

## **Safety**

The proposed excessive levels of truck movements will pose a real danger to road and pedestrian safety. One of the most critical locations is the approach to the single-lane Gostwyck Bridge on Dungog Road, heading towards Paterson. Fully-laden V-double gravel trucks must approach the bridge down a steep incline, around a bend with less than 50 metres visibility of oncoming traffic and inadequate time to stop and give way, as vehicles heading towards Paterson are required to do. I have seen one gravel truck lockup its wheels, burn rubber and part jack-knife while panic braking in an attempt to give way at the bridge with a vehicle approaching from Paterson. I have seen other trucks simply ignore the give-way sign and plough on, leaving cars coming in the opposite direction to stop even though the cars have right of way. Given the proposed level of truck movements, the limited distance available in which to sight oncoming cars and the steep downward incline to the give-way, this will be a potential "blackspot" associated with accidents, injuries and possible fatalities.

The second danger area is in the town of Paterson itself, in the Duke/King Street precinct where the Post Office, Pharmacy, Medical practice, two cafes, service station, art gallery, butchers shop and supermarket are located, all within walking distance of each other. Pedestrian and vehicular traffic concentrates in this area which is NOT serviced by a pedestrian crossing. Even when the quarry is not operating, it can be difficult to cross the road at times due to heavy traffic. If the proposed excessive truck movements are permitted, pedestrian safety will be severely threatened. The area near the intersection of Duke and King Streets is a drop-off and pick-up point for school buses, and becomes congested and busy with parents, their cars and children twice a day for the morning drop-off and afternoon pick-up. As there is no high school in the area, a large number of school children bus out of the district to attend school in Maitland or Dungog. If the proposal is approved, they will have to dodge gravel trucks in both directions in order to get to their bus.

## **Impact on amenity, local commerce, tourism and lifestyle**

The proposed excessive level of truck movements for over 12 hours per day on weekdays will have a devastating impact on amenity, commerce, tourism and lifestyle on the town and district. At present Paterson enjoys a competitive advantage by offering a relaxed, rural ambience as a pleasant place for day-trippers to enjoy a coffee, or picnic in Tucker Park, or visit local heritage sites such as Tocal Homestead and Paterson Courthouse Museum. This ambience and amenity is essential to the viability of tourism, hospitality and other businesses in the town. If the proposed level of truck movements is approved, this amenity will be destroyed and tourists and visitors will go to other regional venues in preference to Paterson, leaving local businesses wrecked. No-one wants to sit and have a coffee or a picnic with huge numbers of gravel trucks rumbling through the town in both directions.

## **Impact on infrastructure**

The proposed level of truck movements will destroy road surfaces and Gostwyck Bridge way beyond any budgetary provision for repair and maintenance. If Gostwyck Bridge has to be temporarily closed for maintenance, which it will be if the proposal goes ahead, gravel trucks will be routed through Vacy or Martins Creek village, on minor roads not built to withstand this heavy traffic, hence there will be a domino effect.

## **Personal impact**

We live about 1.5 kilometres from the quarry. We will suffer, as we have done in the past, from excessive dust in the house every day, plus vibrations and mysterious cracks

appearing in the walls of the house, no doubt due to blasting. No amount of mitigation procedures can negate the fact that blasting is just that – exploding a rock surface, causing vibrations and dust. To suggest this can be mitigated to any meaningful level is ludicrous.

In summary, the proposed number of truck movements and hours of operation are excessive and will have a devastating impact on amenity, tourism, local commerce, road safety and lifestyle. It must not be allowed to proceed. Instead, the rail-loading facilities at the quarry need to be upgraded and most of the material taken out by rail, as was the original intention of the quarry.