

**Director Resource Assessments  
Planning Services  
Department of Planning and Environment  
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**24 November 2016**

**Dear Sir,**

**Martins Creek Quarry Expansion – Application No SSD-16-6612**

I am a resident of 94 View Street, VACY and wish to advise of my objection to the above project proposed by Buttai Gravel Pty Ltd (Daracon).

I oppose the Martins Creek Quarry Expansion for the following reasons:

First and foremost, I am appalled that the history of operations of this company from 2012 to the present day is not being taken into consideration by the Department of Planning and Environment. The history would immediately negate consideration of a new application by this company until such time as the Development Approval Consent Conditions issued by Dungog Shire Council in the 1990's were adhered to and being met in full. I am aware of the court case in the Land and Environment Court between the Dungog Shire Council and Daracon regarding the said Development Approval and I am also very aware of the delaying tactics by the latter's Counsel to forestall any legal findings until after this new application has been settled. When the Department is fully aware of this court case, irrespective of it being the responsibility of the Dungog Shire Council to enforce DA conditions, one would have thought it imperative for the Department (given Daracon's lack of adherence to any of the DA conditions of the 1990's) to dismiss this application until such time as the court case has been determined.

As a point of interest, I have recently had to adhere to a Compliance Order from the Council to contain my guinea fowl (a semi wild game bird) from trespassing/flying onto a neighbour's property, I was granted 30 days to comply with this order, which I have done. Interesting that Daracon can do just what it likes, irrespective of DA conditions, with no consequences and they've had 4 years of non-compliance!!

The foregoing should in itself be sufficient to delay any consideration of expansion of Martins Creek Quarry which incidentally has already been considerably expanded from its original footprint with no consents to date that I can determine.

The impact of this proposed expansion to Martins Creek Quarry on myself and fellow residents of View Street, Vacy, Paterson and the surrounding areas is considerable.

(1) Increased truck traffic through Paterson is totally unacceptable:

Local businesses are being severely impacted, particularly the CBC, the B&B and the Cafes in the village centre.

Children being dropped off or picked up on school buses are being exposed to increased danger.

The elderly are already finding it more difficult to cross the road to the Post Office, IGA, Butcher's, etc.

Historic homes through the village are not only experiencing damage structurally but their occupants are having to endure unacceptable levels of noise from the early hours and throughout the day.

Paterson Village cannot withstand any increase of heavy road traffic. There is a facility for moving quarry materials by rail, apparently 70% (according to the DA conditions presently standing) should already be transported this way – to date NOT HAPPENING!

Does a child or someone have to be injured or die in a traffic accident with these huge trucks? Does a business proprietor in the village have to suicide through despair at a declining way of life or inability to sell his/her property? Does the whole community have to stand by while a greedy operator says 'two fingers' to any community concerns as their village slowly dies and their property prices plummet? Who do they turn to when their political representatives, government organisations and elected representatives bury their heads in the sand and refuse to address such blatant abuses of the system, preferring to support the bully boys of this world? Do people have to be driven to civil disobedience before anyone with the power to do anything takes notice?

Paterson Village, a historical little village consisting of one major street which runs through the middle of it, cannot be altered to facilitate increased truck movements, it is just not possible or practical in any way. The only solution would be to by-pass the village completely and that is probably neither practical or possible either. A proposed new exit road and rail bridge from the quarry to make life more bearable for Martins Creek residents only creates new problems elsewhere and does nothing to reduce traffic through Paterson, so that proposal is of no consequence offering no solution to the major problems which would evolve should an expansion to the quarry be approved. There can be NO expansion and the 70% transport by rail component presently existing MUST be enforced.

## (2) Dust and noise from blasting and crushing:

There has been an increase in both dust and noise from blasting and crushing in all areas in close proximity to the quarry.

Neighbours on the crest of View Street have complained of cracks in their homes. My own home feels the vibration when there is blasting but being at the lower end of View Street has not had any damage. Dust is a constant problem but seems to depend on the direction of the wind as does the level of noise experienced.

- (3) Further damage to native flora and fauna will result if further extension to this quarry is granted.

Those of us who value and care for the little pocket of the Hunter Valley in which we live hope that common sense will prevail and the powers that be will protect our homes and environment. Some have lived here their entire lives, others have returned to their birthplace and some, like myself have only been here for a few years. Most of us knew of the quarry's existence before we settled here, many have lived with it fairly harmoniously until 2014 when 600 trucks a day started rolling through Paterson. We all respect its existence, the work it provides for a few locals and others from outside the area and its right to operate as a going concern. However in turn we expect it to co-exist with us, respecting the community, operating within confines and limits that are reasonable and not damaging or destroying the environment or way of life of the people who reside here. The areas through which they travel to transport their product also need consideration and protection. All of these (eg Bolwarra, Lorn, Brandy Hill, etc.) have bottle necks, danger areas with schools, etc., and incur considerable road damage with heavy haulage vehicles.

We have no intention of allowing our area and Paterson Village in particular to be destroyed and ask you to look favourably on all the submissions.

I have not made a reportable political donation.

Yours faithfully,

Marilyn Coakes