

May Patterson  
Department of Planning and Environment

## Submission - Sutton Forest Quarry Project

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comment during the public exhibition of the proposed mining operations at the Hume Highway, Sutton Forest, known as the Sutton Forest Quarry Project.

Whilst I acknowledge the role and value of extractive industries in a general sense, I would like to raise some specific areas of concern regarding this proposal, namely the following in relation to the construction and operational impacts on the [Diocesan Shrine of our Lady of Mercy at Penrose Park](#):

- Noise.
- Communication with the Pauline Fathers.
- Ongoing monitoring and community involvement.

These matters as discussed below.

### 1. Noise

The Noise and Vibration Impact Assessment (NVIA) prepared by Spectrum Acoustics Pty Limited has identified the Monastery at Penrose Park to be a sensitive receiver and has recognised the significance of the outdoor shrines and grotto also at Penrose Park.

Of great concern is the vagueness of the application in terms of when the blasting will occur. The Environmental Impact Statement details that blasting will occur no more than 12 times per year, and 'generally' occurring no more than once per week (excluding misfires). However dates have not been set, nor has it been specified the period of time that each blast would occur.

The 13th of each month is a major day of pilgrimage (Fatima Day) for the Pauline Fathers in residence at Penrose Park and their visitors which could result in 7,000 pilgrims. One of the essential components of this pilgrimage is **silence**.

A number of other significant holy days are celebrated at Penrose Park such as the solemnities of the Catholic Church which occur throughout the year and also attract a large number of pilgrims.

### Recommendation:

- The consent is conditioned to:
  - limit blasting to 12 times per year. This number of blasting events per year should not be subject to modification in the future.
  - limit the period of each blasting event to within the hours of operation of a single day and the hours of operation would be clearly specified in the conditions of consent. As such, blasting would only occur on 12 days of each calendar year.
  - Specify that the dates of blasting are not to coincide with the 13<sup>th</sup> of the month, or other significant holy days, as determined significant by the

Pauline Fathers (see point 2 below regarding communication with the Pauline Fathers). No other works should be undertaken on these days to mitigate against operational noise or vibration.

- Require preparation of a noise management plan.
- Specify that a blast event means a single blast event, inclusive of a number of individual blasts fired in quick succession in a discrete area of the quarry.
- Specify that should monitoring indicate an exceedance of noise or vibration criteria, the adjoining landowners should be notified and be kept up to date of monitoring results until the relevant criteria is met.
- Specify that an adjoining land owner reserves the right to request the Secretary undertake an independent review of the impact of the extractive industry on their land, should the land owner consider the noise or vibration criteria to have been exceeded.

## **2. Communication with the Pauline Fathers**

The NVIA states that “The Applicant would maintain communication with the Pauline Fathers to ensure that all planned blasting events within the Site are discussed prior to final planning for each blast.”. It is unclear what ‘maintain communication’ with the Pauline Fathers means. The communication should not just be a notification exercise, but instead an open dialogue with an intent to be accommodating and respectful of the long term and established religious observances at Penrose Park.

### **Recommendation:**

- The consent is conditioned to require that terms of reference are to be established with the Pauline Fathers in relation to ‘maintaining communication prior to blasting events’ and these terms are submitted to the Secretary prior to commencement.

## **3. Ongoing monitoring and community involvement**

The monitoring recommendations of the EIS and supporting documentation are supported, however it would be appropriate for key stakeholder and broader community involvement in the ongoing monitoring of the site and operations.

### **Recommendation:**

- The consent is conditioned to:
  - Ensure appropriate community and key stakeholder notification on the proposed blasting schedule. Refer to point 2 above for specific consultation with the Pauline Fathers prior to the setting of the proposed blasting schedule.
  - Require that a community consultative committee be established in accordance with the relevant guidelines prepared by the Department of Planning and Environment. In addition to the independent chair, appropriate representation from the Applicant, Council and the local community, a representative of the Pauline Fathers of Penrose Park, or their agent should be afforded a seat on the community consultative committee.

This submission raises concerns regarding noise and ongoing monitoring and consultation with the Pauline Fathers of Penrose Park and the broader community. Daily monastic life at Penrose Park focuses on silence and prayer and the proposed quarry has the potential to result in significant adverse impacts should noise and vibration not be appropriately mitigated and planned for. Such adverse impacts are not considered to be in the interest of Penrose Park and its stakeholders, or in the broader public interest. Nonetheless, the proposed recommendations above are considered suitable mitigation in this regard.

It is hoped that the comments raised within this submission will be fully considered and provide a further opportunity for dialogue in relation to the three points discussed above.

Kind regards

Matthew Tague  
21 June 2018