

Good morning and thank you for giving us the opportunity to express our very deep concerns at the proposed quarry expansion on Kendalls line.

I would like to add that I am also speaking on behalf of Derek and Kathaline Underwood and Jim McGovern, who are long term residents of Kendalls line and have been through this daunting process before and have no desire to suffer the stress of such a forum.

Mr McGovern was not even given the decency to have any say in this application as the consultants decided he lived adjacent the main road and hence had traffic noise anyhow. The reality is that he is probably the most affected by road safety as his gateway is directly inline with the trucks as they turn into Kendalls line from the North. He would like to express how many close calls he has experienced over the years and also the disturbing noise created by the trucks entering and exiting Kendalls line when compared to normal main road traffic noise.

I would like to point out at this stage that acceleration and deacceleration noise from trucks is very different from passing traffic noise. Every gear change has an air release whistle sound, every gear has a drone as the vehicle accelerates. Likewise with deacceleration there is constant noise frequency changes. This type of noise is not something you get used to and every truck is different.

I would also like to point out that there are a couple of missing objections to the application from residents in Kendalls Line. Notably the property next to me where the resident is an employee at the quarry and another opposite our property who's family own a contracting business that is a customer of the quarry. Even though they are affected by this noise they are not in a position to complain against it.

I purchased our property in 1989 after having a desire to live in a quiet rural environment and enjoy the lifestyle we built from ground up on our newly acquired block of land.

The, then governing council (Kairanga county council) had identified that Kendalls line, being a short no exit rural road was suitable for the subdivision of lifestyle properties. As such there have been the development of 6 lifestyle blocks along the road with all being at the lower half of the road and all but one, on the Northern side of the road. We were the first of these to build and develop.

Having lived rurally for many years we were well versed in the nature of the rural lifestyle with all the noises, smells, dust and activities involved in the environment we live in.

In 1992 we were delivered a file box of information informing us that a quarry was to open at the end of Kendalls line and there would be 20,000MT per annum of rock being excavated from this quarry and this would mean 15 truck movements per day going past our gate.

We attended a hearing similar to this one and although against the idea of the quarry, we were prepared for the activity and duration of 20 years of the quarry existence. We were convinced by experts that the quarry would be well finished after this time period.

All of the conditions that were important to the local residents at the time were written down and validated by the consent approval.

This included the traffic volume, tonnage per year, shelter belt planting for dust mitigation, bundings no more than 6 meters high etc.

Not one of these conditions were ever met, which makes us wonder the validity and usefulness of these consent applications.

This was enough to drive one neighbor away from the area and so they sold up and moved away, purely because they did not want to suffer the noise and disturbance of trucks every day.

However, it was never going to be 15 truck movements per day and it was not long before truck volumes increased significantly. There was absolutely no motivation for either of the councils to monitor or control the conditions of this consent.

After the 2004 Manawatu river floods, we had trucks operating up and down the road day and night.

This was a local emergency event and no way were we going to interrupt the mitigation of the flood damage. We had no reason or desire to complain that the trucks were running day and night.

However, although the night time traffic soon ceased, the daytime traffic increased considerably.

Many of the neighbor's became upset at this and started communication with the (then) quarry operators Brownells.

They were considerate to our concerns and set in place a plan to operate at a more manageable level with dust mitigation, voluntary speed restrictions, children at risk signage, cleaning of neighbouring property roofs and water tanks from dust etc.

In 2007 an application was sought to increase the traffic volumes to 54 truck movements per day to better reflect what was already occurring (a 3.5 x increase).

This seemed reasonable at the time as there was considerable respect from the quarry operators and 54 truck movements, although somewhat disturbing, was not having an enormous impact on our lifestyles.

After time this number increased considerably which was distressing for everyone living on the road but was nothing compared to what we experienced in the summer of 2021/22.

From about October 2021 it was difficult to even get out of our gateway. We could have up to 3 truck and trailer units at the intersection waiting to get onto the main road.

I cannot articulate enough the depressing and distressful impact this had on our lives.

When working from home I had a directive from my work colleagues to have my microphone turned off due to the constant background noise and that was in my home office with windows closed.

The dust was extraordinary and we could not leave any doors or windows open during the summer as the inside would just get covered in dust.

Some still mornings I could smell and taste diesel fumes as I exited my house.

Everyone was just sick of this noise and dust, we were the noisy end of a mobile conveyer from the quarry.

According to the owners of the quarry (as stated in a meeting) this was no more than 170 truck movements per day.

PNCC place a counter on the road for a couple of weeks in June 2022 and recorded one instant of 189 truck movements. Remember June is entering the offseason.

I would express that 250 truck movements per day makes living on Kendalls line, if not total misery then impossible living conditions.

I had a huge amount I wanted to express at the hearing today but being somewhat realistic, acknowledge that this application is most likely a done deal at this level part of the process.

We are not naive to the incredible political influence the owners of Hirock have on both the PNCC and Horizons regional council.

In this particular case, both councils are large customers of the rock produced at this quarry and Hirock have the ability to supply or not.

I have a written response from PNCC in reference to asking them to administer the current consented truck numbers as we were trying desperately to get them to understand what we were going through.

The reply was Quote:

Controlling/monitoring of consent conditions sits with me.

The issue is that a variation has been lodged with Council.

The general rule of thumb is that once a variation/consent is lodged then enforcement ceases. If I take action it could be seen to influence the decision for the variation. I have escalated the matter to my manager, Simon Mori, for a definitive decision and will let you know once I get a reply.

Mr Mori validated that in a reply.

Surely this opens the door for any consent holder to just apply for a variation and then has complete permission to do whatever they like.

Seemingly there was a deal done on this issue as the council and quarry operation decided to adhere to the consented conditions (albeit in the off season).

I would also like to make a quick comment about the stream that runs through our property. The quarry wastewater goes into this stream and every time we have a reasonable amount of rain, the stream runs a mustard colour, it has no clarity value whatsoever. We always suspected this was as a result of the quarry discharge but this was proven to us during covid lockdown. We had significant rainfall where the creek volume was at a high level but it was crystal clear. It had been many years since we had seen it like that.

I considered although this has little effect on us as land owners it must be known and have implications for the horizons regional council.

Despite 3 separate emails to the regional council for information regarding this discharge and any dust discharge they have available, verbal or written.

I have not had any response to my requests at all, so cannot provide any meaningful information in relation to these pollution activities.

Once again this consent application addresses discharge water but how can we be certain it fixes the problem and at the end of the day it really doesn't seem to matter.

Hirock have endless resources to pay for experts that will quite emphatically tell you that we as residents of Kendalls line are liars.

The noise generated by acceleration and deceleration of trucks is no different from normal road noise.

The noise is well within acceptable levels

There is no dust, they measured it.

There is no vibration in our homes because an expert has provided typical data for road vibration.

I am sure if any of these "experts" were to live in any of our homes, they would be standing right here trying to protect their lifestyles as much as we are.

It seems ironic that we had one of the dustiest, most potholed roads for years and then as soon as an application is presented, the road gets resealed and immediately the measurements begin.

With 250 of the heaviest vehicles on our roads traversing daily, I think we all know the pristine condition of this road is very short lived. You only need to see the condition in photos for the application to realise the number of potholes and dust that accumulates over time.

To think that this will be mitigated is a pipe dream. We have, after months of complaining, had the really dangerous potholes repaired only to have them appear again within a few weeks.

The end of Kendalls line is right in the heart of what was the Te Arawaru swamp clearing. Excavations on my property have unvailed large pockets of bright blue clay that holds extreme amounts of water.

Truck vibration is real in this land, it does not require potholes to create the vibration, which is probably why it has not been measured.

We just cannot put the expert resources into this and nor should we.

To think that this type of activity could be classed as "rural" is just ridiculous, it is the most industrial type activity that could impinge on anyone's living environment.

This is not the occasional dust from a ploughed paddock or noise and pollution from stock.

It is not a one off, year long project like windmills (which as example Kahuturawa road has had truck number limitations placed on it) or forestry. This is a long term industrial open cast mine using Kendalls line as the motorized conveyer belt with absolutely no regard to the inhabitants that live there.

We have already been exposed to (apparently a lesser degree) what is proposed for truck movements in this application.

This is not a mere 10-20% increase in current consented truck numbers. It is nearly 500% increase in truck numbers. This is a truck every 1.5 minutes for the whole day and from experience , every day for at least the summer months.

Mitigation effects

There was a proposal to put a footpath between properties at the western end of the road. This is no use to us as the only walking is the entire length of the road for daily exercise. I believe this footpath was ask for by the property opposite us so they could walk the pram up to the woolshed. If any footpath was proposed then it would make sense that that was formed on that side of the road. There is no vegetation removal required, ample flat road reserve available and it would have direct access to the woolshed.

Double glazing was proposed. For the Underwood property this would make sense as the occupants are very elderly and spend most of their time indoors. For the rest of the road it does not make sense at all unless we are expected to also reside indoors until after hours, when the truck movements stop.

Fencing was also proposed. All I can say is that we did not move to a rural property to have our landscape views taken away as well as all the other living amenity we have been deprived of.

I would very much appreciate this hearing to consider our situation. It is absolutely demoralizing to see all our efforts to create a home and rural lifestyle that get ripped away from us due to the development of a huge industrial site like this quarry is.

Unlike 1992, I know we cannot throw the towel in in defending our lifestyle and amenity this time.

We have no possible chance of equalling the massive resource this company has behind it, It is very much a David and Goliath situation.

We can only hope for some kind of fairness either here or at the next stage.

