



## EcoNetwork – Port Stephens Inc.

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1 March 2024

Port Stephens Council

[council@portstephens.nsw.gov.au](mailto:council@portstephens.nsw.gov.au)

### **OBJECTION: DA 16-2023-477-1 - ITALIA ROAD AND PACIFIC HIGHWAY INTERSECTION UPGRADE**

#### About EcoNetwork Port Stephens

EcoNetwork Port Stephens is a grassroots community-based environmental and sustainability network comprising both individual members and more than 20 community and environment groups and eco-businesses, with a focus on sustainable planning. We are non party-political and do not donate to political parties.

#### Submission

While we are reluctant to oppose infrastructure works which could improve road safety at the intersection of Italia Road and the Pacific Highway, we are not persuaded that this will necessarily be the outcome of these works. We believe that on balance, it would be premature to approve this DA at this time. A decision should be deferred until there is a resolution to the wider issue of traffic associated with the large number of existing and proposed hard rock quarries in the area.

The intersection upgrade is justified in part by the proposed increase in quarrying activity served by Italia Road, but some of these activities have yet to be approved. Approval of the intersection upgrade would inevitably be used to strengthen the arguments of proponents for approval of their projects.

We submit that none of the current DAs for new or expanded quarries serviced by the Pacific Highway, **nor this DA** for one of several related intersections used by quarry trucks, should be approved until an overall strategic plan for the future of quarrying in the area has been developed and agreed, and funding allocated for all necessary infrastructure improvements.

Other objectors to this DA have provided detailed submissions raising many valid objections, including:

- Inadequate and outdated traffic assessments

- Failure to consider the combined effect and cumulative impact of all existing and proposed hard rock quarries using the Pacific Highway
- A design for the intersection which is not 'fit for purpose' – in particular deceleration and acceleration lanes which are too short to cope with the likely volume of heavy truck movements, and poor sight lines, together creating an unacceptable road safety risk, particularly during peak holiday periods when this stretch of the Pacific Highway carries very heavy traffic loads, but also at all times for local residents
- The increased road safety risk, fuel consumption and emissions created by the proposed re-routing of large volumes of southbound heavy vehicle traffic northwards past two other already dangerous intersections (Medowie Road and The Bucketts Way) only to come back southwards – a 22km diversion

In conclusion, we object to this DA and submit that it should not be approved at this time or in its current form.

We have no objection to this submission being published in full and unredacted.

Secretary

EcoNetwork Port Stephens Inc.

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