

Gunlake Quarry Extension Project (SSD 7090)
Issues raised at the Community Meeting at Marulan
Thursday 30 June 2016

Attendees

- Department of Planning and Environment (DPE) - Howard Reed, Angela Felton and Margaret Kirton
- Goulburn Mulwaree Council - Louise Wakefield and Scott Martin
- Gunlake - Ed O'Neil (Director), Andrew Wiltshire (EMM Consultants), Lauren Donohue and Catherine Haskins (OPF Consulting)
- More than 50 members of the local community

Introduction

Angela Felton welcomed the members of the community, introduced staff from DPE and explained the principal purpose of the meeting, namely for DPE officers to listen to the community's views about the recently exhibited Gunlake Quarry Extension Project.

Overview of Assessment Process

Howard Reed gave an overview of the assessment process. He:

- outlined the processes that have already occurred (ie environmental assessment requirements issued by Department, environmental impact statement (EIS) prepared by Gunlake and EIS exhibited by the Department);
- provided a summary of the main issues raised in the 47 community submissions received during the exhibition of the EIS; and
- explained the next steps in the process (ie Gunlake will lodge its Response to Submissions (RTS) report, the Department will prepare an assessment report for the consideration of the Planning Assessment Commission (PAC), the PAC will determine the project).

DPE responses to Community Questions about the Assessment Process

In response to questions from members of the community about the PAC, Howard Reed advised that:

- the PAC has a large number (9 permanent and 13 casual) of members, each of whom has with significant expertise and experience in environmental planning, law or a technical field such as transport, appointed by the Minister for Planning;
- it is likely that 3 members of the PAC will be appointed to a panel to determine (ie approve or reject) the Gunlake extension project;
- the PAC is likely to hold a public meeting in Marulan;
- the PAC will consider all submissions received to date and will also accept additional written and verbal submissions;
- the PAC operates independently at arm's length from the Department and the Minister, and has its own Secretariat; and
- the PAC occasionally appoints its own independent experts to advise it on specific issues.

Comments made by Community Members about the Gunlake Quarry Extension Project

- The carbon footprint of the project is significant (with the greenhouse gas emissions associated with the project having the potential to negate all the benefits of the Commonwealth Government's solar panel program) – this issue should be considered by an independent expert.
- The NSW environmental assessment system should not allow proponents to pay consultants to prepare environmental impact assessments, as such assessments are

inherently biased. In light of this, independent experts are needed to consider ESD issues associated with the project.

- One of the transport options presented in the EIS would require roads to be constructed over private property. This option cannot be considered genuine when the private landowners have not been approached about this option. As well, private landowners could not be forced to sell their land to Gunlake for this private road option.
- Whilst there is general community support for the Gunlake quarry and the employment it brings, the amenity impacts associated with the proposed extension outweigh the economic benefits of the project.
- Gunlake should engage with the community like Holcim (which owns the Lynwood Quarry) has done and should commit to actions to minimise its impacts on the amenity of the local community like Holcim has done.
- People who live near Towrang can hear and are annoyed by noise from Gunlake's primary crusher on early frosty mornings.
- Gunlake should enclose its primary crusher, particularly as an acoustic shed is a relatively low cost item.
- Operational noise should be mitigated on the quarry site, not at people's homes.
- Double glazing is not effective and requires people to be indoors, when they have chosen to live in a rural environment.
- Trucks on Brayton Road already create significant surface damage to the road, this would worsen as a result of the project.
- Lynwood trucks should not be allowed to transport products from Lynwood to the Johnniefields Quarry for processing and mixing. The air quality and noise impacts of this is not properly regulated by State or local government. The crushers at Johnniefields are old and very loud.
- If trucks from Johnniefields are added to the proposed Gunlake truck movements (max. 690 per day) then there could be 1000 trucks per day travelling on the Bypass Road.
- Quarries around Marulan tend to blame each other for noise and air quality issues.
- Concern was raised about whether cumulative impacts from existing and proposed quarries will be adequately assessed.
- The Bypass Road should never have been built – the haul route should always have been on private land.
- Brayton Road should never have been designated as a B-double route.
- The speed limit along Brayton Road should be reduced from 100 k/h to 80 k/h.
- The impact of increased truck movements on Sydney's traffic has not been considered.
- The Bypass Road is unsafe – being too steep in parts, subject to fog and with bad visibility on the crest of the hill, particularly if there is sun glare.
- The steepness of part of the Bypass Road greatly increases the noise from trucks which struggle to crest the hill.
- The steep hill also results in a significant safety issue, with residents advising that a B-double once stalled near the crest of the hill and then had no option but to reverse all the way down.
- Gunlake trucks are driven too quickly from the quarry to the highway, as evidenced by the times used in the traffic assessment in the EIS.
- The proposed acceleration lane onto the Hume Highway would result in reduced and less safe access for property owners near the intersection of the Bypass Road.
- The extension project would result in a lot more native animals being killed by trucks.
- Concern was raised that Gunlake was not directed (by the Department's letter requesting the RTS) to look at the potential for a private road to the Hume Highway.

- Compensation should be paid to people who suffer reduced amenity as a result of the quarry.
- Some people are very severely affected by the trucks associated with the existing and proposed development and should be offered pre-quarrying market value compensation for their properties.
- A rail option is economically feasible, particularly over the long term.
- Gunlake originally had a 500,000 tpa production limit. Concern was raised that Gunlake will keep submitting applications to increase the size of the quarry and the number of truck movements.
- If rail is not warranted now, with a 2 million tonne production rate proposed, when will it be warranted?
- If rail is economically viable for Lynwood, why is it not viable for Gunlake?
- At the proposed production rate, the quarry could potentially be extracting rock for 90 years and 99% of this rock will be transported to Sydney. This supports the case for rail transport.
- Gunlake only proposes to spend \$3.25 million for the project. This is not enough when the environmental impacts of the project are considered.
- Dust from the existing operations has a significant impact on nearby residents, particularly in terms of its impacts on water quality in household tanks.
- The EIS's air quality assessment focussed on PM₁₀ particles, it should have considered PM_{2.5} as well, as PM_{2.5} has more health impacts.
- PM_{2.5} is measured at Camden and Canberra – it should also be measured at a half way point like Marulan.
- The issue of silica has not been adequately addressed, particularly given that the hard rock at Gunlake is 33% quartz. Silicosis is a bigger health issue than asbestosis.
- The final void at Gunlake could have long-term impacts on water quality and should not be used as a tip. More consideration should be given to final rehabilitation of the site.

NB - These comments were made by individual members of the community and should not be taken to necessarily reflect the opinion of the broader community or the Department

During the meeting, a show of hands followed some questions. The show of hands suggested that a half to two thirds of the people present at the meeting would support the project if impacts associated with operational noise and transport noise could be resolved to the satisfaction of the community.