

31 July 2021.

Department of Planning, Industry and Environment.

Attention James McDonough.

Objection: Martins Creek Quarry Project Proposal SSD-6612

My submission opposes the expansion of the quarry at Martins Creek.

This submission is made to show how the quarry truck traffic has affected me and my family in our daily lives, living in a rural area and thus using public roads which are heavily impacted by quarry truck movements.

Historical statement

Our quiet environment changed dramatically from 2013-2014 when Daracon began using the Martins Creek quarry while Hanson also operated the quarry at Brandy Hill. Both these companies were sending hundreds of trucks a day along Clarence Town Road and Brandy Hill Drive and toward Maitland. At peak there were 1200 trucks travelling along Brandy Hill Drive on any given day, half of this from Daracon. During this period I could no longer enjoy working in my yard and my health suffered greatly through bouts of depression. My husband and I attended a meeting at Martins Creek Hall in 2014. There were representatives from suburbs that were impacted in some way by the quarry and the truck traffic that was generated from the Daracon quarry. Residents from Bolwarra spoke about the anxiety it caused when walking children to bus stops with trucks driving through one after the other and the constant noise. Businesses were being impacted in Paterson and further along in Lorn. My husband and I spoke about the noise and changes to the amenity and character of our area. After an emotional personal submission from me, the owner of Daracon suggested that an easy option for me would be to sell and move elsewhere!!

I resigned from the Martins Creek Quarry CCC because Daracon was not listening to the community.

While few Martins Creek quarry trucks now use Brandy Hill Drive, my sympathy is with the residents living on the haulage routes through Bolwarra and Bolwarra Heights and the businesses along Melbourne Street, East Maitland who have had to deal with incessant noise of truck movements.

So began a long fight to save people from having to go through what we were living. When one invests in a house and a garden it is not easy to just pick up your belongings and move elsewhere. When Dungog Council won the court case it was a win for our communities. For us at Brandy Hill the truck numbers were halved as we only had to contend with the Hanson quarry.

To the present day.

My weekly routine takes me to the Maitland area, through Bolwarra, Lorn or to Woodberry, Tarro and Thornton and East Maitland. These roads were never designed for the heavy truck movements as used by most Daracon quarry trucks. The roads through the rural areas are often narrow, poorly maintained with poor edges. Closer to townships the trucks are travelling through heavily populated suburbs where road infrastructure has not kept up with the burgeoning population. Quarry trucks take shortcuts to avoid the horrendous traffic congestion and this is an imposition and danger to local communities, eg: Tarro and even some residential streets through East Maitland which are

used as short-cuts to avoid traffic jams. While "Daracon" marked trucks probably stay to the designated roads subcontractors don't. While there is no way to force them to use certain routes over others the road problem is dangerous to residents, pedestrians and cyclists.

Not only are the roads congested but there are river and railway bridges that are not fit-for-purpose for heavily laden and long truck and dog configurations. The Tarro and Thornton railway bridges are narrow and in the case of the Tarro bridge, it has a 90 degree bend on either side which means the trucks need to use both lanes to make the turn onto or off the bridge. The local bridges over the Paterson and Hunter Rivers are either one way or narrow. Daracon branded trucks may not use these bridges but their subcontractors will take the best option on any given day.

I also regularly travel to Paterson to play golf, use local shops and visit friends and family. There is an issue of noise impact and character and ambience of this area. Playgroups and families regularly take children to Tucker Park, a well-resourced and popular feature of Paterson. It is a tourist attraction and often frequented by travellers and as it is located alongside the road, the character and ambience is heavily impacted by the noise of the passing trucks. The use of Duke Street and Gresford Road by trucks is extremely problematic. Trucks need to make a sharp turn through the busiest part of the town and do so by swinging out as wide as they can to be able to negotiate the turn. It was suggested to me by the service station attendant that I not park in front of the takeaway shop next door as there is a risk of being side swiped by a truck. It had occurred. Even getting out of the car is dangerous. Since truck traffic has been reduced after the court ruling, the feeling in Paterson is much more relaxed.

The problem with trucks on the road system around Paterson and along the haulage routes is huge. There are health and safety implications for all residents. Children waiting for school buses on the side of the road are at risk as trucks make the wide turns. There is the change to the amenity and character of the area that must be taken into consideration. People buy a property for its character and in this case it is rural character that people want NOT quarry trucks. Local residents are already grieving for what they have lost. It is the close-knit village feel of Paterson that they want to retain, the tourism, their jobs, the heritage and culture, the road safety and the environment. **The grief, anxiety and feeling that their wishes will be ignored is summed up by the term "solastalgia". This cannot be ignored when making a determination on this project.**

Once the environment is destroyed it cannot be easily rehabilitated. Animals such as the koala cannot be relocated successfully and we stand to lose other precious fauna altogether. Migratory birds are particularly impacted with destruction of habitat. We fought a long fight against the expansion of the Hanson quarry at Brandy Hill and it was with the intervention of the Federal Environment Minister, Susan Ley that Hanson have some serious environmental issues that are to be addressed to provide replacement koala habitat adjacent to the site before any expansion can occur.

I urge you to deny expansion of this quarry.

Margarete Ritchie.