

Thank you for the opportunity to give my opinion regarding Daracon's lodging of plans to expand the Martins Creek Quarry at Dungog.

1) TRANSPORT SAFETY

My main concern is the safety of pedestrians and car and truck travellers on the roads specified in the plans. All the roads traversed from the quarry are country roads – extremely narrow with no overtaking sections... The Gostwick Bridge is extremely narrow and only allows one way traffic. These roads are congested at certain times now and any increase in traffic would result in even more unsafe travel. Housing developments are spreading rapidly and buses drop passengers, especially school students who need to cross these narrow roads. Developments such as shopping villages have sprung up around the housing developments and many coffee shops etc are on the footpaths overlooking the roads these truck and trailer combinations would traverse. The tourist development in the area would be impacted terribly by an increase in the trucks. Many schools and pre-schools have been developed along this road too. I have family in Dungog and travel that road regularly. I am very concerned for my safety with a large increase in quarry trucks. There is an option for Daracon to use railway transport for the gravel and I believe that is a genuine alternative for the company. You would be aware that the Southern Highlands has purpose designed rail links to Sydney. Daracon should use this mode of transport – even now.

2) NOISE AND AIR POLLUTION

Loaded quarry trucks are extremely noisy. At present many trucks from the quarry travel past the road to my residence in Maitland and the noise of the brakes is un-nerving. My family can be woken now early mornings due to the squeal of trucks applying their brakes. Additional trucks on the road would only add to the air pollution too which is currently outside normal levels due to mining in the Hunter. As you would be aware empty trucks heading back to Dungog would produce much dust too. The Hunter area residents have a very high level of lung conditions and asthma and it is important we do not increase the burden on these people. I have lived in many areas of the State but only here do I find a BLACK rag from wiping window sills. More pollution is something we definitely do not want.

3) ENVIRONMENTAL

There would be a massive increase in the loss of mature vegetation with many native animals at risk if an expansion was allowed to go ahead. Koalas have been sighted in the area and 21 hectares of land where the endangered Spotted Quoll live would be bulldozed. With climate change seriously impacting our life we need to protect native vegetation wherever we can.

4) INFRASTRUCTURE

Residents in the area are continually complaining about the state of the local roads. These roads are always in a state of disrepair and local councils feel the pressure of continual maintenance. Historical buildings in areas such as Paterson, Lorn and Maitland will be impacted by the constant 'rumblings' of the trucks – causing damage and pollution to these precious establishments.