

Department of Planning & Environment  
GPO Box 39  
Sydney  
NSW 2001

481 Martins Creek Road  
Paterson  
NSW 2421

Attn: Mr Howard Reed

Manager Mining Projects

14th November 2016

Dear Mr Reed

**RE: Martins Creek Quarry – Proposed Expansion (Application SSD-146612)**

As a resident of the Paterson/Martins Creek community for 39 years I am very disturbed by activities from the Martins Creek Quarry and the impacts of the existing/proposed expansion on the village of Paterson and the broader Hunter community.

I have attached my submission dated 26<sup>th</sup> August 2014 for reference and my submission dated 14<sup>th</sup> November 2016 for consideration on the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for Martins Creek Quarry (Application SSD\_146612).

From the onset I am familiar with the quarry operations and lived in harmony with the quarry for 37 years. I reaffirm my considerations as outlined within the 26/8/2014 letter.

**I object to the proposed application SSD\_146612 and provide detail as to my position in the text of this submission.**

I request the following to be considered.

- Application SSD-146612 not be considered by the DoP&E until the pending court case with Dungog Council is resolved.
- Operation and haulage hours return to 7am till 4pm Monday to Friday
- Extraction limits return to 500,000 tonnes of product
- As per current approval 70% of the product to be transported by rail. A suitably approved transfer facility (such facilities or material hubs could be addressed in the Hunter Special Infrastructure Contributions Plan for the Hunter supporting the Hunter

Regional Plan 2036) needs to be proactively investigated to eliminate the impacts of intermittent campaign road haulage of any products through communities. This initiative would position such projects/consent authorities as leaders in planning and the development of sustainable liveable communities.

My position on Application SSD\_146612 is based on my understanding of the application,

*Current performance and alignment with regulatory conditions.*

- I find myself totally confused as to how an extractive industry is allowed to continue to operate outside of current approval conditions, to the extent that the current consent authority, being the Dungog Council, is forced into Court action with the applicant.
- The proponent has demonstrated to the community that a one off contract opportunity, was more important than a harmonious social licence to operate.
- Consideration to the impacts on the communities are solely based on licence criteria and current law. Meeting this criteria is paramount, however, there are many issues which are very hard to quantify. Current performance (grid locking townships with trucks and this impact **not recognised in the application as a safety issue for the project**) indicates a lack of understanding/concern for the current lifestyles and future sustainability of the small regional communities.

*Traffic Assessment*

- There appears to be little consideration, if any, given to the impact of road closure from the existing rail crossing, within the township of Paterson. The flow numbers don't reflect the true "knock on impact", these closures have on traffic movement through Paterson. Until cleared, the town is grid locked by a conga line of vehicles in either direction. The intention to install "quote: - *a raised central median which will direct vehicle movements and reduce the potential for collisions whilst also providing for a pedestrian crossing at this location*" is reactive and very detrimental to the overall fabric of the rural town. The inadequacy is, the Traffic Assessment, is not considered in parallel with the Social and Economic Assessment, therefore, the suggested, traffic fix to facilitate the quarry expansion doesn't reflect that this area, the Paterson CBD, will suffer a reduction in parking opportunities, likely having a negative

impact on the economic viability of these businesses and the sustainability of another regional rural community.

- The rail movement of product using facilities or material hubs (this could be proactively addressed in the Hunter Special Infrastructure Contributions Plan for the Hunter supporting the Hunter Regional Plan 2036) has not been considered as an alternative. Albeit such facilities are an initial cost, the potential to eliminate the impacts of intermittent campaign road haulage of any products through communities in the future, will lead to safer and resilient communities.

### *Social and Economic Assessment*

- What is difficult to measure here is the detrimental impact such increased truck traffic movements will have on businesses with the Paterson CBD. One point was clear at the last community meeting attended by over 300 regional residents who represented the broader community was, they lived here for the lifestyle. The assessment reflects the benefits for the proponent and state, whilst omitting the potential for local and regional property devaluation due to a degradation in lifestyle and the depreciation of existing community infrastructure.
- The potential impact on tourism for the broader Dungog Shire, is not reflected. This region is in rebirth, rebranding as a preferred lifestyle and tourist destination. To grid lock the entry to the Dungog Shire when a rail haulage option already exists is counterintuitive to the overall sustainability of the State.
- Recent enquiries at two of the local primary schools, Paterson and Vacy have indicated that the 2017 student intake numbers remain stable at one and continue to increase at the other. Despite the Social and Economic Assessment defining the Shire as an aging population the area to be firstly impacted by the proposed trucking activities continues to grow as a preferred family lifestyle location. The impact on the liveability is inadequately addressed.

There appears to be a consistent thread within the expectation of the proponent as demonstrated at the Ardglen Quarry CCC on 17/11/2015 when asked by a community representative “*why should they be given another chance?*” The reply was “*they have an existing planning approval and EPL and are entitled to operate. The Government need*

*quarries and have initiated this CCC process to enable quarries to operate in harmony with the community”.*

At a meeting in Paterson at the onset of this process in 2014, the point was raised as to “*what could we do if the impact proved to be unbearable*” the reply by the proponent then was “*move*”.

As a community member I believe I too have an entitlement, that being to expect our community to be fair and all strive to maintain the lifestyle and prosperity of our region. As we were aware of the quarry when we moved to the area, the application proponent should have been well enough informed through their due diligence studies to realise the restrictions on current and future operations within the quarry.

The application in its current form is not conducive to a long term sustainable future for our thriving regional community as the gateway to the Dungog Shire. The proponents’ use of the State Planning process reflects a deliberate attempt to undermine the previous consent authority for the operation.

Thank you for receiving this submission and once again reiterate that the use of the existing rail and strategically located bulk facility receiving/distribution hubs would position our planning process to better manage complicated land use issues. We all agree we need liveable communities and sustainable development.

Stephen Sneddon

---

Stephen and Michelle Sneddon.  
(Concerned residents)