

Presentation to Community Meeting 7/11/2022 by Maree Amos

In announcing changes to the planning rules for Barangaroo last month, the NSW Premier Dominic Perrottet stated that

"I don't want people to look back and say the Perrottet government made decisions that put developers before people.

The NSW Planning and Environment Martins Creek Assessment Report seems to show too little evidence of consideration of the community submissions.

Of 670 public submissions, over 95% did not support expansion of the quarry and no local businesses identified any benefit obtained from the quarry. In the report, many of the relevant issues raised in the community submissions were not acknowledged, some errors identified and some of the diagrams are of poor quality with notes on them unable to be read.

I will mainly address traffic issues.

I live near Gostwyck Bridge over which every truck must pass. On The Existing Road Network (table 6-1 p19) this bridge is described as a 'two lane (single lane for heavy vehicles) bridge on the state heritage inventory'. This is misleading as the bridge has not operated as a two-lane bridge for many, many years. It has a 'no overtaking or passing' and give way signs. The give way sign has been moved to the quarry side of the bridge as a safety improvement attempt. This bridge is also used by cyclists and pedestrians as it is the only river crossing between north of Vacy and south of Paterson.

This part of the route is a dangerous bottleneck as the bridge approach from the quarry is a bend followed by a short steep descent to the bridge deck. The give way sign is on this descent so this is where the loaded trucks must stop in order to give way to oncoming bridge traffic. The slope could only be slightly reduced by construction of the proposed banana shaped bend, which if anything will reduce visibility to the bridge. A vehicle activated flashing sign (notorious for frequent outages) is the other proposal. This will of course be more infrastructure for council to maintain in a shire that has no traffic lights of which I am aware.

Although Daracon has stated that none of its trucks have been involved in an accident, this is not the whole picture. On 2 occasions I have observed cars that were already on the bridge being obliged to reverse off when met by Daracon trucks. As I can only see this when at my gate entering or leaving the property, I have no idea how frequently it has occurred. No laden truck, usually with dog could safely reverse up the slope on the quarry side. On one other occasion, a car that was reversing after encountering a truck ran off the road and down the steep embankment of the Paterson-side bridge approach. A photo of this, showing the attending emergency vehicles, was included in my husband's submission to the revised application.

Gravel thrown by the trucks, in spite of covered loads, is mentioned in some submissions. I did not think to include this. Could I ask for a quick show of hands if you have also experienced windscreen damage.

On piii the report states "some deterioration in intersection and road network performance is predicted. This would be expected to occur with or without the project and mostly result from

broader regional traffic growth” In which universe will this volume of laden trucks and dogs not damage the rural road network? A road engineer once described to me what they call the 10,000 or 100,000 factor. You can walk across your floor for years without appreciable damage but what damage would be done if an elephant did it once!

No mention is made of the other dangerous traffic issues in Paterson. Only the Gresford Road / Duke St right angle bend is being improved. The sharp left angle bend 75 metres before the rail crossing means that traffic queued at the crossing is invisible until almost on top of it. There have been a number of accidents here recently, fortunately not yet involving a loaded truck. Also on this bend is the intersection with Church Street which leads to the primary school, police station, sports ground and golf course and new subdivisions. This is already a hazardous and increasingly busy intersection.

The dog-leg intersection with Prince Street has also been ignored. As several public submissions pointed out, this intersection is a serious safety concern because a high concrete retaining wall totally obscures vision on both Prince and Duke Streets.

With the added disruptions during roadwork, it is not reasonable to allow truck movements at twice the current legal rate.

Section A32 in the development consent states that Daracon must relocate any public infrastructure that needs to be relocated. Surely parking spaces constitutes infrastructure. No mention of parking is made in the department’s report or development consent, although in the original application Daracon proposed providing a parking area in Paterson. This seems not to be included in the revised submission.

Figure 6.5 in the Department report contains a note “new concrete footpath, kerb layback and driveway access to carpark to be constructed”. It is well known in Paterson that Daracon purchased a block of land many years ago.

Hopefully the carpark has not been proposed because of the realisation of the utter unsuitability of this block, which is accessed directly from the problematic 90-degree road bend at the King Street – Duke Street intersection and slopes steeply down to the river. Figure 6.5 does not make clear how many parking spaces will be lost.

Monitoring of Product Transport B38 requires Daracon to provide a ‘summary of laden truck movements on its website twice a year. Given what the department has called “the history of unlawful operation” this is manifestly inadequate to keep the community informed. With very little trouble, daily truck movements could be reported on at least a weekly basis since B38 also requires the Applicant to keep accurate records of all laden truck movements to and from the site. We would also like information on the rail transport quantities given the commitment to transport as much as possible by rail.

The identified benefits of this project are totally outside the area but the costs are all on the local community.

A large number of submissions concern property and business values. The mention of property price impacts is in Social Impact 185 p49. Property price impacts are identified as residual social impacts and the people most affected are the near neighbours and those who reside or have businesses

along the main haulage route i.e from the Maitland suburb of Bolwarra to the quarry. A quick count on Google Earth shows this to be more than 130 properties.

As previously mentioned, I live near Gostwyck bridge. Picture a potential purchaser stuck in a queue of 5 trucks waiting to cross the bridge and then waiting for truck queues to clear when leaving. We have experienced this a number of times. Add to this hearing the rattle and roar of truck noise while inspecting. The submission by local real estate agent Pamela Munson made clear the severe impact of the truck traffic on the marketability of properties along the haul route. The loss of tens or hundreds of thousands of dollars by me and others if this application proceeds is totally unfair. On p51 the assessment report dismissively concludes that "with the mitigation measures proposed", which we consider to be minimal and token, "the Project would not significantly impact the local community". How absurd.

To claim that most tourism occurs at weekends when there are no truck movements, so tourism will be minimally impacted is, at best, naïve. Submissions such as one from an accommodation provider that says that customers check out early because of the truck noise (and of course do not return), have been ignored. As a retiree, and there are more and more of us, weekends are my last choice for tourist activities. No tourism business would survive on only weekend income.

The summary points out that that the proposed 500,000 tpa extraction is approximately the same as what has been extracted (illegally) for many years piv, as though this somehow justifies the approval for the greater than threefold increase in legal extraction. The reverse is true. We have lived through what the department called the "history of unlawful operations", so we know and have been fighting the horrendous impacts on our lifestyle for years, mostly through the council who first took legal action in 2015, knowing that eventually the law would prevail, and we would get back our peaceful, rural life. This fight was protracted because no agency appeared to have the regulatory power or willingness to enforce the 1991 consent. The report also smugly points out (p32 pt115) that "the start of quarry operations over 100 years ago predates all current inhabitants of the area". However, many of us have lived here before and throughout the entire illegal operation period so we know what it will be like when the illegal now becomes legal.

At the end of the report (in table 6-17 Other Issues) the report states that in spite of road haulage related issues being the key economic issues of concern the proposed annual road haulage rate is less than the historical average dating back to 2002-2003 so economic impacts on local tourism and businesses are acceptable. In other words, if you managed to survive the long effort by the community to stop the illegal extraction and the fight by the Applicant to refuse to comply - if someone gets away with something for long enough the community must be used to it, so let's legalise it.

Is this how the IPCN operates?