

NSW Major Projects

RE: Howlong Sand and Gravel Quarry Expansion

My wife and I have been residents of Howlong for 10 years. In that time we have seen significant development and population growth. Howlong is a vibrant little town with a great sense of community. The town is continuing to grow and is attracting a wide demographic with an increasing number of young families choosing Howlong as a place to live and raise their children. The town has a great school, pre-school, and child care centre.

As mentioned, there has been considerable development in recent years in and around Howlong, particularly industrial development. With this development has come valuable jobs. I, along with most residents of this region support the opportunities that come with this development.

It is hoped that the quarry in question will 'do the right thing' in terms of their environmental responsibility and not cut corners and put at risk the river corridor in which the quarry is located. It is hoped that the quarry owners engage with the local community and are willing to be open and transparent in their operation and demonstrate to the region that they are 'good citizens' and do all in their power to correct unforeseen issues as they arise.

However, the main issue with such development is the heavy vehicle transport and this is a concern to the majority of residents I have spoken to in Howlong. Along Hawkins St, the route in which the quarry trucks will take, we have a school, a pre-school and a day care centre, around the corner in Sturt Street we have an aged care facility. We can all put our heads in the sand and say, "we understand, but these trucks will be careful", but it is not hard to imagine a tragic accident occurring, maybe through no fault of the truck driver. This would be the worst nightmare for all concerned. We all must be pro-active in doing everything in our power to reduce this risk.

My specific concerns for the quarry expansion are –

- Heavy vehicle traffic in the town centre– what can be done to reduce the risks associated with trucks sharing the highway with cars, pedestrians, particularly school kids and elderly residents. A town by-pass is obviously some years away, but this will eventually need to happen – what steps are being taken to plan for such a by-pass? When do we reach the tipping point?
- What can be done to make the highway through the town centre safer? Should the speed limit be lowered to 40km/hour? While this would inconvenience locals it may save a life in the future.
- The quarry entrance to the Riverina Highway is located near a major bend in the road, with an east- west orientation which introduces sun issues morning and afternoon. This is a high risk situation. The merging lanes need to be extended.
- There is potential for sand from truck tyres to be spread onto the Highway surface creating additional hazards. What is being done to ensure sand and gravel will not be deposited from the truck tyres on to the road surface

about the proposal and ask questions. If this is a sign of things to come we are very concerned.

As stated earlier, I strong support sustainable development in the Howlong area, but proponents need to demonstrate that they are good corporate citizens who are prepared to work with and be part of the community.

Yours Faithfully



John Skinner

27/5/20