

Kristen Gadd
Raworth NSW
Kristen.gadd@bigpond.com

Dear Sir / Madam,

I would be grateful if you would accept my submission in opposition to any expansion to the Daracon operations at Martin's Creek Quarry.

My reasons for my strong opposition to the potential expansion are as follows:

- 1) **Extraction Industry Consistency:** The Hunter Valley is home to substantial extraction industries, most notably coal, but also a number of quarries. The extraction of natural resources has represented an economic necessity for many years in the Hunter Valley, and the Martin's Creek Quarry has fulfilled local requirements for hard rock products for many years. As has been contemplated by now an overwhelming majority of coal mines and other quarries however, the environmental impacts of these industries on the communities that surround them cannot be ignored. Substantial investment in infrastructure and long term contractual arrangements have been negotiated between the companies requesting approval for extraction activities and key providers, specifically rail and logistics providers to ensure that the transport of the products they extract is both efficient and has the minimum possible environmental impact, including air pollution, noise, and safety including minimizing traffic movements. The continued extension of rail lines for coal mines in the Gunnedah basin and rail spurs to minimize ongoing day to day road operations is just one example.

It is for this reason, that due the location of the Martins Creek Quarry, and the transport issues with moving the products away from the site that the then State Rail Authority constructed a rail siding on the Martins Creek site. This demonstrates that since prior to Daracon's control, the impact of substantial road movements was understood, and kept to a level, which would not impact materially on the public amenity of the areas surrounding the quarry.

Daracon's submission requests that expectations of their level of investment in appropriate infrastructure are more lenient than those of equivalent extraction industries and that the public will bear the monetary, environmental and amenity costs to the public and local government detriment and to the benefit only of the few beneficiaries of the profits made by this private Company.

- 2) **Local and Pedestrian Traffic:** I have read some previous material on the expected routes to be taken by the majority of the trucks moving to and from the Martins Creek facility. They include routes through residential areas, which are continuing to expand further into the Maitland hinterland, and therefore will impact on a higher and higher number of residents, particularly in Bolwarra Heights, Bolwarra, Paterson, East Maitland and their

neighbouring suburbs. During the time I have personally spent in these suburbs I have experienced family life. This includes adults and children walking and riding bicycles along roads, which have no footpaths, often steep verges, trees along road sides and standard residential setbacks from the road for housing.

The number of movements contemplated by Daracon during peak times will coincide disastrously with children getting on and off school buses, in both the morning and afternoon, riding bikes to and from school and local traffic coming and going from workplaces. The lack of local infrastructure to deal with these conflicting uses, is due to the fact that in the past, these quarries have understood that the number of movements a day must be respectful of the residential nature of the communities they must impose on to transport their product. The safety implications of this juxtaposition of road uses is at best extremely inconvenient and at worst could be fatal.

I understand that the use of Tocal Road is seen as a 'logical' choice due to its 'regional road' status, however again, this status was due to the contemplation of residential and farming traffic due for private purposes. This route is a key access road between regional towns such as Maitland and Dungog, but there is a chasm of difference between residential and rural uses for which the road is currently and has always been utilised, and the substantial increase in heavy industrial use now proposed by Daracon.

I have experienced the current traffic situation in key areas, which are utilised by Daracon for its major transport routes. Specifically, the Melbourne Street intersections of the Flat Road and access to the New England Highway at East Maitland is already a major issue for the volume of localized traffic at peak travel times. Delays are common, and hence an additional few trucks every few minutes would be enough to cause complete gridlock for traffic attempting to move through traffic lights, which change after sometimes only around 5 seconds. One or two additional trucks could completely monopolise the intersections to the exclusion of local residents to access the New England Highway, which we rely so heavily on to transport us across town and to Newcastle for our own workplaces. This is already a major issue for Bolwarra, East Maitland, Tenambit, Raworth and Morpeth residents. No comprehensive solution to the existing problem is currently proposed by either the state government or Maitland Council. Hexham is the other key area of issue. I have frequently experienced 20 minute delays with the 'normal' morning traffic between Thornton and Sandgate. A small number of additional trucks will have a major impact on this point. There are currently insufficient access points to the New England Highway and then in turn, Newcastle and the M1 to add this number of large truck movements. Access to the University of Newcastle, the Port of Newcastle, Newcastle Regional Airport and the North Coast will be materially impacted by any further traffic on these already over congested roads.

In summary, while I understand that industry in the Hunter Valley is a necessary and important part of our economy, we have moved past an expectation as a society where private enterprise can have unimpeded impacts on private residents with minimal accountability. The scale of the proposed operation places an unreasonable burden on the residents and taxpayers, whose roads, environment and amenity Daracon seeks to ignore. I therefore request that you deny Daracon's request to expand their current operations, unless alternate transport arrangements for the products of this extraction are made, which do not involve further imposition on the local communities surrounding the Martin's Creek Quarry.

Yours Sincerely,

Kristen Gadd