

Department of Planning & Environment  
23-33 Bridge Street,  
Sydney  
NSW 2000

Dear Sir,

I wish to strongly object to Ed O'Neill's EIS Gunlake expansion project application.

About 3 years ago, my family and I moved into the Towrang Valley to enjoy the beautiful rural environment, and escape the rat-race of Sydney. We were initially unaware of the quarry industry nearby.

We were soon to become acutely aware of this industry through the Holcim/Lynwood quarry's plans for expansion. Over two long years we negotiated with the quarry management over the many issues that could have severely impacted us and many in the local community. To Holcim's credit, they listened to concerns and responded with action that makes it possible for us, and everyone in close proximity, to live in harmony with this major industry.

Gunlake's proposal, by contrast, offers only a negative impact to the local community and Hume Highway road users.

Gunlake are currently licenced to run 164 heavy vehicles per day along Brayton Road and the Hume Highway for approximately 200km from Marulan to Sydney. Ed O'Neill wants to increase his production from 750,000 tonnes to 2,000,000 tonnes per annum which will increase the number of truck movements to an average of 440 per day and maximums of 690 trucks a day, 24 hours a day along the same route. This is the equivalent of 1 truck every 2 minutes. Each truck carries roughly 40 tonnes of crushed rock.

Residents of Towrang regularly use Brayton Road and the Marulan bypass as the shortest route to the Hume Highway towards Sydney. The school bus uses Brayton Road as do residents of Big Hill. Already the road is subject to deterioration, and 690 trucks would make driving extremely hazardous, not to mention the extra noise and pollution residents would be asked to suffer. In addition, 690 trucks per day along the Hume Highway is a significant impost to road users and taxpayers who must repair the road, especially when there is a better long-term solution.

This amount of rock in this quarry is likely to last 90 years. It would serve the people who live along this already busy corridor to insist this product be shipped by rail. Now, if Gunlake was situated miles from existing rail, one could understand why rail would be less feasible, but Gunlake is situated right next door to Holcim/Lynwood who have indicated they would be willing to share their rail infrastructure. One wonders why Ed O'Neill is reluctant to talk to Holcim, and exclude the most obvious option from his EIS.

If it is a cost issue, it should be pointed out that it is half the cost per tonne to ship by rail as it is to ship by road. (the EIS says cost of rail transport is 6.6 cents/tonne compared to the cost of road transport at 12.5 cents/tonne) The capital set-up cost will be greater, but by his own estimates, Ed O'Neill is expecting to turn over \$1.424 billion over 30 years for a \$3.2 million investment. Taking into account the generous profit margins quarry operations enjoy in Australia and the fact they don't pay royalties for their raw material, he can certainly afford to set up his business properly for the long-term low-impact of his quarry on the community and NSW roads. On the grounds of extra emissions, cost to the tax-payer to repair road damage, and danger of accident on the Hume Highway alone, this proposal should be rejected. But when one considers that Ed O'Neill intends to reduce the quality of life of nearby residents, expecting us to bear loss, not only of quality of life, but of land-values, without benefit or compensation, it is totally unacceptable.

As if transport issues aren't enough, Gunlake's production increase to 2,000,000 tonnes per annum is expected to increase crushing operations to 24 hours per day. We can already hear the drone of crushing in the mornings. Life would be intolerable when this crushing is ceaseless. A simple solution would be to replicate Holcim's solution which has been to enclose their rock-crushing operation in a sound-proof, dust-proof shed.

I must emphasise that I am not opposed to the quarry in principle, simply that Ed O'Neill should not be allowed to expand at the expense of the community in which he runs his business. If he can't afford to meet the standards Holcim have set, and proved possible, he shouldn't be allowed to proceed with his planned expansion.

I do understand quarry operations are State-significant and therefore must be situated somewhere, though it is hardly fair to sacrifice a beautiful rural community when the sacrifice does not have to take place. Holcim have shown it is possible for quarries to live in harmony with rural communities, rural communities we should cherish and protect.

Yours Sincerely,

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