

My name is Jake Cassar. I am a conservationist and an eco-tourism operator on the NSW Central Coast. I take walking tours and run bushcraft workshops in the bush on the Coast and Hinterland. I regularly take international groups on educational bush tours and on overnight bush-survival workshops at Australia Walkabout Wildlife Park which is next door to Hanson's Calga Quarry. I spend a lot of time in the bush around Calga so I know this area really well and have a particular interest in safeguarding it. My livelihood depends on it.

I am also the father of a young daughter and I need to know that I can teach her my bushcraft, and take her to visit these areas around the quarry, safely, without being concerned about her health.

I would have preferred to prepare a detailed submission about the development, but it has only just come to my attention. Submissions close today so I only have time to summarise the main reasons for my objection.

I have read RW Corkery's EIS and it says very little in its 17 pages. There are various baseless claims such as:

They won't make more noise but they should be allowed to make more noise.

Background non-quarry noise levels are understated although they had the levels increased in 2012 when they moved the administration building and they have no new basis for why they should be increased even further.

They have consulted widely with the community but they have only put letters in a lot of people's mailboxes and they haven't talked to any Aboriginal people.

Their operations won't change and will still comply with their 2005 conditions of consent when they put in a rock crusher.

The only apparently thorough environmental assessment attached to the EIS is the Air Quality Assessment that is out of date and not fit for purpose. It was produced in 2009. It used data from a quarry in Richmond and not Calga. It modelled how dust might be produced by a quarry that would have operated very differently to the operations Hanson appears to be planning as a new direction for its Calga Quarry.

Corkery has not explained how Hanson will get another 1,800,000 of product from the almost completed, and final, Stage 3 of the quarry. Unless they are going to operate very differently, it is impossible to see how they can get this much material from a quarry that is almost exhausted. Especially one that has only managed to yield 2,040,000 tonnes of material in the 10 years since their 2005 approval.

Everything said and, more importantly, NOT said, in the EIS suggests that this material will come from cutting even deeper into the aquifer, probably reopening areas that they are supposed to have finished quarrying, and with decreasing prospects of rehabilitating the deeper they go, except maybe as a rubbish tip.

And are they considering turning themselves into a processing centre for other quarries in the area, including Hanson's quarries as well as smaller private quarries?

Corkery has not done any assessment of changing the way the quarry operates will change the way the quarry makes dust, uses water, makes vibration, produces noise and adds to local traffic. But it will. They will be working with harder material, doubling the output from 250 thousand tons per year to 400 thousand tons every year (not just in a maximum year, and noting they have never produced more than 250 thousand tons even in their busiest years), using new extraction techniques to get the hard layers of sandstone out, quarrying deeper, and using more machinery and trucks to process and transport product.

It defies logic to claim that there won't be any additional environmental harm done, and the EIS does not even attempt to explain why it won't.