

OBERON QUARRIES EXTENSION PROJECT

COMMUNITY CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

Location: Function Centre, Lake Oberon Estate, 167 Harveys Rd, Oberon

Date: Thursday 6 February 2025

Time 11am

Attendance:

Garry West	Independent Chairperson
Julie Alevras	Community representative
Barry Lang	Community representative
Cr Ian Tucker	Oberon Council
Harley Kolstad	Community representative
Damian O'Shannassy	Oberon Council
Neil Hargraves	Oberon Quarries
Jake Hargraves	Oberon Quarries
Peter Jamieson	Anditi

Apologies

Tim Murray	Community representative
Cr Lauren Trembath	Oberon Council
Bennett Kennedy	Oberon Council
Emma Terracni	Oberon Quarries

Minutes

Welcome & Apologies

Garry West welcomed everyone to the meeting of the CCC and extended apologies from Cr Lauren Trembath, Bennett Kennedy and welcomed Damian O'Shannassy from Oberon Council to the meeting. Garry also advised that John Hackfath has sold his property and moved to Bermagui.

Declarations of Pecuniary / Conflict of Interest

No new declarations

Company Presentation

The presentation was provided by Peter Jamieson. This presentation updates and supersedes the presentation that was given to the CCC in February 2024.

Existing Quarry

Commercial operations commenced in 1995. In 2015 a new State Significant Development (SSD-6333) was approved until 2045. The quarry has an approved area of 30 ha and operations of up to 400,000 tonne per annum (tpa) production and 3,000 tonne per day (tpd) product delivery. The current operations are Monday to Saturday except public holidays.

All runoff from the extraction area drains to Sediment Dams 1 & 2 and the 2 ML Storage Dam.

The currently approved final rehabilitation will have benched quarry walls, grassed and timbered quarry floor free draining to sediment dams 1 & 2. The existing processing plant is within a fully bunded area and no changes are proposed.

30 years of operations have occurred with no significant environmental impacts.

Existing Environmental Monitoring & Reporting

The quarry undertakes monthly site inspections, dust and water quality monitoring along with blast monitoring and noise monitoring as required. The monitoring result can be found on the quarry website:

<http://www.oberonquarries.com.au/environment>.

The quarry prepares an Annual Return in accordance with its requirements under its Environment Protection Licence (EPL 4442), an Annual Review of the Development Consent (SSD-6333), tri-annual Independent Audits and complaints register which are all available via the website. The next Independent Audit is due in 2026.

Proposed Extension Area

The proposed extension area is 31.5 ha consisting of improved pasture and 10 trees that occupy an area of 0.2 ha. The resource is covered by 0 m to 0.2m of topsoil/overburden, is 16 to 19 m thick and contains approximately 15.7 million tonnes of hard rock. The project is seeking consent to extend the life of the quarry to 2057. Access to the proposed extension area will be from the existing quarry floor and with runoff from the extension area serviced by the existing quarry water management system.

Hours of Operation

Currently quarry and processing is approved 7am to 6pm Mondays to Fridays and 7am to 5pm on Saturdays. It is proposed to extend the start to 6am Monday to Saturday, except for blast hole drilling which will remain at 7am. Any construction work will only occur within the current approvals. No quarrying or processing is undertaken on Sundays or public holidays and that is proposed to continue.

Maintenance is currently approved 7am to 6 pm Mondays to Fridays and 7 am to 4 pm on Saturdays. No changes are proposed to these times.

The loading of haul trucks is currently approved from 6am to 10pm Mondays to Fridays and 6am to 5 pm Saturdays. It is proposed to extend the start time to 5am Monday to Saturday. This earlier loading time will allow trucks to access the Sydney market prior to peak times. No loading of haul trucks is undertaken on Sundays or public holidays and that is proposed to continue.

Product delivery is currently approved from 6 am to 10 pm Mondays to Fridays and 6 am to 5 pm Saturdays. No product delivery trucks are to enter the quarry prior to 6am on any day. During the periods 6 am to 7 am and 6 pm to 10 pm a maximum of 4 laden delivery trucks shall leave the site per hour (total of 8 truck movements per hour). The proposed change is to allow product delivery trucks to enter the site from 5 am Monday to Saturdays. During these periods approval is sought for a maximum of 8 laden delivery trucks shall leave or enter the site per hour (total 16 truck movements per hour). No other changes are proposed.

Proposed Extraction Sequence

It is proposed to quarry within blocks of approx. 2 ha. Each block is estimated to contain approximately 1 million tonnes of hard rock with negligible topsoil/overburden.

The proposed annual extraction of up to 950,000 tpa comprises approx. 650,000 tpa of aggregate and road base; 200,000 tpa of crusher dust and scalpings together with a stockpile drawdown of 100,000 tpa.

12 Blasting events a year are proposed and crushing and processing is to occur in the existing plant within the bunded area.

Backloading of ENM and VENM

To assist in improving the overall efficiency of quarry operations, approval is sought to backload Excavated Natural Material (ENM) and Virgin Excavated Natural Material (VENM) to the quarry which will be incorporated into the final landform. Backloading of up to 500,000 tpa is sought with the potential for emplacement of up to 10 to 15 million tonnes of ENM and VENM over the life of the quarry.

EIS Engagement

Following the issuing of the Secretary's Environmental Assessment Requirements (SEARs) there has been extensive engagement with councils, relevant government and non-government agencies as well as local landholders.

Surrounding Residences

There are 4 residences within 1.1 kms to 1.5 kms of the proposed extension.

Groundwater Springs and Seepages & Water Management

Several springs and seepages have been identified around the base of Racecourse Hill downslope of the interface between the basalt and underlying Tertiary gravels. Julie Alevras raised concern regarding potential impacts the spring on her property. Peter Jamieson advised that a similar spring at Langley Heights had been monitored on a monthly basis for the last 30 years and no changes to spring as a result of quarry operations has been detected. Observations by the landholder at Langley Heights (Barry Lang) is that the spring typically has water in it except during prolonged dry periods which is consistent with pre-quarrying conditions. No quarry related impacts are expected for the spring at the Alevras property or at any of the other springs and seepages around the toe of Racecourse Hill.

Peter went on to explain no changes were proposed to the existing quarry water management system outside of the existing and proposed extraction areas. It is proposed to maintain the same water management infrastructure to the east of the extraction area which is designed to contain and control runoff from the 1 in 100 year 24-hour rainfall event. Additional storage and surcharge capacity will be provided on the quarry floor within the extraction area and a program for expansion of this system has been developed. In addition to the proposed expansion, the system can also be quickly augmented to increase in-pit storage and surge capacity if required.

Surrounding Land use

Surrounding land use is grazing of modified pastures and native vegetation and mining which are not incompatible with the proposed quarry activities. The site is zoned primary production and extractive industry is permissible under this zoning. The site has scattered remnant forest trees and there is limited habitat connectivity with the surrounding area. The groundcover assessment shows 99.3% of the 31.5 ha site is Category 1 land which is classified as “low conservation value grassland”. It is proposed to remove less than 0.2 ha of native trees which is less than the clearing area threshold of 3 ha. Fauna surveys list 20 ecosystem credit species in the area however none were detected during targeted seasonal surveys.

Biodiversity Offsets

The Biodiversity Assessment Methodology (BAM) has been applied to the site. No ecosystem credits are required as the site does not meet the thresholds required. Also, no species credits are required due to the lack of suitable habitat, habitat constraints being absent from the site or species have been surveyed and not found.

Cultural Heritage Sites

No Aboriginal sites or potential archaeological deposits were identified during the survey and there are no proposed impacts to Aboriginal sites.

There are no known historic heritage sites.

Traffic Impact Assessment

Up to 950,000 tpa of product delivery is sought by the project over the life of the quarry, together with an increase in the maximum daily tonnage from 3,000 tpd to 6,000 tpd. Since 1995 maximum legal payload per truck has increased from 29 t to 50 t, therefore it is envisaged the average payload per truck will increase from 35 t to 45 t over the next decade. Laden trips at maximum daily transport is proposed to increase from 104 trips to 172 trips for an average payload of 35 t. This is proposed to subsequently decrease to a maximum of 109 trips/day for an average payload of 45 t. It is estimated that at this level of product transport there will be an average of 90 trucks/day or approximately 8 trucks/hour. At the peak of 6000 tpd there will be 15 laden trucks per hour.

The ENM and VENM will be backloaded on quarry trucks so this will not increase overall truck movements. Oberon Quarries only generates approximately 25% to 30% of heavy vehicles in the Oberon LGA. A Voluntary Panning Agreement regarding road maintenance contributions will be separately determined in consultation with Oberon Council. Analysis indicates that existing intersections at Shooters Hill Road/Edith Road, Edith Road/Titania Road, Titania/Duckmaloi Road, Duckmaloi Road/Jenolan Caves Road and Jenolan Caves Road/Great Western Highway can accommodate the increased truck numbers from the quarry.

As part of this analysis, traffic counts were undertaken on behalf of Oberon Quarries by Austraffic at the 6 intersection locations on haul routes used by Oberon Quarries which assessed the average weekday hourly vehicle movements as well as existing traffic volume & composition. The studies also reviewed intersection capacity and warrants for turn treatments on major roads.

Air Quality Impact Assessment

The Air Quality Impact Assessment (AQIA) indicates the incremental concentrations from the project are small and there is no projected exceedances of the annual average TSP, PM10 and PM2.5 criteria.

The Greenhouse Gas assessment indicates the direct emissions associated with the project contribute the equivalent of up to 0.005% of NSW total GHG emissions in 2020 and up to 0.001% of Australia's GHG emissions in the 12 months to June 2022.

Noise & Vibration

Operational noise levels will meet Noise Policy for Industry (NPI) criteria for all non-project related residences under noise enhancing meteorological conditions and maximum noise levels will be below EPA trigger levels for sleep disturbance at residences.

Quarry road traffic noise will meet Road Noise Policy objectives at nearest receivers under worst case conditions.

Air-blast overpressure and vibration from blasting will meet all criteria. Detectable impacts are largely confined to Quarry related properties.

No properties meet the Voluntary Land Acquisition and Mitigation Policy (VLAMP) requirements.

Visual Impact Assessment

The visual impact assessment shows all surrounding properties will be minimal.

Bushfire Hazard

The extension is Bushfire Prone Land; however, fire hazard present is containable to a level necessary to provide an adequate level of protection to life and property.

Final Landform

The final landform is proposed to be combination of benched and backfilled landform. The extent of backfilling will be dependent on the volume of ENM and VENM together with 500,000 tonnes of stockpiled topsoil and overburden. The rehabilitated quarry floor will then be seeded with improved pasture in accordance with the landowner requirements including native trees. The final landform will be shaped to be free-draining or draining to the existing water management system.

Environmental Monitoring sites

The existing monitoring sites will be maintained. Two additional dust deposition gauges (D5 and 6) are proposed to the east and south of the proposed extension area. An additional blast monitoring site is proposed at Westrel which is the closest residence to the proposed extension area and approximately half the distance that the nearest non-quarry related residence (Nestlebrae) is from the proposed extension area. If blast impacts exceed acceptable thresholds at Westrel, additional blast monitoring will be undertaken at Nestlebrae.

Socio-Economic

30 years of operations combined with scientific analysis and modelling indicates that the proposed extension will have negligible impact on surrounding non-related residences. The proposed extension will require negligible increase in social infrastructure with the number of staff and contract truck drivers increasing from approximately 35 to approximately 45 over next 10 years. No change is required to the road infrastructure other than ongoing maintenance.

Alternatives and Justification for the Project

The Environmental Impact Assessment criteria requires all projects to review and consider the alternatives from proceeding with the project as well as justifying why the project should proceed. Alternatives considered include do nothing, not increasing annual production, consider alternative crusher locations, do not backload ENM and VENM and consider meeting the electricity needs using renewable energy such as solar and wind.

The site justification indicates the site and infrastructure are well established and highly suitable for the proposed extension; 30 years of demonstrated ability to operate the quarry in a way that has low impact on surrounding residents and negligible impact on the surrounding environment as well as a low demand on the social infrastructure.

The quarry makes a significant contribution to the maintenance and upkeep of roads in the surrounding area and has access to approximately 15.7 million tonnes of high-quality hard rock resource that is highly sought after.

The quarry provides continued employment for 35 staff and contractors with the potential to increase to 45 staff and contractors as well as continued utilization of established infrastructure that can be used for many years to come.

The proposed extension provides an opportunity for utilisation of void created by quarrying for emplacement of ENM and VENM in an energy efficient manner by backloading to the quarry.

The project is consistent with Planning Objectives and Policies and is consistent with Ecological Sustainable Development (ESD) principles.

General Business

Cr Tucker indicated that a number of updates and corrections to the presentation could be made and Peter Jamieson undertook to update and the Chair to provide all members with an updated electronic version.

Each backload of ENM and VENM is required to have a certificate from the EPA.

Damian O'Shannassy raised an issue arising from the Jenolan Caves Road closures and the need for alternative routes leading to complaints than come to Oberon Council. Neil & Jake Hargraves explained the quarry has a complaints contact number which is available on the website and agreed to discuss with Council how best to facilitate such complaints being handled. Details of complaints are necessary for the quarry reviews and audits. A copy of these reviews and audits are posted to the project website and will, in future be supplied to Council.

When the EIS is submitted, Council will provide a link on their website.

Mr West thanked Tony and Julie Alevras for hosting the meeting at their venue.

Meeting closed at 12.30pm

Next meeting TBA