Quality Waste Management Pty Ltd along some of the same roads has been the subject of recent and strong community concern. Following a request from Hi Quality to Goulburn Mulwaree Council to vary the Conditions of Consent to allow increased truck movements there was a strong community reaction. After consultation with the community and on the spot inspections of the roads to be travelled, the Council indicated that approval for increased traffic would only be agreed if Hi Quality paid for substantial road improvements and agreed to a number of truck movement control matters.

Hi Quality took the matter to the Land and Environment Court and the matter was resolved on 15 May, 2012 after a conciliation conference presided over by Commissioner Hussey. The modified Conditions of Consent include a number of provisions including:

- a prior additional financial contribution of \$500,000 by Hi Quality towards local road upgrading, including widening of the approved haulage route to a sealed width of 7.0m,
- restriction of haulage routes to specified roads and hours on week days only and not during school bus movement times,
- Hi Quality also voluntarily limit their and their contractors vehicles to 80kph and monitor the movement of those trucks.

Assessment of economic and social costs on the communities

Overall there has already been a substantial increase in traffic, including heavy traffic, with further increase flowing from the Hi Quality approval. We submit that there will be little direct economic benefit to the affected communities from agreeing to the Multiquip Quarries proposal for access to local roads. We are not aware of any considered study of the effect of such access on the Windellama and Tarago communities. In particular there has been no assessment of the costs that the proposal will impose on the communities. Such a study should assess economic and social costs to all the communities affected, including Windellama and Tarago.

Environmental effects

The proposal gives no thought to the environmental issues of heavy trucks driving on inadequate roads nor indeed to the dust issues or road damage issues that will arise from driving on dirt roads.

Community consultation

Multiquip Quarries have not undertaken or been part of any community consultations involving Windellama or Tarago communities on its proposal. A proper process of consultation with all the communities that will be affected may well have reduced some of the communities' concern about the proposal.

Many of the roads that Multiquip Quarries proposes to use are those that are currently used by Hi Quality trucks, this will significantly increase the number of heavy traffic movements on those roads. Importantly, the current proposal does not suggest that those Multiquip Quarries truck movements be under the same limitations and conditions or rigorous supervision that are applied to the Hi Quality trucks and its contractors. Yet the restrictions that apply to Hi Quality trucks were put in place because of the inadequate quality of the road and community safety issues.

Safety issues

The local roads proposed to be used by Multiquip Quarries include roads that Hi Quality is not allowed to use, such as Windellama Road, and include many of the roads used by the local community for commuting and shopping and by school buses and parents taking children to and from schools and school buses.

Windellama Primary School is a major safety issue, for historical reasons the school is situated on both sides of Windellama Road. The school needs to access the sports area which is across the road during school hours – so speed limitations at the beginning of the school day and at the end of the school day are of no value.

The increased heavy traffic generated by Multiquip Quarries will negate many of the safeguards negotiated by the community and council in relation to Hi Quality traffic movement and agreed to/approved by the Land and Environment Court.

The increased volume of heavy traffic on an inadequate road network has a significant risk of motor vehicle accidents impacting on road users, including the local community. Council and the Land Court decisions indicate the high probability of this risk – it can not and should not be ignored. Major areas of concern are road safety for all resident and road users, the Windellama Primary School, all school

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buses and the impact on the first responder volunteer emergency services including the community RFS and SES.

Summary

We no longer feel safe using Cullulla Road or Sandy Point Road as an exercise amenity for walking, running or bike riding because of the nature and volume of the traffic and the quality of the road.

We oppose the approval of any expanded transport route for Multiquip Quarries, however, should some limited expansion be approved this must only be with strong and enforceable limitations on load limits, times, routes and speeds for their and any contracted or sub contracted trucks and drivers. There is now technology available to provide real time control and monitoring of vehicles.

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