

Rankmore Submission re Macka's Sand proposal

My family and I, as residents of Nelson Bay Rd are against the modification of Macca's Sand approved truck movements for following reasons;

Safety

- Our house has a bus stop out the front, on both sides of the road. These two bus stops (and others) on Nelson Bay Rd are in constant use, particularly at peak-hour times to pick-up and deliver the increasing amount of residents on Nelson Bay RD. The bus stops are predominately used by children and teenagers from the Williamtown Leisure centre, local neighbours and my family as a mode of transport, as well as, servicing the scheduled school buses. Crossing Nelson Bay Rd at any time is extremely hazardous. A significant danger already exists with these bus stops being located on two blind corners (with only 100m between each corner), and with a speed limit of 80km/hr, this area poses as an extreme hotspot for a fatality. Adding further truck movements to that approved, and increasing the hours of operation will only broaden this already deadly and existing risk to pedestrians and public transport users. Further, the consideration of the unique disadvantages of trucks in an accident, namely that of stopping distance and mass, can only compound a significant danger to the users most frequent of the services - young children and youth.
- Our house is 6 metres from the road edge, and is based on a blind corner that is extremely exposed to truck movements in the southerly direction. No consideration has ever been placed on such exposed properties as mine, where upon, there is no protection from a truck leaving the road whilst negotiating the blind corner. It is a constant risk and fear that a mechanical fault, driver error, or driver fatigue could legitimately cause a heavily laden truck to come off the road - and with no road fence/guard rail this would result in the destruction of our house, and quite likely injury or death of my wife, my two daughters (under two years of age), or myself! This is already a significant safety oversight risk on such a road, and increased truck movements interacting with existing traffic, entering/exiting residence driveways makes such a guard/fence essential and already overdue - without adding to the probability of the risks and dangers of 96+ truck movements per hour! (48 travelling North and South on Nelson Bay RD).
- Entering and existing our property is extremely hazardous. The existing truck movements are already extremely aggressive on the road and are regularly speeding. When my family or I pull out of our drive, in-part due to the blind corners, and in-part due to the excessive speed/aggressiveness of truck drivers, we are tail-gated, shouted at with truck horns, and flashing of lights. As a resident and rate payer of Port Stephens, we have a **'right'** to safe access to and from our property, and this has been steadily eroded by the exponential increase in traffic movements over the past 10 years. The truck movements already existing from Macca's Sand have proven to provide the most dangerous scenarios, again due to the environmental positions of our properties access (blind corners etc), the current speed limit, and the excessive speed/aggressiveness of drivers - combined with the natural limitations of

trucks to respond [stopping distance/mass] produces a dangerous black spot in which fatalities will continue to occur.

- Several fatalities and high impact injuries have occurred as a result of car crashes along Nelson Bay Rd. Most have occurred within one kilometre of the northern blind corner adjacent our address. These have included vehicles that have crossed to the wrong side of the road and come off the road. Should this occur with one of the many existing, or proposed truck movements, then fatalities and injuries beyond consciousness will result. Nelson Bay Rd is not safe for such high traffic volumes at such speed for the above mentioned reasons, and the road has no capacity for maintaining the safety needed for heavy vehicles travelling at 80km/hr. Nelson Bay RD lacks pull-off lanes, dividing rails to separate traffic flow, or guard rails to protect road users, pedestrians, residents and property. Clearly, the past approving delegates and Port Stephens Council have, thus far, demonstrated little concern for the safety and lives of many thousands dependant on Nelson Bay Rd. Further, any increase in truck movements will increase the probability of such a tragic occurrence without significant physical mitigations.

Noise and Environmental Impacts

- As a resident of Nelson Bay Rd [NBR], and with my residence being within six metres of the road boundary, the affects of traffic and heavy vehicle movements are significant. Past delegates have not considered residences beyond that directly adjacent to the new Macca's Sand access point on NBR. I argue that my residence and families well-being and quality of life are more detrimentally affected then those adjacent the new access. This centres on the fact of my residences proximity (six metres) from the road, the 80+km/h travelling speed of truck movements, and the fact that the road is elevated (one metre) out the front of my residence to be in-line with the windows of the house structure. The reverberation and vibrations from each heavy vehicle movement passing by my residence is significant enough to constantly wake my two daughters (under two years of age) during both daylight naps, and night sleeps. This is in addition to the excessive and untenable noise generated by the trucks droning engine and exhaust brakes being used as they negotiate the two blind corners afore mentioned. The speed at which the trucks travel exponentially increases the noise and vibration, as road works/accidents have shown, slower speeds lowers this impact significantly. The vibrations and low 'bass' like droning of the heavy vehicle traffic is extreme. Our only relief is the lack of frequency of truck movements outside of around 7am to 4pm weekdays and the reduction in truck movements (comparatively) on the weekends. We are not the only property with a extremely close proximity that would suffer the compounding effects of noise/vibration who's impacts should be satisfactorily considered, but we are the most exposed of all residences along NBR. It is not acceptable to impact my daughters health, well-being and growth, in addition to my ability to perform shift-work and provide for my family, without Macca's Sand being forced to provide physical mitigations to address the noise and environmental impacts on my residence and protect my families health. This should have been adequately addressed and acknowledged by the prior approval delegates, but was not - again a resident rate-paying, tax-paying family is at the mercy of bureaucracy.

- With a proposed increase of 48 truck movements per hour, the approving delegates must acknowledge that this will equate to 96 truck movements moving in both North and South directions on Nelson Bay Road to service this ONE mine. Therefore, the delegates must concede that the total number of truck movements passed my residence (and all others residences on this stretch of NBR) would have the potential to be well over 130 movements per hour - this is in conservative consideration of the original [first] Macca's Sand mine that will maintain linear operation on Oakvale Drive SaltAsh with that of Williamtown.
- Consideration of the all consuming and combining affects truck movements bring residences of Nelson Bay Rd [NBR] in terms of noise, vibration, safety and quality of life. With the ever expanding developments in housing estates and increased populous numbers of the Port Stephens peninsula, combined with the 'tens of thousands' tourism visitors during holiday seasons, approving delegates must consider the community of Williamtown itself. With a population on Nelson Bay Rd (between SaltAsh and RAAF Williamtown roundabouts) of approximately 800 people, the approving authority must genuinely consider the on-going dangerous and negative impacts already suffered by this community through Macca's Sands first proposal - and accept that this stretch of road and its residents do not need additional truck movements to better aid the already rapid growth in danger this road represents
- Air-pollution and sand exposure. The sand trucks that traverse NBR are not properly covered and have a vented/non-sealed section at the aft section of their tarp. This allows air to mix with the sand load and deliver constant "airborne" matters in the form of sand left in the turbulent wake of the trucks passage. Again the speed at which the trucks travel exponentially increases the amount of dust/sand particulate in the air, which, should be contained by fully-sealed tarping - but as shown by existing truck movements, these tarps and frames are regularly not fully sealed or are in disrepair.

Response to comments made by Macca's Sand director in Examiner

- I refer to comments made by Robert MacKenzie (Macca's Sand Director) in the "Examiner" newspaper that "the modifications [requested] are aimed at making life easier for the truck drivers", and "the number of truck movements would not change". These comments are deliberately misleading and scandalous. Through my own discussions with Mr MacKenzie during the first [now approved] proposal, it was apparent that he had significant tonnage aspirations to rival and overtake that of the Central Coast sand mines. Now that these mines are in question, and have a limited forward life, it would only be logical that an increase in truck movement capacity would offer Macca's Sand a viable alternative to serve the 'sand market' on a larger scale.
- Through my own past discussions, and the quotes printed in the Examiner, the approval delegates must acknowledge that Macca's Sand directors do not consider the impacts of their applications, and that they consistently attempt to mislead factual impacts. Therefore it must be assessed that the request for 48 truck movements an hour during their increased hours of operations would be met in full, during periods of demand - and that no such

number of movements would 'light' or 'minimal' in their resultant impacts to all Nelson Bay Road users, residences and families.