

I do not support the modification request for Mackas Sand on the basis of public safety. The application should be rejected, or, at the very least a deferred decision for 2 years time so that a reasonable assessment can be made of the true effect of the new road on the traffic safety on Nelson Bay Road. By then the results of other mining approvals which are under consideration for approval at present will be known. The cumulative effects on our only road in and out of Tomaree Peninsula cannot be underestimated.

This road should never have been approved by the Planning Assessment Commission and when it was approved, strict conditions were placed on it. Yet, here we are less than 2 years down the track and with the road only having been completed less than 6 months ago, asking for a 200% increase in truck movements. It makes complete mockery of the previous PAC decision.

Mackas Sand still has the option on their licence to use Lavis Lane which would be a much safer option than kicking even more trucks onto a single lane section of Nelson Bay Road with what I believe, regardless of the rules and regulations, are totally inadequate deceleration and acceleration lanes. I am not a regular user of Nelson Bay Road compared to daily travelers. On one occasion, not long after the road became operational, I noticed a sand truck slowing down in front of me. If I had not been aware of that new road and the potential for the truck to turn there, then I could well have had a collision with the truck. Similarly, I am truly frightened about the prospect of having to deal with a sand truck accelerating onto Nelson Bay Road at sufficient speed for the rest of the vehicles on Nelson Bay Road having to brake or accelerate themselves to avoid a collision with oncoming traffic. There is nowhere else to go.

I attended the public meeting at Williamstown when I hear the biggest pack of lies I am ever likely to hear from Robert MacKenzie relating to this application. No extra truck movements? Well why on earth are they asking for an increase? Utter rubbish. He even told us that truck drivers don't like waiting in queues to load. Well, if there is insufficient loading facility, well fix that first. Next, tell the truck drivers to go drive trucks for a wheat harvest and then they will know what waiting is all about – 2 days!

The traffic study which was included with this application is clearly flawed, yet again – just like the one last time. It was done during one of the quietest times for tourists in our area – 28th May I recollect. I'm left to wonder just how many trucks were pulled from the road during that period as well – Just how independent are these surveys?

Any questions about “economic benefit” for this application should be quickly dismissed. Mackas Sand have a licence to extract much more and this increase in truck movements is not going to stop that – provided they are prepared to use the Lavis Lane option and not push all the trucks out onto Nelson Bay at a very dangerous spot indeed – one which has pea-souper fog on winter mornings and the road is located on a bend with limited visibility. How the RMS could have acted responsibly in recommending this previously is beyond my understanding.

To have the empty trucks needing to do a U turn on Pauls Corner roundabout to return to the road access is unbelievable as well. That roundabout is a recipe for accidents and hundreds go unreported each year. They might not be fatal where two smaller vehicles are involved. Put a B double sand truck into the mix and fatalities will be next. Our tourists coming from Nelson Bay will be blissfully unaware that a huge B double is about to U turn right in front of them..... and then further on down the road after they have done that, to potentially collide with the same truck when it decelerates in an 80KM zone to exit busy Nelson Bay Road.

Parents and buses using the Pauls corner roundabout to access the Salt Ash Public School already need to make a perilous left hand turn off the roundabout as it is. Mix that with more B double sandtrucks and there will be more accidents and fatalities.

The other roundabout likely to be impacted in the future is the Medowie Road/Williamtown Airforce base roundabout. Huge expansion is taking place at the airport and Medowie has had a large number of extra subdivisions approved in the last 2 years. More people, more traffic. The safety of people who live in Banksia Grove has not been considered. It should have been compulsory for Mackas Sand to put in some kind of safety barriers at this location when the PAC approved the road back in 2013. These people are elderly and cannot cross the road even with normal traffic, let alone huge B doubles with limited time to break to avoid the pedestrians. They need shelter and it should not have to be provided by the taxpayers of Australia or the ratepayers of Port Stephens. The company which stands to benefit should be paying.

I find it incomprehensible that Mackas Sand has such disregard for the PAC decision and the operating conditions tied to this road. I don't believe for one minute that this road has been fully tested with the original truck movements, let alone a 200% increase for a road barely tested.

This application should not be approved because of all the above reasons and, once again, the traffic study is flawed as it does not take into account the extra volume of trucks to go through the Williamtown roundabout.

This approval process should not take into account the licence approval for extraction for Mackas Sand. Extraction is useless without safe access for sand trucks.

Name Withheld