

# Seaham Quarry Project

## Questions & Answers



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Boral Resources NSW's (Boral) proposed Seaham Quarry Project (the Project) involves continuing operations at Boral's existing Seaham Quarry (the Quarry) for an additional 30 years, until 2057.

The Quarry located at 139 Italia Road in Balickera NSW has a development consent to operate until 2035. The Project is being investigated because the approved hard rock reserves will be exhausted by approximately mid-2027.

Geological investigations indicate there are approximately 35-40 million tonnes of hard rock reserves to the immediate north, east and south of the existing pit, outside of the approved quarry extraction boundary.

### **Q1. Will the Project involve increased truck movements?**

- A.** The Project will involve an anticipated average heavy vehicle truck movements of 474/ day and maximum truck loads would be 650/ day (including deliveries), this is compared to the 270/day average product truck movements plus deliveries currently.

### **Q2. With increased trucks on Italia Road, how does Boral propose to enforce the no-left-turn out of the Quarry heading west on Italia Road?**

- A.** Boral have installed additional warning signage and a security camera at the Italia Road access to the Quarry. This will be used to monitor vehicles entering and exiting the Quarry and will help enforce the right-turn only requirement for heavy vehicles leaving the Quarry. Boral has recently held a contractor safety forum for the Newcastle business. Information was provided to all contractors on the requirement for right-hand turn movements onto the Pacific Highways for all deliveries with the exception of local deliveries. All contractors have been provided with maps of approved local delivery areas.

### **Q3. What details are available about the proposed upgrade to Italia Road and Pacific Highway intersection?**

- A.** Boral has prepared a strategic design, in conjunction with the proponents of Eagleton Ridge Quarry and Stone Ridge Quarry, to address the critical issue of northbound access to the Pacific Highway from Italia Road. The design facilitates prohibition of the southbound right-turn movement from Italia Road for heavy vehicles.

Under the proposed upgrade, after travelling north, grade-separation for all southbound quarry vehicles is proposed at the existing Pacific Highway/Tarean Road interchange at Karuah. The Development Application (DA) for the intersection upgrade has been lodged with Port Stephens Council in consultation with Transport for NSW (TfNSW). The DA is not part of the Seaham Quarry Project.

### **Q4. Does Boral contribute to the maintenance of Italia Road currently?**

- A.** As part of the current consent issued by Port Stephens Council, Boral contributes to a fund in respect to road repairs for those roads in the immediate vicinity of the area where our operations are conducted. The levy is paid on a monthly basis and is calculated based on weigh bridge tickets and the volume of tonnes moved. The levy is varied annually, with a \$453,800 contribution made by Boral between September 2022 and August 2023.

### **Q5. Will the Project increase the amount of dust for nearby properties?**

- A.** A detailed assessment of potential construction and operational air quality impacts is required, as part of preparing the Environmental impact statement (EIS) and in accordance with the Approved Methods for the Modelling and Assessment of Air Pollutants in NSW. Investigations for the air quality impact assessment have commenced. Further information will be provided, when the outcomes of the air quality study and assessment are known.

The dust mitigation and management measures currently in place at the Quarry will continue to be implemented. This includes:

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- Using water carts on unsealed haul roads
- Using water spray systems, to dampen down dust at the quarry face and in stockpiling areas
- Monitoring weather patterns, to help ensure potential dust generating activities are deferred or stopped, during unfavourable conditions (e.g. windy conditions).

### **Q6. Does Boral still plan on operating 24/7, as part of the Project?**

- A.** Boral had initially proposed 24 hours, seven days a week operating hours, however as a result of preliminary noise modelling and community feedback, the proposed operating hours have been refined. Pending environmental investigation findings, further information around operating hours for specific activities will be provided to the community.

### **Q7. Is Boral proposing upgrades to the existing infrastructure?**

- A.** Minor plant and equipment upgrades will be undertaken in order to accommodate the Project. These upgrades will occur primarily to the processing plant and include new screens, replacing crushers and installing enclosure sheds at points along the processing plant. Some plant and equipment upgrades will be required throughout the life of the Project to maintain safe and efficient operations.

### **Q8. Will the Project involve increased blasting?**

- A.** The Quarry currently blasts approximately two to three times per month, within the hours of 9am – 5pm, Monday to Friday. Under the maximum scenario for the Project, the frequency of blasts would increase to one per week. Blasting hours will remain as per the current operations.

### **Q9. Will Boral provide advanced notice to property owners for blasting?**

- A.** Blasting notifications can be provided to nearby property owners in advance of planned blasts, via email or text message. Boral maintains a database of property owners to inform with as much notice as possible, preferably, 24 hours prior to a blast.

Many factors contribute to the timing of each blast, and it is not always possible to provide advanced notification within this timeframe. Occasionally, a blast notification could be a few hours prior to the blast.

### **Q10. Does Boral compensate property owners if damage is sustained to properties due to vibration?**

- A.** Boral has blasting limits set for ground vibration and air blast overpressure. Monitoring is completed for each and every blast. Any exceedances to these limits are reportable to the EPA and are investigated. These results are publicly available on the Boral Seaham Quarry website.

### **Q11. What noise monitoring is being undertaken for the Project?**

- A.** In accordance with the NSW Noise Policy for Industry (NPfI), noise monitoring and modelling has commenced for the Project, as part of preparing the EIS.

Noise monitoring loggers were temporarily placed at three properties bordering the Quarry to determine the minimum background noise levels that the Project will be assessed against in accordance with State noise policies.

Future operational noise controls, including reduced operating hours for certain activities are currently being considered and modelled.

If approved, the Project will be required to comply with noise criteria which will be confirmed through attended monitoring.

### **Q12. Will Boral be looking at social/lifestyle impacts to nearby property owners?**

- A.** As part of the EIS, the Social Impact Assessment identifies the social and geographical areas of focus and considers:
- The nature and scale of the proposed project, including associated infrastructure
  - The scope of the potential social impacts throughout the project lifecycle
  - The location and characteristics of potentially affected communities

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- Land use patterns, infrastructure and urban/rural centres.

Upcoming engagement activities will be undertaken for the Social Impact Assessment and will involve in-depth interviews with key stakeholders including nearby neighbours and landowners, local councils, Indigenous groups and cultural knowledge holders, service providers and key community groups.

### **Q13. Does Boral recycle used tyres on site?**

- A.** Yes, Boral is committed to sustainability and the environment through the inclusion of glass, plastic, **tyres**, old road pavement, slag and other materials in its paving. This focus on a circular economy reduces the amount of virgin materials required to build roads and provides better outcomes for the communities in which we operate and our customers. This has been implemented through the INNOVO system, aimed at improving sustainable outcomes by incorporating everyday products that are likely to end up in landfill and repurposing them into roads around the country.

### **Q14. Is Boral considering the cumulative impacts from other quarry proponents in their studies?**

- A.** The EIS will include an assessment of likely cumulative impacts of the Project operating in combination with other existing and future development (including the Stone Ridge and Eagleton quarry projects) in the area. This includes paying particular attention to likely impacts on:

- road safety
- water resources
- air quality
- noise
- land capability
- biodiversity
- shared infrastructure.

More information will be provided when the assessment outcomes are available.

### **Q15. What is Boral doing to preserve koala habitat and native flora?**

- A.** In accordance with the NSW Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016 (BC Act) and as required in the SEARs, a detailed assessment of the biodiversity values and the likely biodiversity impacts of the Project is being undertaken in accordance with the Biodiversity Assessment Method (BAM) (DPIE 2020). Targeted threatened species surveys, undertaken to date, have identified the following threatened fauna species within the disturbance footprint:

- Koala
- Brush-tailed Phascogale
- Squirrel Glider.

Assessments of the significance of impacts on these species are currently being undertaken.

No threatened flora species have been recorded within the proposed disturbance footprint to date.

The Project will disturb approximately 26.5 ha of an endangered ecological community listed under the BC Act, the Lower Hunter Spotted Gum Ironbark Forest in the Sydney Basin and NSW North Coast Bioregions.

Impacts to threatened vegetation communities and fauna species will be required to be offset in accordance with the BC Act. Boral is currently developing the offset strategy for the Project.

If approved, Boral will also be required to prepare and implement a Biodiversity Management Plan (BMP) for the Project. Any clearance of native vegetation would require specific procedures for threatened species, including but not limited to pre-clearance surveys by suitably qualified fauna-ecologists, and specific methods for the clearance of vegetation.

### **Q16. How long is the approvals process for the Project?**

- A.** The Project is being assessed as a State Significant development (SSD) under Part 4 of the NSW *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979*.

The current timeline, subject to change, includes:

- Scoping Phase – March to June 2023
- SEARs issued – July 2023

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- EIS preparation – July–mid November 2023
- EIS exhibited – late 2023, early 2024
- Responses to submission, DPE Assessments and Determinations – 2024

### **Q17. How is Boral monitoring the impact on water quality for local residents using water tanks?**

- A.** Boral undertakes regular dust monitoring at the designated EPA monitoring locations. Boral is required to comply with the allowable limits and investigate and report to the EPA any exceedance. These results are made public on the Boral Seaham Quarry website.

### **Q18. What is Boral doing to ensure the Quarry doesn't negatively impact the region's drinking water catchment?**

- A.** Boral maintains a water management system of sediment basins and dams that are downstream from quarry areas and quarry pit. The basins and dams function to capture dirty water for filtering and treatment prior to discharge. The majority of water captured is utilised for quarry operations including washing and dust suppression. Under the project, the water management system will be modified to accommodate dirty water areas associated with new resource areas. Boral will periodically sample and monitor water quality against a suite of parameters to ensure discharges are within acceptable limits associated with the drinking water catchment.

### **Q19. Where is Boral going to source water from to support develop the Project?**

- A.** The quarry currently sources a majority of water used in its operations from a series of basins and dams which function to capture stormwater across the site. This water is recycled and transferred to water tanks across the site for use in dust suppression, equipment washing, and in the washing of product and aggregates.

### **Q20. What is Boral doing to assess the impact on the heritage-listed Balickera House?**

- A.** The EIS will consider impacts to historic heritage items within, and in proximity to, the Project area.

Field surveys completed for the EIS have not identified any sites or items of historic heritage significance, within the Project area.

Balickera House is approximately 500 metres north of the Project area. Potential impacts to this house will be assessed in the EIS including noise, vibration, air quality and visual. The Project will retain most of the vegetation along the northern side of Seaham Hill which will provide a buffer to this heritage house.

### **Q21. What aboriginal and cultural heritage studies are being undertaken for the Project?**

- A.** Boral is undertaking an Aboriginal and Cultural Heritage Assessment (ACHA) for the Project. The ACHA is being prepared in accordance with Heritage NSW guidelines. The ACHA aims to identify, characterise and assess the presence and extent of any Aboriginal sites or objects in the Project area; to identify and assess the potential impacts on these sites posed by the Project; and to identify and recommend measures to mitigate any heritage impacts.

A number of local Aboriginal stakeholders are being consulted with for the Project, and consultation with these groups is ongoing.

### **Q22. Will Boral look to invest in community sponsorship programs?**

- A.** Boral's Seaham Quarry readily recognises the role it plays in the local community. This recognition is not just as an employer of local people, but also as a corporate citizen of the wider Seaham area. Further opportunities to continue to support the Seaham community are being considered.

### **Q23. What is the rehabilitation plan for the Quarry?**

- A.** A rehabilitation strategy is being developed for the project and will be included within the EIS. The rehabilitation strategy will identify the conceptual final landform for the site and develop project specific rehabilitation methods to suit the area. The strategy will consider and assess the potential risks and impacts arising from rehabilitation works and will outline a monitoring program to track rehabilitation performance and reporting.

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### **Q24. How will the Project impact nearby property owners visually?**

**A.** A Visual Impact Assessment will form part of the EIS. The objective of the Visual Impact Assessment is to determine how the Project will impact on the existing landscape character and visual amenity. Any potential negative impact must be investigated to determine how it can be mitigated and reduced to an acceptable level. The visual impacts of the project will include:

- Lighting impacts
- Potential impacts on views of the Project from key vantage points.

Identified landowners will be contacted directly to allow the Project team access to properties to undertake the assessment.