

Director, Resource Assessments
Planning, Industry & Environment
Locked Bag 5022
Parramatta NSW 2124

27 June 2021

Dear Sir/Madam

I oppose the proposed Martins Creek Quarry Project SSD-6612. I was living in my current house in Bolwarra Heights, during 2013 and 2014 when Daracon was operating illegally so I am making the following objections having lived through that dreadful experience.

- **Noise** – heavy vehicles full or empty make a significant amount of noise. With 280 truck movements per day and 40 trucks per hour there will be almost continuous noise at my house as trucks approach, pass and retreat. Even with the doors and windows closed, during 2013 and 2014 the trucks were loud enough to wake me up in the early morning. Truck noise will penetrate my home and in warmer weather it won't be possible to open doors and windows without the noise overpowering normal activities such as conversations, the television, radio etc.
- **Safety** – From Hilldale Drive to the intersection with Paterson Road and between Maitland Vale Road and Lang Drive, Tocal Road is narrow and winding with no cycle lane. Nor is there any pedestrian footpath between Lang Drive and Maitland Vale Road. It will be extremely dangerous, and unpleasant, for cyclists and pedestrians to attempt to share the road with heavy trucks travelling at 80km/hr.
- **Traffic Congestion** – the proposed trucks from Martins Creek Quarry in addition to those from Brandy Hill Quarry will cause congestion on many local roads.
 - At peak times, the intersection of Pitnacree Road and Melbourne Street (East Maitland) is already busy. Traffic is frequently backed up over the railway bridge and past the change of speed limit sign. With an extra 20 trucks each hour the queue and wait will be much longer.
 - The lights at the Melbourne Street/New England Highway intersection cause traffic to be backed up to the lights at the Pitnacree Road/Lawes Street intersection meaning that even when the lights are green, vehicles are unable to move. Twenty extra laden trucks an hour will lead to more gridlock, and extra waiting time.
 - The *Traffic Impact Assessment August 2016* confirms the above two points (Section 2.5.7 *Current Road Network Operations*.) Since the

data was collected over five years ago, traffic will have increased by 2021. The latest traffic update in May 2012¹ reaffirms the congestion issue. I also note that the report does not offer any solution to this problem.

- Empty trucks, returning to Martins Creek Quarry, will block the lane on the New England Highway designated for turning right into Melbourne Street. This will lead to longer waits and/or other traffic using minor back roads.
- Empty trucks are not required to return to the quarry via Pitnacree Road, so Belmore Road in Lorn, and Paterson Road in Bolwarra will also become more congested.

- **Health**

- Some quarry product is crushed andesite which contains silica. “Respirable silica dust particles are small enough to penetrate deep into the lungs and can cause irreversible lung damage.” (www.safeworkaustralia.gov.au) Consequently, I am concerned over the negative effects of inhaling dust from quarry trucks.
- The noise from trucks will have a detrimental effect on my mental health causing anxiety and disturbed sleep.

- **Insufficient Controls**

- The ‘Code of Conduct’ for truck drivers is inadequate. I have no confidence that trucks will stick to designated routes and times.
- Daracon’s past record shows they have scant regard for regulations. There is no control to insure they will comply with specified truck movements.

- **Future Amendments**

- If the expansion is permitted, then I am concerned that Daracon will apply for consent modifications, such as increasing truck movements and/or operational times. These amendments will be difficult for me and the community to keep abreast of and to object to.

- **Clearing of 21 Hectares of Native Vegetation**

- As stated in section 6.10.3.2 *Threatened Flora and Fauna Species (Executive Summary Umwelt)* the clearing of land will affect flora and fauna. I am concerned that it is not just humans that will be impacted by the proposed quarry’s expansion but all the plants and animals that will be destroyed or displaced if it proceeds.

- **Property Values**

- Even though *The Stakeholder Consultation Issues Report (Monteath & Powys)* states that “It is considered that this [property values] is not relevant as Martins Creek Quarry has been an operating quarry for 100 years.” I believe that property values are very relevant indeed. It is obvious that a property with 280 trucks passing it each day will be worth less than one with no trucks passing it.
- All properties surrounding the quarry and along the proposed haulage routes will be devalued if the expansion proceeds.

- **Community Consultation**

- I have been involved in consultation with Umwelt, but Daracon has not engaged with the community at all, as far as I am aware. This gives me the impression that Daracon is only interested in making money and has no concern for how its operation impacts the local residents.

I would like to note that it has not been an easy process to write this submission. There are many documents, and they are extremely lengthy. It has been impossible to read them all and difficult to find relevant parts to cite.

In summary, if the Martins Creek Quarry Expansion is permitted, my way of life in Bolwarra Heights will be negatively impacted in a substantial way and the amenity of the surrounding area will be spoilt for at least 25 years. I urge you to reject the application in its entirety.

Yours faithfully

Alison Cook