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Director – Resource Assessments

Planning Services

Department of Planning & Environment

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Supplementary Submission Martins Creek Quarry Expansion – Application No SSD-14_6612

Dear Madam/Sir

I oppose the Martins Creek Quarry expansion.

Subsequent to my initial submission opposing the Martins Creek Quarry expansion I have received on Wednesday 30 November in my letterbox a Community Update from Daracon regarding the proposed quarry expansion. I assume the Update is not introducing new or altered information but reflecting selected parts of the quarry expansion EIS. The Update is dated November 2016 and has been received 6 days after the closing date for submissions. Please note this is the only communication I, and I assume everyone living in my community, have received from Daracon. Because of this failure to consult with the community I am sure there will be many who would have lodged a submission but were unaware of the proposed development. As a planning Major Project I believe Daracon should have been more forthcoming with information.

Rail dispatch of product

Despite the above, it was clearly stated in Appendix D, Rail Logistics Operations in the EIS that . . . *rail transport has a clear operating cost advantage over road transport* . . . The Community Update further supports rail with the statement *Daracon would like to use rail distribution as much as possible*. Daracon states the Martins Creek rail loading facilities *are suitable for loading ballast trains. They are unsuitable for aggregate freight*. I assume this statement is referring to the fixed overhead hopper facility. The equipment currently used for loading aggregate into the trucks should also be able to load aggregate into rail wagons.

The existing facilities were put in place when the quarry was essentially a source of rail ballast. As the present quarry operator now wishes to supply rail ballast plus other grade product, it is their responsibility to upgrade their facilities accordingly. Daracon states it will *enhance the opportunities for rail distribution . . . with appropriate aggregate loading capabilities as market opportunities develop and suitable unloading and distribution facilities become available*. As stated

in the EIS, the 12 month period Nov 2013 – Oct 2014, 5.44% of output was *train loaded material*. Therefore the other 94% was sent either by wheelbarrow or truck! Surely this demonstrates more than adequate *market opportunity for appropriate aggregate loading capabilities* to have been already installed.

As for *suitable (rail) unloading* facilities, it should be the responsibility of Daracon to assist or establish suitable unloading facilities. My copy of the Newcastle UBD maps shows a linking rail line from the main north coast line to the Hunter Valley line with a spur line into the Rutherford industrial complex. If this rail setup can be accessed and there is suitable land in the industrial complex then Daracon should be able to establish a facility to service Maitland and surrounds. Appendix D, Rail Logistics Report, Market Conditions, 5.4 identifies the Port Waratah complex as a suitable site for a Newcastle area rail unloading facility.

Daracon has, it would seem falsely, argued the inability to dispatch a train any more frequently than every second day and argues the inability of the quarry's rail loader to load a train of more than approximately 22 wagons. However it states in the Update that *Daracon will enhance . . . the quarry site to provide for extension of the rail sidings . .*

Daracon's argument that *rail network congestion and limited ARTC access paths* restrict rail distribution viability fails to explain why it has not established suitable rail loading facilities for aggregate. Daracon on one hand states that (Appendix D, Rail Logistics Report, Market Conditions, 5.4) *aggregate for construction purposes is a relatively common material with consequently low value . .* and on the other (Update, Background) *Martins Creek quarry . . services . . the Hunter, Central Coast and Sydney regions by processing and delivering specialised quarry products*. Although not stated, this must imply products of reasonably high value.

It seems fairly inefficient to be road transporting lime, fly ash, slag and other binding and mixing materials to the quarry site and then transporting the same materials back to areas of final use. Much of the road network between the quarry and both Maitland and Newcastle has not been built to handle the volume of traffic proposed by Daracon. There are communities including Paterson, Bolwarra and Lorn where pedestrian traffic would be severely threatened by the combination of service vehicles, laden trucks and returning empty trucks and the lifestyle of residents and visitors to these communities and townships would be severely impacted. The proposed operating hours and truck volume is unacceptable.

Summary

Martins Creek Quarry could increase its throughput while limiting the impact on the Martins Creek community and communities along the road distribution routes by implementing the following:-

- As a priority, establishing a suitable train unloading facility in the Maitland area and a further train unloading facility in the Newcastle area. These facilities to be a processing site, including crushing, mixing, grading, washing and binding of product where required.
- As a priority, extend the quarry rail sidings to allow the use of longer trains and give absolute priority to rail transportation. There seems no reason why a train could not be loaded and despatched of an afternoon or alternatively despatched the next morning and another train loaded and despatched late morning/early afternoon.
- Quarrying operations be entirely limited to the removal of overburden, drilling, blasting, extraction of rock, stockpiling, loading, washing and any other process required to produce transportable rock product.
- Carrying on quarrying operations between the hours of 7am and 6pm Monday to Saturday

with blasting limited to the hours of 9am to 5pm Monday to Friday and 9am to 12 noon Saturday.

- Crushing, mixing and binding be phased out at the quarry site within a predetermined timeframe as the train unloading and mixing facilities become operational.
- Road transportation be limited to an absolute maximum of 20 outbound laden trucks per hour with an absolute maximum of 100 outbound laden trucks per day Monday to Friday. When necessary, a maximum of 10 trucks per hour 9am to 12 noon Saturday.

I have made no reportable political donations.