

Giles Road Resident – Objection to the Brandy Hill Quarry Expansion

I am a resident of Giles Rd, and live within 1km of the Quarry. I am strongly opposed to the expansion of the Brandy Hill Quarry. My objection to the extension of current quarry resources follow some of the key issues as outlined in the Environmental Assessments and include, but are not limited to: Socio- economic impact, Noise and blasting, Air quality, Traffic, Ecology, Surface and groundwater. We are strongly opposed to increased operational hours, including crushing and blasting, and for quarry operations and transport to be increased to 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

I am a Business Management Consultant, Sessional Academic and mother of three young children, aged 4months, 2.5years, and 4 years. Our family moved to Seaham two years ago as part of our “tree-change”. We looked forward to the lifestyle and quality of rural living – great communities, great schools, clean air, safer roads and a healthier environment. The proposed expansion of the Quarry will have a significant cumulative socio-economic impact on this area.

There will be a great impact on our local social and health amenities, including visual, traffic, noise, vibration and air quality. The Seaham area and its surrounds have high social value and include local and regional natural conservation areas (Hunter Estuary Wetlands, Stockton Sand Dunes), engaged and dynamic rural communities, businesses and schools. The extension of the quarry will impact on Seaham and its surround negatively.

We are concerned about the impact on Air Quality. Although the Air Quality Impact Assessment rates the air impact as potentially low, as a local resident, I often see dust plumes over the quarry. These dust plumes and their movement on wind currents are particularly evident at twilight and I am already concerned regarding the health impact that this dust has on my, and my children’s, health. I live on a hill, and have a good vantage and view of the surrounding landscape. The dust plumes over the quarry are extensive and I do not believe that the extension would remain a “low” impact at all.

Quarry operations already excrete air pollutants that are extremely dangerous and toxic to human health. Monitoring of current Brandy Hill Quarry Operations is already inadequate. Emissions from the blasts are extremely concerning. Increasing blasting will only increase existing health concerns and issues about air quality.

There are currently inadequate monitoring stations to monitor and collate information regarding quarry air and noise pollutants. How will the proposed quarry expansion impact on our air quality and health if there is already inadequate monitoring?

I am concerned about the long term health implications of the proposed extension for myself and my children. I am concerned that we are already greatly aware and regularly hear noise and blasting, including crushing, from the quarry. We are concerned about the vibrations and noise from the quarry.

Increased heavy vehicle movements will significantly affect the amenity of the area. Seaham and Brandy Hill are home to many families. There are several schools, preschools and school bus stops that service the surrounds. There is already a safety concern addressed by residents of this area about their ability to safely and comfortably move on Brandy Hill Drive and Clarencetown Road, particularly in terms of cycling, walking, horse riding, accessing bus stops and the pre-school. The road shoulders are inadequate for these functions.

Although the EIS/Traffic Impact Assessment states that the projected traffic increases will be within the local and regional road network capacity we are extremely concerned. One of our key concerns is the proposed 24 hour operations and trucking movements and the associated increase in traffic, noise, dust and diesel emissions. Brandy Hill Drive and Clarencetown Road are already extremely busy rural roads, with high speed limits (80-100kms). Heavy vehicle movements along these roads are already a concern and the physical condition of the road, which is poor, is already posing road safety issues. There are numerous dangerous pot-holes and significant road edge erosion on these roads.

Consideration must also be made to the cumulative transport impact associated with the proposal of the Brandy Hill Quarry and the proposed Martins Creek Quarry. The estimated combined daily total of 988 quarry trucks on Brandy Hill Drive alone is astonishing and the impact of 24hour movements will be massive. The number and intensity of trucks would cause an unreasonable and unacceptable impact on the environment. In this case, the environment being the residents and users of these roads.

I am concerned that the potential impact on the environment has been inadequately addressed by the proposal. The extension of the quarry is likely to have a significant impact on listed threatened species and communities including the Koala and Grey-headed Flying-fox. The proposed action will result in the clearance of habitat critical to the survival of these species and a number of other endangered or vulnerable species as highlighted in the EIS. Clearance of 48.65ha of undisturbed vegetation as proposed in the application includes 45.8 hectares of confirmed habitat for Koala. As a resident of Giles Road who regularly walks along Giles Road and Croft Road (bounded by the Quarry) I am concerned for our local koalas and other wildlife.

The extension of quarry operations, resources and transport at Brandy Hill is concerning and will greatly affect the lifestyle, health and well-being of the area and its residents. I want my children to grow up in an area where the air is clean and free of toxic pollutants, the roads are safe and the community is strong and dynamic. I want my children to benefit from growing up in an area that is environmentally sound, where wildlife thrives, the popular Wetlands are healthy and the local water areas are thriving. I want to wake up and hear the sounds of birds calling, not be woken by the sound of quarry blasts and feel its vibrations 24 hours a day. I want my children to be able to travel to school on a road that is safe, to feel comfortable with them using the school bus stops. I want to know that I own a home in an area that is growing and increasing in value from a social and financial point of view – not one that is going to suffer the financial effects of heavy industry and degraded air quality, dangerous roads and denuded wildlife. I am a concerned mother. I am a concerned resident.