

# MT COTTON QUARRY COMMUNITY REFERENCE GROUP



**MT COTTON  
QUARRY**

## MEETING #4 SUMMARY

**Date and time:** Monday 13 May 2024, 5:10pm – 6:50pm

**Venue:** Mt Cotton Quarry office, 1513 Mt Cotton Road, Mt Cotton

**Chairperson:** Richard Lemon

**Attending CRG members:** Sue Panuccio, Anthony Moloney, Richard Lemon, Rodney Powell, Ewen Thomson, Peter Spencer, Jacob Carlyle

**Attending Barro Group team:** Harry Clark, Stephen Bennett, John Taylor, Kate Thomas (note taker)

**Apologies:** Liza'l and Scott Textor, Christine Melling, Beverley Lemon, Hon Mick de Brenni MP, Cr Julie Talty

Items discussed	Action
<p><b>A. Welcome</b></p> <p>Chairperson Richard Lemon opened the meeting and ran through the agenda.</p>	<p>Noted</p>
<p><b>B. Update on commencement of quarry extension</b></p> <p>Harry Clark and John Taylor provided an update on the start of operation of Stage 1 of the quarry extension.</p> <p>They noted that Barro Group had notified the Minister for Housing, Local Government, Planning and Public Works, the Department of Environment, Science and Innovation (DESI) and Redland City Council of Barro Group's intention to begin operation of the Stage 1 quarry area from Monday 15 July 2024. The notification had been acknowledged and the Environmental Authority online portal updated (permit EPPR03087315). Council officers visited the site in the week of 11 July 2024 to review operations.</p> <p>Development conditions to allow the operation had been met, with only a couple of internal items to be finished such as the wildlife crossing, associated fencing and drainage for the internal haul road were not complete.</p> <p>Quarrying operations were slowly starting in the lower extraction area. The start of the lower quarry pit (extended operations) was a significant milestone for Barro Group.</p> <p>The new weather station and environmental monitoring equipment had been installed, with Barro Group staff to be trained in its use on 22 August 2024. The equipment was already collecting data, and reports would be shared with the CRG. Water quality monitoring had also recently been undertaken data would be available shortly.</p> <p><b>Questions and actions arising:</b></p> <p><i>Qu. Since CRG members toured the site earlier in the year, what has changed (visually) since the start of operations?</i></p> <p><b>A.</b> There is now some quarrying activity in the lower extraction area. There is no mobile plant in place as yet, so excavators and loaders are being used. Work on the internal main haul road is continuing.</p>	

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<p><i>Qu. Can the CRG be provided with a calendar of activities at the quarry by the quarter so we can better understand what's happening on site?</i></p> <p>A. Yes Barro Group can provide this.</p> <p><i>Qu. Did Council give Barro Group approval to proceed with quarrying activities as a result of their visit to site in the week of 11 July 2024?</i></p> <p>A. Council does not tend to provide Barro Group with formal advice in this regard. Officers appeared generally satisfied with operations on site, and were particularly interested in erosion and sediment control. Following the visit, Barro Group decided to empty the sediment control basin near Gramzow Road as a precaution before upcoming rain events.</p> <p><i>Qu. If the sediment basins aren't emptied what can happen?</i></p> <p>A. Barro Group monitors the fill levels of the basins and empties or cleans them out as needed. The recent major rain event in Mt Cotton would have been captured by the sediment basin without it being emptied but Barro Group decided to do this to be ready for future wet weather. There is a requirement for Barro Group to capture runoff from 1-in-5 year rainfall event (note: a rainfall event which has a 20% chance of occurring in any given year). The sediment basins and diversion drains have all been proven to be working as required over the past 2-3 years and have improved with time as the site works have had time to stabilise and revegetate.</p> <p><i>Qu. If a sediment basin overflows, where would the overflow go?</i></p> <p>A. In most significant rainfall events, holding dams at the top of the site and diversion drains (drainage channels) around the site capture and direct stormwater to the sediment basins. Any events above the 1-in-5 year rainfall event are permitted by the existing conditions to be released from the site. The logic for this has been backed by extensive hydraulic/stormwater testing and modelling nationally and internationally.</p> <p><i>Qu. A CRG member who had lived along California Creek for 40 years asked about the images of brown water discharges in California Creek shared with the CRG previously (raised in CRG meeting#2 and outlined in the meeting notes online). These sediment discharges were considered to have come from the active quarry site and had begun approximately four years ago. The CRG member said the matter had been investigated by Council.</i></p> <p>A. Current Barro Group staff have not seen any coloured water discharge that would raise cause for concern in California Creek over the past couple of years. The quarry is compliant with water quality requirements, as assessed by DESI.</p> <p><i>Qu. Who is responsible for doing checks of water quality upstream of the quarry?</i></p> <p>A. Barro Group is only responsible for checking on site, and Council monitors California Creek at points both upstream and downstream of the quarry operations.</p> <p><i>Qu. Can we confirm an internal 1:10 grade haul road is being used to transport material from the lower to upper parts of the site rather than a conveyor as was stated in the development application?</i></p> <p>A. We are in Stage 1a of the quarry extension which does not include construction of a conveyor. Mobile plant and an internal haul road will be used. Stage 1b is when fixed plant and a conveyor is envisaged but this could be years away (timing unknown).</p> <p><i>Qu. A CRG member raised that noise modelling in the development application was based on two trucks a day using internal roads while (it is believed) there will now be more like 14 trucks an hour on the new haul road. It appeared that the modelling was not correct. For a family nearby who can see the haul road from their property, trucks</i></p>	<p>Barro to provide a quarterly calendar of activities at the next meeting</p> <p>Barro Group to clarify basis of</p>

Items discussed	Action
<p><i>will create significant noise disturbance. It had been thought a “silenced, dust proof” conveyor was being installed while the current situation was very different.</i></p> <p>A. This interpretation of modelling does not appear accurate. Modelling would have allowed for a range of internal truck movements and Barro Group would not be putting in fauna crossings and dam crossings on the haul road if it was only to be used by light vehicles. Truck movements on the haul road are largely shielded by the constructed earth bund which is designed to manage noise. It was also noted that a conveyor may not be preferable from a noise point of view, considering it is mechanical. Barro Group is conducting noise monitoring of operations and results will be shared with the CRG.</p>	<p>noise modelling; particularly the modelled number of truck movement on the internal haul road</p>
<p><b>A. Action items from previous meeting</b></p> <p>The group reviewed action items from the previous meeting. The following comments were made:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <i>Site tour dates for Christine Melling and Cr Talty</i> Proposed dates have not been requested as yet.</li> <li>2. <i>Information on wind direction (once the weather station has been installed)</i> To be provided at the next meeting following Barro Group staff training in the use of the weather station.</li> <li>3. <i>Confirm operating hours of weather station and dust monitor</i> To be provided at the next meeting following Barro Group staff training in the use of the weather station.</li> <li>4. <i>Information on reportable events and limits for silica dust</i> Provided at this meeting. The response was that if there was over 10% silica content in the quarried rock on site there were strict requirements for managing any dust exposure for workers (eg through dust suppression and managing speed limits of trucks). These controls aim to protect workers' health as they are close to the source of dust. By extension, neighbouring residents' health is also protected.</li> <li>5. <i>Geologist advice on silica of grey greywacke material</i> Provided at this meeting. The response was that Groundwork Plus' Principal Geologist Rod Huntley had retested samples of greywacke material from the site to assess its composition including silica content. The tests showed that there was 20% to 30% silica content in the rock. This was considered a relatively low level of silica when considering potential exposure levels. It was also confirmed that given the site testing occurring and obligations to on-site staff in this respect, these measures should provide local residents with sufficient assurance that any potential impact from silica will be negligible, if dust is managed as required on the site.</li> </ol> <p>A CRG member raised that the current silica limits and conditions were not enough – more should be done. This was acknowledged as a broader national/international issue and not necessarily the responsibility of Barro Group which has existing conditions to meet, and measures in place to meet them.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>6. <i>Update on truck movements on internal haul road during Stage 1A of development</i> Provided at this meeting (refer notes above).</li> </ol>	<p>Cr Talty and Christine Melling to suggest tour dates</p> <p>Update at next meeting</p> <p>Update at next meeting</p>
<p><b>C. Development conditions discussion: water quality</b></p> <p>John Taylor provided an overview of the development conditions relating to water quality affecting the operation and extension of Mt Cotton Quarry. The conditions are provided in:</p>	<p>Noted</p>

Items discussed	Action
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Minor Change approval issued by Minister's office on 17 April 2022</li> <li>• Approved plans including the staging plans</li> <li>• Environmental Authority permit issued by DESI on 13 May 2020</li> </ul> <p>It was noted that there are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• two conditions of development relating to water quality from the Minor Change approval (Sections 44 and 45)</li> <li>• seven conditions relating to dust in the Environmental Authority (EA) (conditions WA1 to WA7).</li> </ul> <p>John Taylor facilitated a detailed discussion about the conditions affecting stormwater management and surface water quality monitoring at the quarry. He noted that while the Minister set all of the development conditions, it was Redland City Council's responsibility to regulate them. The regulator for water quality for this operation is DESI, under the EA permit and this includes monitoring of water quality in California Creek.</p> <p>John advised that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Quarry pit water was monitored as part of the conditions and was generally 'dirty' / contained sediment and was reused for dust suppression on site.</li> <li>• Barro Group's acid rock management plan was related to water quality as there was some low potential for acid to leach out of rock. The pH level of pit water and rock was regularly tested and if the pH was too low, then it was required to be appropriately treated (eg. lime dosage).</li> <li>• Barro Group had to conduct about 20 different tests including pH, trace metals, nutrient levels, turbidity and dissolved oxygen in the sediment ponds and pit water.</li> <li>• Barro Group has 'oversized' sediment basins on site to ensure stormwater runoff was captured. Diversion drains divert clean water around the quarry activity.</li> <li>• The requirement for monthly monitoring started in July 2024 and one round of testing had already occurred. There are four monitoring points: four release points from site and the quarry pit. Results from the first round of monitoring showed that the pit water was 'dirty' but all other monitoring points were compliant with requirements. Data can be shared with the CRG.</li> <li>• Engineering certification of the main Stormwater treatment ponds was in place.</li> <li>• Water on site and in California Creek was naturally slightly acidic.</li> </ul> <p><b>Questions and actions arising:</b></p> <p><i>Qu. Are water quality management plans in place at the quarry?</i>  A. Yes these were prepared over the life of the project, provided to Council and DESI in 2017 and are being followed.</p> <p><i>Qu. Please can the slide presentation shown at the meeting be attached to the minutes?</i>  A. Yes.</p> <p><i>Qu. If pit water is being used for dust suppression on haul roads, will the metals in the water be concentrated as the water evaporates? The concern is that these could be washed into waterways.</i>  A. DESI water quality monitoring would show any increase in metals in waterways if this was the case. Water runoff from the roads would be captured in the onsite dams and sediment ponds. There is a gully alongside the main haul road that will lead into a sediment pond. Sediment settles in the onsite settlement ponds before any release into waterways like California Creek. Water quality monitoring will show the baseline situation and also any changes that may occur over time.</p>	<p>Share water quality monitoring data with the CRG</p> <p>Provide copy of slides with meeting notes</p>

Items discussed	Action
<p><b>Additional community questions</b></p> <p><i>Qu. What is the baseline measurement of silica in the air during dusty periods on site?</i></p> <p>A. There was no previous requirement to measure silica in dust so there is no previous baseline measurement. However, this is now being measured as required.</p> <p><i>Qu. Will the new dust equipment on site test for silica?</i></p> <p>A. Yes. The equipment can test for silica.</p> <p><i>Qu. Is the dust monitoring data captured made publicly available? This would be good practice – there are many industries like the healthcare industry which presents performance statistics publicly.</i></p> <p>A. Under Barro Group’s development conditions, data does not need to be published. Any instances of non-compliance must be provided to the regulator. However, a summary of results will be shared with the CRG and presented in CRG meeting updates. Barro Group will consider the CRG’s request.</p> <p><i>Qu. Some community members are concerned that silica in rock dust can adversely affect people with chronic diseases, such as nearby residents with respiratory conditions and inflammatory disease. Some CRG members did not agree that impacts from silica dust at Mt Cotton Quarry were likely to be negligible and cited epidemiological evidence gathered over 10 years that showed that there could be risks to the community from low level exposure to silica in dust. Some CRG members were concerned that the development conditions that Barro Group must comply with were outside of current WHO guidelines. A CRG member noted there were certain times of day (eg 3pm in the afternoon) where plumes of dust from other quarries in the area could be seen on the horizon. This was of great concern.</i></p> <p>A. Barro Group’s activities are unrelated to the quarries mentioned. It is also possible that monitoring and management requirements are different on the other sites. Barro Group will manage dust and monitor levels in line with their development conditions. The monitoring conditions for dust are among the most stringent that Groundwork Plus/SLR has seen in Queensland. Results of monitoring will be shared with the CRG.</p> <p><i>Qu. Some CRG members are concerned about the measuring process for silica dust. The limits stated in the conditions has a stated limit (is 3 ug/m<sup>3</sup>) based on an annual average. We are concerned that if there is a non-compliant event on a particular day then this will not be evident as the data is averaged out over the year.</i></p> <p>A. Barro Group acknowledges this concern, but notes that the requirement is set by the regulator (State Government) and not the company. Barro Group will comply with this requirement. Monitoring is now active and results will be shared with the CRG.</p> <p><i>Qu. Did Council provide written approval to Barro Group noting that it had met its development conditions before it started operation of the quarry extension?</i></p> <p>A. Council visited the site to audit the status of conditions. Council does not provide a written clearance, or approval but does request more information if it has any concerns. Council has not requested any additional information or actions.</p> <p><i>Qu. Are the roadworks at the quarry entrance on Mt Cotton Road completed? What about the internal driveway?</i></p> <p>A. Works on Mt Cotton Road are complete. The internal driveway will be duplicated in future. This will be on the original site access alignment and will be asphalted.</p>	
<p><b>D. Next steps / general business</b></p> <p>The CRG agreed on the next meeting timing:</p>	<p>Barro Group to issue meeting</p>

Items discussed	Action
<p><b>Monday November 18 2024 at 5:00pm</b> on site.</p> <p>A discussion topic nominated by CRG members was: review of initial rounds of data captured by the weather station and dust monitoring equipment on site.</p>	<p>invitation and agenda in September 2024</p>