

NSW GOV MAJOR PROJECTS SUBMISSION:
OPPOSED TO MARTINS CREEK QUARRY EXPANSION

17/07/21

Dear Sir/Madame,

I am writing to express my concerns and strong opposition of the Martins Creek Quarry Expansion. I have been a resident of the Bolwarra community since 2015 and live less than 50 metres from Paterson road. This section of the current truck route is an established residential area. Much of the truck route passes through communities that are 50 – 120 years old (Vacy, Paterson, Gresden, East Maitland, Bolwarra Heights). This particular section of the road is the primary access point to the Bolwarra primary school (420 students), Bolwarra sports reserve, Bolwarra Heights Playground lookout. It is also in a residential growth corridor with Bolwarra heights, Bolwarra tops, Hunterglenn and Maitland vale all currently being intensely developed. Further major residential development is projected in the immediate region over the following 20 years (*Maitland 10+ strategic plan*). This section of the road has already become a major thoroughfare linking to the commercial and shopping precinct of Maitland, Rutherford and East Maitland. It has narrow single lane road sections with little to no side allowance for cyclists or pedestrians down to Flat road.

Daracon's amended DA seeks approval to use this road and others for up to 280 truck movements per day operating between the hours of 6:45am to 7:00pm. That's an additional 256 trucks than what is currently approved of today. Up to 500,000 tonnes of quarry material per year. Should any one business be allowed to use a public road this extensively, without considering the impact on the local community?

The original permit for this Quarry in 1991 was for rail ballast transport yet the expansion application has a 3 x increase in rail use and a 5 x increase in road use. Why would a quarry that's current license is that of a rail ballast quarry apply for such heavy road use? The answer provided to the public was that it cost \$1 more per metric tonne to transport via rail. Whilst this may be a minor cost to the company at what accrued detrimental cost will it be to these established communities?

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On moving to this region from inner west Melbourne, we were a young healthy energetic family ready to cycle and walk the country roads and explore the pretty regional vistas as much as possible. Bike trailers and prams at the ready we were astounded by the heavy traffic on our road and many trucks roaring by. We felt unsafe. Beginning at 5:00am through to 23:00pm 6 days per week, the regular disruptive noise of heavy diesel deceleration and acceleration throughout the day, night and early hours of the morning greatly impacted sleeping patterns of both adults and infants. Many of these vehicles were from the Martins creek Quarry. We have since heard that this amount of usage was not permitted and legal action was taken against Daracons' unlicensed excessive road use by Dungog council. We dread the thought of this frequent abrasive noise returning to our community and still to this day Daracon trucks have been sighted travelling outside the permissible operation hours.

I continue to walk myself, dog and children regularly to school, playgrounds, and day care. Whilst I try to use a route that is both quiet and safe, it is a challenge. I must still cross Paterson road during peak times and walk upon different sections of the road unpathed. A new footpath along Paterson road completed by Maitland council in Feb 2021 has made these journeys somewhat safer but with heavy exhaust pollution it is not quieter or at all healthy. Crossing the road causes us the most concern as there is an almost constant stream of oncoming traffic in both directions during most of the day and no pedestrian islands within Bolwarra/Heights. We sometimes stand and count cars until we are able to safely cross, often we reach upwards of 100. 272 vehicles is our record. The additional Daracon trucks on the road will make the simple act of crossing our road more difficult and unsafe.

Within 1 year of moving here my then 3 year old daughter was admitted to ER with severe breathing difficulties. It was her first Asthma attack and she now carries her Ventolin inhaler everywhere. I have also succumbed to regular respiratory infections and have recently commenced using Symbicort an Asthma inhaler to overcome a chronic cough I've had for the last 18 months. We are the first in our extended families to be diagnosed with this respiratory disease. Whilst this cannot be attributed to Daracon's quarry alone the further addition of 31,000 trucks per annum emitting carcinogenic diesel fumes and silica rock dust as they pass through the community could indeed amount to further health complications to myself and many more residents in this region.

Australia is setting targets to reduce it's carbon emissions, however this major project application will not assist this. Over the coming years can Daracon work towards becoming a zero emission company? Not just by revegetating land and purchasing biosource forested land as an offset, but by investing in vehicle technologies that are both quieter and lower in emissions? Can it rely on rail ballast transport rather than stressing an already heavily utilized residential route? Can it expand it's output by 5-10% rather than a major tripling of size to meet the requirements of its' national clients?

Whilst the use of road transport may provide cheaper running costs for Daracons already lucrative quarry than rail, it must be asked what is the ultimate cost to the surrounding community? And whilst the 3 fold expansion would offer more jobs, and obviously more quarry material for both the national and the international markets does it really need to be so extensive? I ask local, state and federal government members who look to strengthen and protect it's communities to reject the current Major project Martins creek quarry expansion proposal.

Yours sincerely,



Ms. Camille Adams