

AN ACCIDENT

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MASSIVE quarrying and tipping at Scammonden could lead to tragedy on the M62, it is claimed today.

Residents near the landmark Brown Cow bridge over the busy motorway at Scammonden say hundreds of lorries cross the bridge every day on their way to the two sites.

And they say rocks and stones keep falling from the trucks which could easily get between large gaps in the railings and fall 150ft onto the motorway below.

They fear this could cause carnage if it hit a vehicle.

The protestors are also angry that licences have been granted for a quarry and tip - one in Kirklees and the other in Calderdale - at either end of the bridge.

They claim the tip is being overfilled which could lead to long-term environmental damage.

And they say that lorries leave mud all over the road with a single roadsweeper struggling to cope.

The quarry is owned by Birkby-based company Marshalls and the tip - a former quarry that used to be owned by Marshalls - is now owned by Rochdale-based firm P Casey Enviro Ltd.

Marshalls have been granted a licence by Kirklees Council to dig out stone from Moselden Quarry on the Kirklees side of the single span bridge and huge eight-wheeler dump trucks can make 75 trips into and 75 trips out of the quarry each day.

Calderdale Council has granted a licence for infill at Clockface Quarry on the Calderdale side of the bridge.

Once again the licence is for eight-wheeler dump trucks to make 75 trips into and 75 trips out of the quarry each day.

Residents say this all means 300 single lorry trips to both quarries every working day which is far too much for the area.

Protestor Ian Birch said: "If a rock falls from the bridge and hits a vehicle on the M62 below then people are going to die."

He claimed there was a lack of liaison between the two authorities over the licences and the Environment Agency should have stopped both getting them.

He added: "One lorry coming away from the Moselden Quarry had dropped rocks all over the bridge - but then carried on. We alerted Kirklees Council to the danger, but when nothing was done we moved them ourselves."

Several protestors - all voluntary Scammonden Wardens who promote the area and report any crime concerns to the police - held a briefing on the bridge as the lorries rumbled by.

One driver was clearly on his mobile phone.

A large stone was also found next to the kerb which must have fallen from a lorry.

Mr Birch said: "We have real worries about rocks falling from the lorries. There is a large gap at the bottom of the railing and a low pavement lip, so any rocks could quite easily fall onto the motorway below."

"The bridge is also in a terrible state. All the railings are rusting and we don't think it has been painted for around 10



■ **LAST LINE:** Railings on M62 bridge at Scammonden

Soon, 300 quarry lorries may cross M62 bridge every day ... with only these railings to prevent debris falling 150ft onto drivers

years.

"Everyone ticks the health and safety boxes, but don't actually do anything about it. If one of these lorries hit the railings I doubt the railings would be strong enough to stop it from crashing through."

Paul Wood from Barkisland added: "I've walked across this bridge for many years and I've never felt it shake like it does now. You can feel it move as lorries go across it and it's quite frightening."

Susan Russell from Krumlin in Barkisland said: "In good weather the dust and debris created by the quarries is terrible so we have to keep our windows closed."

Mr Birch said: "When the mud gets on the road it can be slippery and cars and motorbikes travel along here at some speed. When it is very cold there is a danger the water the roadsweeper puts down can then freeze."

And he called on Calderdale Council to investigate Clockface tip to

make sure it was keeping within its licence.

The wardens claim the tip is being overfilled. They have photographs from the 1970s which showed the land before it was quarried and say the land is now already higher than it was - and the dumping is still going on.

Mr Birch said: "If that is the case then there are worries over the stability of the site, contamination and rules of operation."

A Highways Agency spokeswoman said: "We continually patrol the motorway network and we are not aware of rocks or debris falling on to the M62 from Scammonden Bridge. We will, however, look into this issue further."

"We completed a full inspection of Scammonden Bridge last year which showed that it is in good condition and is structurally sound. Although there is some vibration caused by

passing vehicles, this is not unusual for a structure of this size. The bridge has also been assessed for its load carrying capacity and meets all necessary requirements."

Both Kirklees and Calderdale Councils stressed they had consulted over the quarrying proposals.

A Calderdale Council spokesman said: "We consulted with Kirklees Council when the original agreement was made to restore the quarry and we are still in regular contact with Kirklees."

"Planned agreed visits are made by officers to the site twice a year and the site is also subject to unannounced spot checks."

"We are satisfied that the company is working within the conditions of its planning consent and working to an agreed plan which will see the restoration of the site in keeping with the surrounding natural environment."

A Kirklees Council spokeswoman