



Wollombi Valley Chamber of Commerce Inc.

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The Secretary
Department of Planning & Environment
Sydney 2000

OBJECTION to the Calga Quarry Application Number DA 94-4-2004 MOD 3

It has just come to attention of our Chamber of Commerce that there is an Application to modify the conditions of Consent for Hanson's Calga Sand Quarry located at 151 Peats Ridge Road, Calga. We are the organisation responsible for promoting tourism in the Wollombi Valley and all along Tourist Drive 33. This very scenic drive commences at Calga and includes Peats Ridge Road where the quarry is located.

We are also working closely with the Central Coast Plateau Chamber of Commerce in the development of a Harvest Trail along Tourist Drive 33. This will be very important in sustaining agriculture in the area and in supporting tourism.

The Wollombi Valley Chamber of Commerce very strongly objects to this development for a number of reasons.

THE PROJECT

Hanson has applied to add a crushing plant at their Calga Sand Quarry and to significantly increase production of sand product on site.

TOURIST DRIVE 33

Tourist Drive 33 is the scenic gateway into the lower Hunter Valley following the historic convict trail on George Downs Drive and The Great North Road, stretching from the Calga (southern end of Peats Ridge Road) exit on Pacific Motorway 1 to the township of Branxton in Hunter Valley wine country.

TRAFFIC

We understand that to achieve the large increase in production anticipated, sand materials may be trucked from other quarries in the area. This would not only significantly increase traffic on Peats Ridge Road, but also on George Downes Drive and adversely impact on visitors to the area and along Tourist Drive 33.

We further understand that even if materials are not brought in from other quarries production levels at the quarry are planned to almost double from 250,000 tonnes to 400,000 tonnes leaving the site each year. This alone will cause a significant increase of heavy truck traffic on Peats Ridge Road and other local roads.

Sand trucks on this route are already posing a deterrent, even a danger to other drivers. Especially affected are tourists many of whom find it difficult to drive on country roads, even without having to contend with sand trucks bearing down on them.

We strongly object to any modification to existing operations that would increase the volume of sand being transported along Tourist Drive 33, whether on Peats Ridge Road or George Downes Road and on the adjoining local roads.

ABORIGINAL HERITAGE SITES

Heritage tourism along Tourist Drive 33 incorporating The Great North Road is extremely important.

We understand that Hanson has not commented on any impact on Aboriginal Heritage and sites, which are very significant along Tourist Drive 33. We note that there has been no consultation with Aboriginal people or agencies.

We understand from the 2015 decision of the Land and Environment Court that the Calga Valley, which adjoins Hanson's Calga Quarry, is extremely important to Aboriginal people and contains a rich landscape of Aboriginal sites and artefacts that Aboriginal people wish to visit.

We understand that effects on Heritage have not been considered in Hanson's application.

Tourist Drive 33 is the route to visit important Aboriginal sites including those in the Wollombi Valley. Our traffic concerns expressed above apply equally to people being deterred from visiting these places that are important from an historical perspective to Australians generally.

WATER

We understand that, to access the anticipated increased materials in the volumes Hanson claims remain in the existing quarry, they will need to quarry much deeper than they have previously done. They may reopen areas where quarrying has been completed and that have already been sealed.

We are extremely concerned about impacts of deep quarrying on water supplies in the long term. Tourist Drive 33 is a scenic route with a focus on eco-tourism. Water deprivation and its effects on the landscape and agriculture will be hugely significant.

EXPLOSIVES

We are extremely concerned that Hanson may resort to the use of explosives to extract the harder materials that their new crushing plant will be able to process. The implications of this to anyone using Tourist Drive 33 are very serious and have not been considered by Hanson in their application.

TOURISM

We are concerned that Hanson has not addressed possible impacts on tourism, especially eco-tourism in the area.

We submit that the proposed development is incompatible with tourism on Tourist Drive 33 and with agriculture and the Harvest Trail shortly to be commenced.

Yours Sincerely,

Wollombi Valley Chamber of Commerce

Michael Noyce
Vice President.

