

We have lived live in Howlong for over 15 years and we have the following concerns about the Howlong Sand and Gravel Quarry Expansion.

1. Safety of school children and pedestrians crossing at both the shopping centre, local school and Lowe Square. Even when a truck is travelling at low speed, they still require a long distance to stop.
2. Increased noise from the trucks that will affect both locals and the Howlong Golf Resort motel. This could cause a downturn in their occupancy at the motel as no one will want to stay in a place where large trucks are going pass their windows. Even at the lower speed you will still be able to hear them. We can hear the trucks crossing the bridges from our place in Hoddle Street.
3. Murray River and groundwater: One pit will be 100 m from the river channel, which would seem to increase risks to the Murray itself. Even though they are considered safe, if there is a problem - and it most likely will occur one day- this would have a direct impact on not only the Murray River at Howlong but also downstream.
4. Biodiversity: There will be major changes within the environmental management zone for wetlands and for landscape and riparian. If we continue to abuse and take away these areas soon, we will have a negative impact on our local environment, and it will be to late to turn back time. Tourist come to the area because it is a wonderful area to visit and lots of birdlife.
5. The extension of the quarry could also have a negative effect on house prices in the area as people will not want to live in an area that has large truck going through the centre of the township. This will cause a downturn in rates at some stage.
6. It would be more appropriate to look at alternative crossings that can be built that will minimise the impact of trucks requiring to travel through town within the Federation Shire. If this is not discussed with the appropriate government departments now it will be too late to acquire the land that is necessary plus a lot more expensive exercise. Echuca can replace their bridge so it can be done.
7. We feel that the promises of jobs and other economic benefits to Howlong is a smoke and mirrors act. There will be minimal if any economic benefit to Howlong itself.
8. It is about time that Federation Council took a greater interest in the holistic value of the area rather than giving into a short term minimal financial gain. Maybe the developers should be made to give a large percentage of their gross turnover to the Federation Council who can then use it to provide positive benefits for the community of Howlong who are being to tolerate their quarry.

Julie Considine and Ron Newman

85 Hoddle St Howlong