

Martins Creek Quarry Project – Application No SSD-6612

I object to the above project application on the following basis:

I have lived at our current residence since 1988 having purchased the land in 1985.

At that time there were no operations on what is now called the West Pit at Martins Creek Quarry.

From 1988 to the present (2021) the **quarry operations have at least quadrupled in area and moved closer to our home by at least 1km.**

In 1988 the straight line distance from our home to the closest point on the quarry was about 2.5km and has been reduced to the current distance of about 1.5km.

Part of the current proposal seeks approval to extend the operations to the North Western boundary of what was formerly Lot 6 DP242210 **reducing the straight line distance a further ¼ km** (*All distances measured on SIX Maps <https://maps.six.nsw.gov.au/>)*

The quarry expansion in the direction toward our home is due to the expansion into Lot 5 DP242210 and illegal expansion into what was formerly Lot 6 DP242210.

The current Application seeks to legitimise existing and extend future quarry operations in an area the courts have ruled were illegal.

Objectionable Noise

Since 1988 the quarry noise level has increased from **barely discernable to quite objectionable** due to both the increased output and the movement of the operation in our direction.

In recent years (prior to the recent cutback in production) it was **not unusual to be awoken at 6.30 a.m.** by sound of rock (apparently) being tipped into a bin or crusher.

Current noise consists of sudden louder noise which sounds like the dumping of rock into bins or crushers against a constant background noise of earth moving equipment, loading of trucks and what sounds like a crushing operation. Despite claims to the contrary by Daracon I have been told by ex employees of the Martins Creek operation that **portable crushers** are used in the West Pit.

An additional disturbing aspect of the Application is the plan to do **equipment maintenance and loading of trains at night.** Both these operations must result in **objectionable noise** during the night hours. Equipment maintenance will entail test running of equipment to ensure production readiness and loading of trains using front end loaders and the shunting of trains as planned can only result in an increase in noise level.

Any planned increase in production and further expansion can only result in further increases in the level of noise generated by the quarry operations and extend the noise problem to 24hrs per day 5 days per week.

Blasting

The frequency of blasting has obviously increased since 1988 in line with the quarry expansion and increase in production. The explosions generate **disturbing sudden noise accompanied by vibration** that rattles our cavity brick home built on a slab.

Any planned increase in production and further expansion can only result in a further increase in the frequency of blasts required by the quarry operations and the associated effects including the potential for damage.

Truck Traffic

Since 1988 the increase both in the number and size of the trucks running to and from the quarry has increased considerably in line with its expansion and increase in production over time. Our local roads and bridges are just not suitable for the amount of truck traffic generated by the quarry.

My experience is that increasingly from 1988 the incidences of **potential collisions, driving through the local townships in convoy, forcing their way over one lane bridges so they need not stop and give way and the parking up in convoy on the side of roads in the early morning** prior to the quarry opening has dramatically increased.

Despite Daracon relying on a Code of Practice from their own and other drivers **my experience is that travelling our local roads in the company of an ever increasing number of heavy trucks is a hazard.**

There are four (4) ways trucks can access the Martins Creek Quarry, all but one are limited by a single lane bridge excepting the newly replaced bridge at the intersection of Horns Crossing Road and Dungog Road.

The Application has a designated Haul Route heading to Maitland however this obviously doesn't preclude trucks from using another path. If the truck comes from or needs to go in another direction than Maitland e.g. Gresford, Singleton, Dungog, Stroud etc then another route will certainly be taken.

The only ways to access Martins Creek are:

Single Lane Gostwyck Bridge (Paterson River) on Dungog Road - The nominated Haulage Route to and from Maitland, approximately 2.4km by road South West of the quarry entrance.

Single lane Vacy Low Level Bridge (Allyn River) on Horns crossing road approximately 6.3km by road North West of the quarry entrance.

Single lane bridge (over Rail) on Cory St approximately 1.3km by road South of the quarry entrance. Load limited and unusable to heavy vehicles.

Dual Lane – signposted **25kph** (recently replaced single lane) (over Rail) on Dungog Road approximately 2.5km by road North North West of the quarry entrance.

Road damage attributed to heavy vehicles has been increasing over time. Deterioration is obvious especially in periods of increased production and increased trucks on the road.

Increased truck traffic particularly through the village of Paterson, presents a constant danger to other vehicles and pedestrians and more so when travelling in convoy.

The proposed new entrance to the quarry off Dungog road would be located in a section of road that is potentially dangerous to other road users given the current speed limit of 80kph and the lack of clear vision.

The road network from Bolwarra to Maitland and beyond will come under obvious stress as the proposed increase in truck traffic from Martins Creek joins with the trucks from the recently approved expansion of Brandy Hill Quarry. This of course will carry its share of potential dangers.

Any planned increase in production and further expansion will obviously result in a further increase in truck traffic and movements. This will result in an increase in the potential harm to other road users and pedestrians. It will also lead to accelerated deterioration of our local road system and costly repairs.

Environmental

Up to this point **dust pollution** has not appeared to be an issue at my home. However increased expansion and production will certainly **not reduce the possibility of it becoming a problem.**

Since 1988 I had not heard of a Koala sighting in our subdivision until recently. Given the history of the original land use (farming) and the closer settlement in the area that might not be considered unusual.

Recent Koala sightings at 93 View St and 16 View St Vacy could then be judged to be a positive sign of them coming in to the area.

Another possibility of course is that the **Koala are being forced to move from their normal area as quarrying operations continue to destroy natural habitat.**

Any planned increase in production and further expansion must obviously result in an increased risk of dust hazards. It will also result in the loss of native habitation with ensuing problems for any native populations including Koala.