

Dear Amanda & Sarah (please forward if required),

We are very grateful and wish to thank you for the opportunity to speak on air yesterday, concerning the Mt Coot-tha Quarry (MCQ) - on behalf of the very unfortunate Mt Coot-tha Local Residents (MCLR).

This was a great privilege for us and we thank you again.

- I have uploaded yesterday's audio extract recording our website [www.BanTheBlasting.org/ABC/ABC-Radio-1-6-2019.mp3](http://www.BanTheBlasting.org/ABC/ABC-Radio-1-6-2019.mp3), if anybody asks about that please give them our link.
- Apologies for the quality of my audio, which was at times difficult to hear. Had I known the low quality level I would have taken steps to improve it.

As regards what Anne said, there are some things which may not be always correct.

- Because of the extremely large hole size, the actual blasting conditions change from month to month.
- Certainly I have personally seen car loads of eager tourists turned away much to their dismay and anger, I am not there very often but have seen this several times.
- Other times the quarry simply display English signs, however most of the tourists cannot read English and they ignorantly walk right past.

Regarding the message received regarding the asthmatic dust response, please consider:

1. The levels of silica and dust emitted are absolutely deadly  
<http://www.bantheblasting.org/ImagesBlastDust28Feb2019.htm>
  - a. This is far greater than any simple asthmatic response level.
  - b. This massive levels of dust remain in the area for some weeks, to be blown around the residential and tourist area with the wind changes and these are cause of asthmatic attacks.
2. There is only one dust monitor which has been carefully positioned on Mt Coot-tha Rd.
  - a. This has been very carefully located, where no wind or blasting dust ever blows from the MCQ.
  - b. To protect the tourists and scenic drive athletes requires 6 or more dust monitors.
3. Against all odds I succeeded in recording the 28<sup>th</sup> February 2019 blast and the consequential silica dust storm which enveloped the Mt Coot-tha Forest and headed for the picnic areas.
  - a. The quarry workers tried to stop me from videoing the blast and I had to rely on my iPhone.
  - b. The only existing dust monitor never received any dust, because no dust ever blows there.

As far as the BCC Quarry manager script is concerned, the major problem we always have is an almost total lack of truth, everything we are told is either a half-lie or total lie.

I am sorry to have to report to you that the BCC totally lied to you, and the council statement which unfortunately you read out on air is definitely and grossly incorrect.

I fully understand your often urgent timelines but offer the comments below which we have been highlighting for some years.

BCC script:

1. "The MCQ has operated since the 1920's, long before the current residents chose to purchase there."
  - a. They pretend that the quarry existed in its current form since 1920, which is absurd.

- b. This is a Key Resource Area KRA-42 which has Zero separation zone to the very unfortunate residents, some have lived there for decades.
  - c. We were given written assurance that the blasting levels emitted by the quarry were much lower than would ever cause damage to homes. This turned out to be a total lie.
  - d. We were also given BCC assurance that the quarry would close several times, but this also turned out to be totally untruthful.
  - e. In c2000 the MCQ reinvented itself using the latest high power blasting powder and techniques, this has a massively worse effect on the local residents.
2. "The MCQ continues to be a vital resource for Brisbane providing necessary materials to build infrastructure in our city."
    - a. We can see that the quarry has run out of the main source of gravel and is now mining up along Scenic drive.
    - b. We have followed the quarry trucks loaded with MCQ gravel and found them to be delivering gravel to private companies south of Ipswich.
  3. "In the coming year MCQ will contribute the major road projects."
    - a. As there is no rehabilitation plan at all, it is likely that the money saved by mining will cost considerably more to rehabilitate.
    - b. The MCQ is selling the gravel to anybody who wants it, whilst not factoring in the considerable rehabilitation costs.
  4. "The quarry conducts a maximum of 2 blasts per month."
    - a. This is not true, sometimes there have been more than one blast in a week and also on consecutive weeks.
  5. "Each Blasts lasts less than 0.6 of a second."
    - a. This is absolutely not true.
    - b. Whilst each actual detonator cap may take 0.5 seconds to fully explode, there are normally hundreds of detonators which are exploded in a timed controlled sequence.
    - c. The time can sometimes take several seconds to complete.
      - i. An example of this is the 28<sup>th</sup> February 2019, where our decibel metre recorded the sequence lasting for several seconds.
  6. "Blasts are monitored by an independent Blasting Expert."
    - a. This is not true at all, the MCQ Manager Mr Bell dictates exactly where the blasting monitors will be located.
    - b. He decides that the transducers will be loosely coupled to the ground by only using a soil spike, thereby reducing the energy transfer into the monitoring device and modifying the reported ground response.
  7. "Residents are provided with advanced notice of all blasting activity."
    - a. This is absolutely not true and a very sore point indeed.
    - b. Notice of blasts is something which the local residents fought hard for year to receive and has only operated for approx. 5 years, and we are only told the next blast occurrence date.
    - c. Even though we have asked 16 times to be advised of any activity estimate, we are never told the degree of activity or strength and are ignored every time.

8. "Strict environmental regulations are in place for MCQ operations and Compliance Audits are conducted regularly."
  - a. The compliance audits have never considered the internal home monitoring, which were verified by the EDO as being legally required.
  - b. There is only one dust monitor which is positioned to never record any blast dust, this never and cannot records anything like the MCQ blast dust footprint.
  
9. "MCQ is still operating and no date has been set for the quarry to close."
  - a. It is obvious that they have almost run out of gravel rock to mine.
  - b. In 2017 and 2018 they extracted as much as possible, probably because they thought that in 2019 the Zipline would be restricting their operations.
  - c. The problem with closing is that they will have to admit that they have created a monster hole which will cost hundreds of millions of dollars to fix.
  
10. "Following the completion of extraction activities, the council intends to rehabilitate the MCQ."
  - a. The MCQ is destroying the last of the topsoil at their furthest away location which is right up alongside Scenic Drive, which is the least economical to mine and the most expensive to rehabilitate.
  
11. "The future use of the site is yet to be determined, but will involve consultation with the community."
  - a. The BCC concept of community consultation at Mt Coot-tha has never once taken into account what the ratepayers actually want or need, the chances of this being miraculously changed seem very unlikely.
  - b. The viability of the MCQ mining does not consider the urgent need to improve the existing tourism at Mt Coot-tha.
    - i. We are talking about improving and building on the popularity that currently exists and not destroying it with an intrusive destructive Zipline.
    - ii. Indeed a professional quality longer-term popularity, which will continue to grow year on year as it has done with other rehabilitated quarry's in UK and Canada.

I believe that we deserve a second go at this interview:

- We were not able to comment on air on what the ABC text-line said about the dust
- and also what the council statement stated in their carefully tailored script.

Kind Regards, Philip Best - MCLR Chairperson and Engineer.

I am an the third Chairperson after John Higgins who passed in 2016, before that I was the secretary and engineer.

I an also an active member of the Mt Coot-tha Protection Alliance.

Peter Hale is the president of the Mt Coot-tha Protection Alliance.

David Hassall is a member and chair of special MCPA committees.