

23/11/2016

Application Number: **SSD 14_6612**

Dear Sir/Madam,

Thank you for this opportunity to make a submission regarding the Martins Creek Quarry Expansion Project.

There are myriad issues relating to the proponent's application to expand the geographic size, operational hours and amount of material extracted from this site.

In my submission I will address the impact that the Martins Creek Quarry Project will have on the township of Paterson and the influence of the increase in truck traffic.

Paterson is a small rural town in the lower hunter region with a population of approximately three hundred and fifty people. The EIS, which to me is a two thousand four-hundred-page puff piece, often refers to the 'social benefit' the quarry expansion will bring to the region. Please explain to me how six thousand trucks through a small rural town with small rural roads Monday to Saturday could possibly be of social benefit? The threat to local business is immense. The three bed and breakfasts that operate in Paterson will not survive if the application is approved, as there will be a substantial increase in truck numbers. No guest wishes to be woken at 5:30am to the sound of truck and trailer. The coffee shops that currently operate in the town already have issues with truck noise and safety. With an increase in truck traffic they surely will not be able to operate a profitable business. The down-stream effect of these small business' closing would be a devastating blow to the town and potentially lead to its demise. Drivers of the quarry trucks rarely stop in Paterson to purchase products as the trucks are too long to be able to park safely, so they provide very little economic benefit for the town.

My wife and I often go to Paterson for coffee, but to sit outside on the terrace at the CBC B&B is not a pleasant experience, due entirely to the passing quarry trucks. It's also the case for the café across the road.

There may be some social and financial benefit to a small number of current and future Daracon (Buttai Gravel Pty Ltd) employees, but the damage done to Paterson will be irrevocable.



As can be seen in these pictures there is not enough width in the road lane to safely accommodate both trucks and parked cars. This dangerous situation is magnified many times when trucks pass each other or a driver of a parked car opens his or her door.

Within the EIS is this summation: (EIS Main Text, Page 27)

‘the extended operating hours associated with the expansion of the quarry is likely to result in an increase in heavy traffic through the townships of Paterson and Bolwarra. It is noted that the maximum hourly frequency of traffic from the quarry will nevertheless remain as per current (40 laden trucks an hour exiting the quarry in the mornings, with a significant decrease in the afternoons).’

This extract fails to mention the 40 empty trucks returning to the quarry. Also not mentioned is any ancillary trucks required for quarry operation. Morning is the time when residents are most affected by truck noise and this is the peak time.

Daracon has proposed to address truck safety at the Martins Creek site with the construction of a bridge and road exiting at Dungog Road. Also a remedy for the tight turn at the corner of Duke and King Street and Gresford Road in Paterson has been offered but at a considerable cost to the community. Many parking places will be lost, affecting nearby business, and the ability to exit the service station and head in a northerly direction will not be possible because of the proposed concrete pedestrian island. These road alterations, as inadequate as they are, do not address the horrendous noise the trucks make, especially the trucks contracted to Daracon for haulage, which Daracon admit they have no control over.

I see no attempt has been made to address the narrow and dangerous intersection of Prince and Duke Street because nothing can be done as the two historic homes that front these streets have no nature strip to surrender. This intersection is a major safety issue for the residents of Paterson and its visitors. Trucks almost always cross the lane lines at this point. (See second picture). Not because they are poor drivers but because there is physically not enough space for them to pass without

encroaching on lane lines. This is particularly obvious when trucks pass each other in the opposite direction.

Another dangerous section of road is the T intersection at Paterson and Tocal road. The bridge, that crosses the Paterson River, is far too narrow to accommodate the quarry trucks, especially a truck and dog configuration. Trucks turning onto the bridge from the northerly direction, heading east, always cross into the opposite lane. This danger is magnified by the fact that Paterson Road has an eighty kilometre speed limit and Tocal Road a one hundred kilometre speed limit. Driver's vision, when heading in a westerly direct on Paterson Road, is severely impaired when these large trucks attempt this turn.

This is an extract from the Daracon website under their 'values' subheading.

Environment

Daracon ensures that any foreseeable inconveniences to the community or environmental impacts are mitigated through comprehensive planning of our projects and by informing and involving the community effectively and equitably.

We place the upmost importance on public safety and environmental protection throughout all of our activities as we foster a strong sense of responsibility and continually strive for excellence in ensuring community well-being and environmental integrity.

In my opinion, and in the opinion of my fellow residents, Daracon has not fulfilled any of the above claims. This is evident in the continuing breach of the 1990 Dungog Council consent rules regarding the amount of quarry extraction allowed. ('A production limit of 300,000 tonnes per annum should be adhered to with 70% of product from the quarry to be despatched by rail'- EPA hearing Question 36. 14/11/2014). During the Hexham project, in 2014, 1,100,000 tonnes were extracted per annum. Daracon did not inform the community of the impending increase. They arrogantly went ahead and did what they wanted without community involvement.

If Daracon wish to prove they adhere to '*a strong sense of responsibility and continually strive for excellence in ensuring community well-being*' they would comply with the 1990 consent limit.

It is not only the local roads through Paterson that are ill equipped to cope with trucks of this size but all the local roads on the haulage routes are too narrow and pose a risk for all drivers and pedestrians that share these roads with these large quarry trucks.

As an occasional cyclist it is near impossible to safely ride my bike from home to Paterson and back. After attempting this once I will not attempt it again. And this from a hardened long time Sydney bike commuter.

The general loss of amenity in the township of Paterson is currently being affected by quarry haulage trucks and if an expansion of quarry operations were to be approved the emotional strain placed on the residents of the town would be considerable. The detrimental effect on the town of Paterson, both financially and socially, far out-ways the benefits of the quarry expansion.

There is only one Paterson, and contrary to information in the EIS, there are other sites within New South Wales where hard rock andesite can be extracted, without destroying a lovely and historic town.

The arrogance of Daracon cannot be understated, not only in their breach of consent rules and contempt for the communities affected by the quarry operation, but also in the attitude of the CEO, David Mingay. This arrogance was clearly on display during the 2014 community meeting held in Paterson. When asked about blasting and truck noise by a Martins Creek resident his response was – "if it's a problem you should move".

The community is not suggesting the quarry close. My understanding is that it has been operating for approximately one hundred years in a mostly harmonious atmosphere within the community.

What I am suggesting is that an upper limit of 500,000 tonnes of material be approved for extraction and that 70% of that extracted material be moved by rail. As most of the impact of the road haulage is felt in the morning, a start time of 7am and finish time of 4pm Monday to Friday would curtail community angst to some degree. At this production level, blasting and processing of rock would be reduced accordingly therefore addressing concerns of residents that live close to the quarry site. If this suggestion is not financially viable the quarry should cease operation.

