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port stephens  
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Port Stephens Council

14 September 2023

**Objection: Combined BA/DA 7-1985-2683-6 - Boral Seaham Quarry - 139A Italia Road Ballickera**

This DA is a proposal for the deepening/modification of a section of the pit floor of the Seaham Quarry operated by Boral Resources (NSW) Pty Ltd.

EcoNetwork Port Stephens, which represents more than 25 community environment groups, has major concerns about this proposal – mainly the traffic implications affecting a much wider area.

We also submit that the application should be assessed alongside a related proposal for expansion of the quarry which has not progressed as far along the approval pathway.

We also support the more detailed objections made by our affiliate Group - Voice of Wallalong and Woodville (V.O.W.W.) on behalf of more directly affected local residents.

We note that Council refused a similar application back in 2020, for good reasons.

Boral has applied for a major quarry expansion of this quarry which is being processed as a major project by the Department of Planning (SSD 59354474). The EIS for this expansion has not yet been finalised, but will be highly relevant to this modification DA.

TfNSW appears to have given 'in principle' support for this DA but only on condition that a DA for the upgrade of the intersection of Italia Rd and Pacific Highway would be considered concurrently. This has not been done and therefore this DA should either be deferred or refused, pending such a DA.

TfNSW's in-principle support for modification 6 is also conditional upon Boral not increasing the number of truck movements. We understand that a 1985 agreement, modified in 2001 means that there are no limits on the amounts of material they can remove as it is driven by market forces (DA2683/85).

We are not confident that Council could impose this condition or that it has the resources to monitor or enforce such a condition.

The volume of traffic passing or using the Italia Rd/Pacific Highway intersection has grown significantly since 2020, when Boral previously submitted the DA to Council. The intersection has therefore become even more dangerous even with an unchanged number of heavily loaded trucks or truck and dog combinations turning onto the highway, the majority of which will be turning right, across the northbound lanes, with limited acceleration capability. With the crest on that section of the highway to the south, visibility for motorists as well as trucks is limited and with the high speeds typical along the highway this just adds to the danger and potential for accidents.

With approved hours of operation from 6am to 10pm Monday to Friday (6am to 5pm Saturday), many truck movements on weekdays may be in hours of darkness, compounding the danger at the intersection.

We note that the VOWW submission questions some of the traffic volume figures given in the supporting Traffic Report, and submit that these be critically assessed for accuracy.

This modification DA should be **refused** on road safety grounds alone.

We note that the operating conditions for this quarry are far more permissive than those for other quarries in the area. For instance, Brandy Hill quarry operates only between 6am to 6pm Monday to Saturday. We submit that any change to the existing DA for the Boral Quarry provides an opportunity for Council to address these inconsistencies in quarrying consents and bring the older ones into line with more modern conditions.

In conclusion, until Boral can address the safety concerns to the Italia Road/Pacific Highway intersection by a major upgrade, as requested by TfNSW, this application should, once again, be **refused**.

We have no objection to this submission being made public, in full and unredacted. Please communicate by email (see below).

Secretary  
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