

**Hunter New England Local Health District
Hunter New England Population Health
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Health
Hunter New England
Local Health District

4 April 2017

Ms Jessie Evans
Planning Officer
Department of Planning & Environment
GPO Box 39
SYDNEY NSW 2001

Dear Ms Evans

BRANDY HILL QUARRY, CLARENCETOWN ROAD, SEAHAM (SSD 5899)

I refer to the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) exhibited on the NSW Department of Planning & Environment web site in relation to the Brandy Hill Quarry (SSD 5899). Hanson Construction Materials Pty Ltd proposes to extract up to 1.5 million tonnes of hard rock building materials per annum, an increase from a previous per annum average of 700,000 tonnes. It also plans to expand into a new extraction area, construct a concrete batching plant and install a receiving station for concrete washout material for recycling.

Hunter New England Population Health (HNEPH) has reviewed the EIA and associated documentation provided by the proponents and also the extensive list of Director General's Requirements, paying particular attention to the management of air quality, noise, soil, water and other issues which may have an impact on human health.

HNEPH notes the importance of effective and genuine community consultation with active involvement of the adjoining property users, the community and the local authority. There is some sensitivity in the community associated with development proposals, particularly those that may have noise and dust impacts. The EIA should ensure that community consultation is continued up to and if approved, during the ongoing operation of the development.

When assessing health risks, both incremental changes in exposure from existing background pollutant levels and the cumulative impacts of specific and existing pollutant levels should be addressed at the location of most affected receptors. The EIA states that the cumulative impacts of some pollutants at the sensitive receptors exceed applicable criteria and outlines mitigation measures to reduce their impacts. HNEPH considers it necessary that mitigation measures be introduced early in the construction stage to reduce the community impact from any unpredicted exceedances and these measures should be included in the EIA.

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The following should also be considered in the approval process for this project:

Air Quality

Long and short-term exposure to PM_{2.5} causes health effects including heart and lung diseases which may lead to premature death and increased hospital admissions. No threshold has been identified below which exposure to PM_{2.5} is not associated with health effects. Therefore the proponent should demonstrate that the mitigation measures implemented throughout their operation of the project will result in no increase in the net PM_{2.5} to the air-shed impacting on the surrounding population.

Potable Water

The EIA states that "Potable water for drinking and washing would be supplied from roof catchment and stored in rain water tanks. The assessment should, therefore, include comment on issues associated with drinking water quality and rainwater tanks.

Businesses or facilities that supply drinking water from an independent water supply (i.e. not town water) need to follow the *NSW Health Private Water Supply Guidelines* (2014). *The Public Health Act 2010* and the *Public Health Regulation 2012* require drinking water suppliers, including private water suppliers, to develop and adhere to a 'quality assurance program' (or drinking water management system) from 1 September 2014. Further information and templates can be found at:

<http://www.health.nsw.gov.au/environment/water/Pages/private-supplies.aspx>

NSW Health recommends regular testing of drinking water at facilities with a private supply. If a private water supply is contaminated, or is not monitored or not treated then consumers should be warned.

The peak reference document in Australia for information in relation to rainwater tanks is enHealth's *Guidance on use of rainwater tanks* (2010), which is accessible at:

<http://www.health.gov.au/internet/main/publishing.nsf/Content/ohp-enhealth-raintank-cnt.htm>

Wastewater

There is minimal information in the EIA on wastewater and effluent disposal associated with the proposal. The collection, retention, treatment and use of wastewater and effluent needs to be approved by the appropriate regulatory authority and confirmation included in the EIA.

Noise and Blasting

It is acknowledged that the EIA outlines the mitigation measures available to minimise emissions from quarry vehicles and equipment, however the expansion of the quarry into a new area and associated blasting may affect the users of nearby properties. In this regard HNEPH recommends that the proponent review their noise and blasting operations in consultation with the community to minimise the effect of any noise emissions.

If you require any further information please contact Chris Williams, Environmental Health Officer on 4924 6477

Yours sincerely


Professor David Durrheim
Director - Health Protection
Hunter New England Population Health