



STEP Inc

Community-based Environmental Conservation since 1978

4 September 2015

Director – Infrastructure Projects
Department of Planning and Environment
Application number SSI 15_7066
Major Projects Assessment
GPO Box 39, Sydney NSW 2001

Dear Sir,

Re: Hornsby Quarry – Spoil Management Project

STEP Inc is a local community based environmental group with a membership of over 400 in the Hornsby/Ku-ring-gai area. Our group has considerable experience in dealing with environmental issues and regenerating and preserving natural bushland. Our management committee includes three members with PhD qualifications and extensive work experience in geological fields.

We have comments on 2 aspects of the proposal to fill the Hornsby Quarry with spoil from North Connex tunnel.

1. Preservation of access to the volcanic diatrema

The EIS does not provide any information about the ultimate level of the fill within the quarry. The Hornsby Diatrema that has been exposed on the eastern side of the quarry has high scientific and heritage value (refer page 147). STEP is very concerned that there appears to be no recognition of this unique feature in the project documentation and by Hornsby Council. This is potentially the only publicly accessible exposure of a volcanic diatrema cross section in Australia and is therefore a vital education resource for school and university science students and members of the general public interested in the history and evolution of the Sydney area and the Australian continent. At least two of the uppermost faces must be left exposed and set aside as a future viewing area and due care should be taken not to damage them or obscure them with dust and rubble.

2. Habitat of the endangered Gang-gang Cockatoo

The EIS notes that the Gang-gang Cockatoo has potential to occur within the project site and that biodiversity offset and species credits are required in respect of habitat vegetation that is to be impacted by the project. There are other nearby areas that are also Gang-gang Cockatoo habitat that are currently subject to a development application, most notably the subdivision application before Hornsby Council for 79-87 Malton Road, Beecroft that would destroy some 3 ha of habitat. This species has been listed as endangered under the Threatened Species Conservation Act as the Hornsby/Ku-ring-gai population is the last known population in the Sydney region.

The cumulative impact of the continuing loss of habitat should be taken into account in determining the use of the offset credits. We call upon the Government to use the credits from the Quarry Project towards purchasing the Malton Road land not only to preserve the Gang-gang habitat but also other significant wildlife corridor and vegetation preservation reasons.

Yours sincerely

Jill Green

President