

**Submission to the Independent Planning Commission of NSW
(Brandy Hill Quarry Expansion Project - SSD 5899)**

In March 2017, I made my submission to the NSW Department of Planning, Industry and Environment, commenting on the proposed Brandy Hill Quarry Expansion Project. As a Brandy Hill local resident, I detailed many objections to this proposal.

I have now read the Department's Assessment Report of the Project (May 2020). Whilst I still prefer that no approval is granted, I acknowledge that the Department has taken account of the many serious objections previously raised by myself and the other 168 local residents, especially regarding increases to hours of operation, numbers of truck movements, and noise - and has produced a set of recommended conditions for approval that seek to balance the needs of all stakeholders.

That said, I wish to note the following ongoing concerns:

- I am alarmed at the danger this Project still poses to the habitat of a number of threatened species of native fauna and flora, including the koala, by the clearing of around 54 hectares of moderate to high quality native vegetation. It is highly disappointing that such national living treasures in our local area can be simply traded off by "proposed biodiversity offsets". Offsets are only paid up credits, and are no guarantee of actual fauna and flora numbers being returned to the damaged habitat area.
- The Assessment Report states the "Department has relied on the updated BAR (August 2019)". Hence, the horrific 2019/2020 summer bushfire season and its unprecedented destruction of habitat of koala and other threatened species have not been taken into account in the Assessment Report. It is entirely possible that individuals of these fauna species have fled bushfire destruction and sought safe habitat on Hanson's land since the Biodiversity Assessment Report was completed. A current biodiversity assessment is urgently required, as it is now more important than ever for Australia to preserve areas of native vegetation suitable to the koala and other threatened species.
- Hanson says the Project will "provide ongoing and additional employment opportunity for up to 31 FTE workers". There is no guarantee that local people will be those who are employed, especially in haulage. The 11 newly created positions are such a tiny boost to jobs in the Port Stephens LGA over the projected 30 years of quarry operation, compared with the hundreds of local residents living near the quarry site and along & near the haulage route who will continue to be affected by the negative impacts of this proposal.
- It is just not acceptable for Hanson to allow a final void lake to gradually fill with quarry effluent and wastewater, groundwater inflows, and rainfall for approximately 160 years. When quarry operations cease in 30 years' time, will

Hanson still be held responsible for continued rehabilitation of the site for up to 160 years? I doubt it.

- Lastly, I remain extremely concerned that Hanson apparently has not accepted the Assessment's recommended conditions for approval, but continues to request 24-7 operations. The Independent Planning Commission must not be swayed into watering-down any of the Assessment's recommended conditions for approval, which would further threaten our beautiful area's amenity, character, road safety, noise and air quality, health of residents, biodiversity, and property values.

Thank you.