

**Supporting Detail from Neil & Denise Burge regarding:  
"Proposed Quarry SSD11591659"**

Attn: James McDonough. The Department of Planning, Industry and Environment.

We appreciate the opportunity to put forth our concerns, hoping they will be given a fair level of respect and attention.

There is an exhaustive amount of data in the EIS including appendix A through to X and whilst a large amount is repetitive and some inconsistent the expectation that the normal person can understand all the data in the period of time given to us is bordering on criminal.

An example of the use of the word "insignificant" is used many times as in "the impact is insignificant", what is insignificant to one person is very significant to another.

I have included a table of words used throughout the documents, as a high number of these words express someone's opinion, and used in the context of being advisable and give small comfort to the community that this proposal has any care for the local community and its natural surroundings.

There is a high number of inconsistencies between the documents regarding start and finish, blasting times etc. I request concise summary of the key operating statistics and they need to be presented to the community and approvers so the project can be assessed with the proposed "actual" data.

Does a government department (or who) actually audit the information submitted by a developer if so who is that department?

**Word Table.**

Document	EIS	App A	App B	App C	App D	App E	App F	App G	App H	App I	App J	App K	App L	App M	App N	App O	App P	App Q	App R	App S	App T	App U	App V	App X	
Word	Minor	35	0	0	0	1	0			1	0	4	4	12		8	23	10	0	0	20	3	1	1	0
	Insignificant	0	0	0	0	0	0			0	0	0	2	0		0	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0
	Minimise	57	4	0	1	0	4			5	1	10	1	16		5	6	0	4	0	16	2	3	1	4
	Satisfactory	0	0	0	0	0	0			0	0	0	7	0		0	0	0	0	0	6	0	0	0	0
	May	174	2	0	3	1	13			18	23	10	17	45		37	185	35	5	13	36	14	10	6	2
	Generally	49	0	0	0	1	3			4	0	6	1	11		2	16	16	4	3	6	11	1	2	0
	Consideration	54	9	0	9	1	0			6	3	5	2	11		12	8	16	2	0	6	3	1	3	0
	Risk	111	3	20	1	0	5			0	2	12	2	0		8	19	34	0	2	21	19	2	5	1
	Should	59	1	0	0	0	35			3	4	2	14	14		18	42	41	14	0	23	19	3	5	0
	Minimal	32	0	1	0	0	0			3	0	6	1	4		12	2	3	1	0	7	13	0	2	0
	Limited	65	0	0	0	1	5			1	1	4	2	10		3	10	14	2	0	9	7	4	2	1
	Unlikely	53	0	0	0	0	0			1	1	1	2	109		5	3	13	1	0	11	3	0	0	1
	Negligible	15	0	0	0	0	0			1	0	5	0	0		0	0	0	1	0	5	3	0	0	0
	Adverse	34	0	0	0	1	0			2	0	4	5	14		15	1	1	1	0	4	0	1	1	1
	Anticipated	45	0	0	0	0	1			1	1	2	1	3		77	10	2	1	0	6	5	0	0	0
	Reasonable	18	3	0	0	0	3			5	0	3	8	1		3	2	3	4	1	4	1	0	0	1
	Endeavour	1	0	0	0	0	0			0	0	1	0	0		0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0

As we move forward, approvers and other departments must take into consideration some of the current standards are not in line with community expectation, if we don't challenge some of current standards then we will never improve. Just think one day a quarry (or similar) will come knocking at your door.

There is no doubt a number of these projects get approved due to a few greedy people and the approvers having little understanding of the actual impacts or regard for the people, flora and fauna it affects.

The local councils, Mid Coast, Port Stephens & Dungog say they support and want to increase tourism, but I fear this type of development will drive tourism away, and I suggest tourism and other similar opportunities collectively will provide far greater financial, community and supporting business benefits. This proposal will reduce those opportunities.

It is clear the area needs to be rezoned (E4) to protect the current well-being of the people in the community, native fauna & flora, together with the creek and river systems between the M1 and Gloucester, "the forgotten corner".

Inserted below is an extract from Published by:

Department of Environment, Climate Change and Water NSW. DECCW 2011/236

### 1. 1.3.1 NSW State Plan

*Investing in a better future: NSW State Plan* (NSW Government 2010a) is the NSW Government's long-term plan to deliver the best possible services to the people of NSW. It sets tough, realistic targets for service improvement across the public sector and provides an open and transparent way to measure performance.

In 2009, the NSW Government held an extensive state-wide consultation with the community, business, local government and stakeholder groups, to assist in developing the State Plan and to make sure it reflected the needs and vision of the NSW community. More than 3,500 groups and individuals provided their views and local knowledge.

The State Plan aims to ensure:

- the economy grows stronger, supporting jobs and attracting business investment
  - the transport network is world-class – safe, reliable and accessible
  - NSW is the Clever State – children are better educated, people are more skilled, and the state is known for its research and innovation
  - the health system provides the highest quality care, accessible by all
  - NSW is the Green State – energy is clean, the natural environment is protected and NSW is a leader in tackling climate change
  - the most disadvantaged communities are strengthened and the most vulnerable citizens are supported
  - the police and justice system keep people safe.
- Further information on the State Plan may be found on [www.stateplan.nsw.gov.au](http://www.stateplan.nsw.gov.au).

My question is are these objectives applied when new projects are under consideration and can we see them demonstrated during the assessment?

### **Noise & Vibration**

No mention of machinery reverse alarms.

Truck & dog – noise evaluation does not account for poor road conditions along the Buckets Way specifically an empty truck combination and measured as vehicles in motion. The acceptable level should be based on the lowest SPL of a European manufactured truck. The majority of the truck combinations used will be Australian/American built and therefore a high use of engine braking (Jacobs Brake) will be used, exponentially increasing obtrusive noise levels.

The noise emission estimates for the low- noise heavy trucks were based on the noise limits for heavy trucks used in Europe as specified in UN ECE Regulation 51 and EEC Council Directive 92/97. These regulations specify noise limits for heavy trucks that are 7 dB less than the noise limits specified in Australian Design Rule ADR28/01. Low noise trucks must be used on all proposed projects.

Most, if not all of the road trucks will be contractor if not sole traders and therefore the proposed quarry will take no responsibility for the actions or noise levels of this equipment as soon as they leave the property.

Product dispatch 6.00 am to 6.00 pm. This means additional trucks travelling on the Buckets Way 5.30am to 6.30 pm  
Maintenance shall be limited to 7.00 am to 5.00 pm Monday to Friday

**WHO** guidelines state that the recommended noise level for a community should be **less than 30 dB**.

**Photographs attached.**



### **Air Quality**

Reference to using Beresfield and Mayfield as the criterion, this is flawed as these testing areas have been set up due to coal train dust and therefore the criterion is set higher than what it is along the Buckets Way. Respiratory diseases are of a growing concern in Australia, please refer to the Hunter Valley, do not continue to widen an already problem.

### **Traffic**

No assessment included for Fridays, public holiday or school holiday am or pm times. The wait times at the Buckets Way / M1 intersection will be unbearable and will have a high probability of major accidents including death, rated at 5A. See table below.

Risk Probability	Risk Severity				
	Catastrophic A	Hazardous B	Major C	Minor. D	Negligible E
Frequent 5	5A	5B	5C	5D	5E
Occasional 4	4A	4B	4C	4D	4E
Remote 3	3A	3B	3C	3D	3E
Improbable 2	2A	2B	2C	2D	2E
Extremely Improbable 1	1A	1B	1C	1D	1E

A similar intersection of the New England Hwy (A15) and The Golden Hwy (B84) which has high levels of waiting traffic was modified and the A15 speed limit for approx a kilometre in either direction was limited to 80 Kph.

**Attached photograph** of Buckets Way / M1 intersection, car turning right toward Newcastle and if a heavy vehicle from the south is in the Buckets Way turning lane the vehicle turning right loses vision of vehicles travelling north.



It is clear the traffic study has not considered high traffic times as noted previously; the assessment is skewed to support the approval for the project.

## Extract from EIS

In the operational phase the quarry is expected to quarry product 49 weeks of the year, 5.5 days per week. The quantity hauled, using 32 tonne truck and dog haulage vehicles, is estimated to be an average of 10,200 tonnes per week or 1,800 tonnes per day. The tonnage per day would vary greatly however a maximum of 4,000 tonnes could be supplied on any given day based on customers' needs. This maximum quantity would equate to a maximum peak of approximately 110 haulage vehicles leaving the quarry on a peak demand day and approximately 55 haulage vehicles on an average day. The highest peak hour traffic volume would be no greater than 25 laden haulage vehicles exiting in a peak hour based on loading / weighing dispatch times. It is important to realise this will not occur every day and every hour but would be a short term peak associated with a number of concurrent major orders.

Do the numbers make sense?

$1800 / 32 = 56.25$  loaded truck movements  $\times 2 = 112.5$  truck movements in 720 mins  
= a truck every 6.4 mins

$4000 / 32 = 125$  loaded truck movements  $\times 2 = 250$  truck movements in 720 mins =  
a truck movement every 2.88 mins

The queuing effect at the Buckets Way / M1 intersection will not be acceptable, people including truck drivers will take risks to enter the M1 going in both directions with the most likely consequence being death.

Increase in truck & dog combinations means an increase in animal deaths together with frightening of animals and birds.

There are also a large number of side roads and personal accesses that are already dangerous due to low visibility in either direction and with the high number of additional trucks presents a high risk of accident with a catastrophic outcome.

**Attached photographs** current road conditions consistent with the first 12 kilometres of the Buckets Way.



### **Social Impacts**

Firstly, I must refer to the MARA Consulting Social Impact Assessment, 23 Sept 2021, Executive Summary treats the local community with contempt. It is written with the underlying support of the project approval, and basically states the project will have no significant impact in any area or to the local community.

I clearly remember being in one of the online zoom meetings with Mara Consulting and they weren't interested in any comments being put forth, they just muted the meeting and advised the project met current requirements and standards.

### **Water**

Refer to App P. Table 4.1 Summary of Average Water Balance (ML)

Areas of concern are:

(Assuming the numbers are correct)

Imported water of 1.8 ML in the first stage is equal to an additional 138 semi-trailer movements of water purchased, I doubt they will do this. These additional movements have also not been considered in the traffic assessment.

Secondly, the “controlled” and “uncontrolled” releases are not acceptable and will cause irreparable damage to downstream flora, fauna and aquaculture industries. Please look for the obvious, water releases from many projects have caused permanent damage to our water ways in the past and if this project is approved will only continue to destroy natural habitat together with the profits of other natural industries that far better provide economic and tourism opportunities within the LGA.

### **Bio Diversity**

Refer App L.

Koalas are in the area and need to be protected not moved on or relocated. Koalas tend to be faithful to their home range and **will attempt to return if moved elsewhere** (relocated). The relocation of mature individuals that are healthy and who are coping well within their home range is discouraged unless there has been a recent and significant loss of habitat. It is a known fact clearing of Koala habitat is devastating to the species.

I also make note the only Kangaroo identified in the area as being the Brush Tailed Rock Wallaby. I live nearby and have a number of Eastern Grey, Common Wallaroo, and Black Wallaroo frequent our property on daily basis and I will suggest these and other species are common and widespread.

It an undeniable fact the impacts of blasting, vibration, man made noise, diminishing air quality, vehicular traffic headlights have a destructive effect on animals not only in the immediate but widespread area and they never return, if they indeed survive.

### **Visual Amenity**

Refer App V. Whilst the Mara Consulting document details that no resident will have visual siting of the proposed quarry, what are the ramifications if they do? The public are sick and tired of soft measures that provide no consequence for the instigator. In this case the operation must cease until a hard measure is put place that rectifies the problem.

I object to the comment by Mara Consulting regarding the haul access road. “the visual impact will begin to diminish as the road becomes a part of the landscape.” Their documents constantly playdown the impacts of the proposed quarry. Based on the EIS this road could have a truck and dog travelling on it every 2.8 min plus other support vehicles.

## Comments & Information Requests regarding noted Appendix (As provided at the Public Meeting 9 December 2021)

### Appendix D

- Can you provide a copy of the safety audit carried out on the Limeburners Creek bridge?
- Traffic counts on the Buckets Way were carried out on 21 February 2019, this was prior to the effects of Covid19. The traffic count specifically on the M1, Buckets Way intersection has changed and will continue to be of an increased nature due to the reduction of overseas travel for many years to come.
- Statement regarding "If a driver does not adhere to the Code of Conduct, they will be suspended from undertaking further haulage from the quarry." Does this mean the proposed quarry operator will be responsible for a truck drivers' behaviour from the quarry to his/her destination and back?
- Can you provide the economic benefits to the lower Hunter in detail preferably in Excel or PDF?

### Appendix E

- If the quarry is approved, blasting must be restricted to 9.00 am to 4.00 pm Monday to Friday, as stated in Appendix H-Air Quality 1A.
- Traffic and Transport. If the Buckets Way road condition diminishes due to quarry truck & dog movements then the all truck & dog quarry traffic must cease until the road is returned to a safe and acceptable surface level.

### Appendix H

- Reference to Table 5.3 Summary of PM2.5 Levels, using Beresfield and Mayfield levels and criterion are not relevant. Beresfield and Mayfield are rail corridors. The current levels at specific points within a 10-kilometre radius are well below the stated levels and the criterion would be much lower.

### Appendix J

- Table 3.1 WMS Design Criteria. Concerns with dirty water. All workshop and hard floor area's to be collected in sumps and pumped out on an as required basis with no discharge to site or surrounding areas. There must be no opportunity for oil and other hydrocarbons or toxic material entering waterways. Oil separators and similar require maintenance and are often overlooked with a high level of environmental incidents.

### Appendix K

- With regard to traffic, the Buckets way has always been considered a dangerous road. There were 40 serious crashes along the route in a recent five-year period and an additional 10 lives lost since 2014.

- Traffic counts were carried out on Thursday 21 Feb 2019, this I believe provides an misleading count, a realistic count must consider Mondays, Fridays, School Holidays and days prior and post Public Holidays if this detail together with advised min/max truck rates are included I suggest the Buckets Way will be outside its design criteria and queuing at the Buckets Way intersection will become intolerable.
- Refer 10.5 Pavement Construction. This statement is totally inaccurate, the condition of the Buckets Way is extremely poor in a number of areas this has been exacerbated by increased rainfall (which may be an indicator of the future) and it is clear an increase of heavy vehicles will destroy it further and at a rapid rate.
- Refer 11.0 Conclusion. Extract. "[Much of the road noise issues and residential amenity issues associated with heavy vehicle traffic can be controlled through the preparation and implementation of a Traffic Management Plan and Driver Code of Conduct for the quarry.](#)" This is an extremely poor way to manage risk, administrative controls are at the low end of the scale, this appears consistent across the EIS and attached appendixes.
- Attachment E. Crash Data. It sounds like death, serious and moderate Injury are acceptable, it is clear some government departments and consultants need to move into the 21<sup>st</sup> century. No death or major injury is acceptable.
- If proposed quarry trucks are to use this road major changes & improvements must be made to, road surface, signage, bridge widths, speed limits, verge clearing, access to and from The Buckets Way together with noise abatement measures along The Buckets Way.

#### Appendix Q.

- There is a new NSW Road Noise Policy "Draft for Consultation" this policy must be made available to all interested parties and adopted as a minimum policy. Publisher DECCW 2010. ISBN 1742323383, 9781742323381
- Reference to 5.4.3 Traffic Noise Impact Assessment. This refers to criterion 55dB(A), the EIS must establish what the current noise levels are in the area to enable what impact it has on the community.

#### Appendix S.

- Table 1 Proposed Hours of Operation, is inconsistent with other sections of the EIS, we need confirmation of the proposed hours.

[Refer "Community Strategic Plan - MidCoast 2030"](#)

[Our environment](#)

We protect maintain and restore our natural environment

Value, protect, monitor, and manage the health and diversity of our natural assets, wildlife and ecosystems

Protect, maintain and restore water quality within our estuaries, wetlands and waterways

Improve the capacity of industry and the community to achieve the best possible outcomes for the natural environment.

I don't see how this supports the proposed quarry as I will further discuss directly with MCC.

- Refer to "Compensation & Property Value". I agree with the Voluntary land Acquisition Policy but this won't apply to the majority of the community who will be affected by the road trucks noise both laden and unladen it is fact that:

A noisy atmosphere is a sure way to **drive down the value of a** home. A home valued at 500K can drop nearly \$40,000 in value when affected by road noise pollution. A recent study showed 50% of buyers won't consider a home with road noise. The noise drives down the overall value.

Mara Consulting don't consider this in their assessment and a number of the properties in the area are in and above the \$1mil price range.

- Refer 5.4 Key Themes. Mara Consulting appear very sympathetic in this area toward the community concerns but their summary says:

"The assessment concludes the Project's economic impacts to be overwhelmingly positive with minimal adverse impacts identified."

It is clear very little weight is placed on the community concerns if that is the summary of their assessment.

Can you please provide a full set of financials so the community can assess the true financial benefit, if any?

## Conclusion

In conclusion we request that our views, comments and outstanding questions are answered in full with facts and data. Based on the information currently provided and with community and regional expectation this project must not be approved.