

To NSW Planning and Infrastructure

Attention Planner: Paul Freeman

Dear Sir,

Please find attached my personal submission in relation to the Mackas Sand Mine project Lot 218 Port Stephens re the proposal to provide an alternative access route application number 08-0142MOD1 closing date for exhibition 21st November 2012.

Submission Modification to Mackas Sand Project.

Mackas Sand Project- S75W Modification

Submission Date: Friday 9th November 2012

Reference number: 08 0142 MOD 1

Position: I object to this proposal.

Reasons:

Mackas Sands already has previously been given approval to mine sand from lot 218 Stockton Bight National Park, approval was provided by State Planning in 2009. This approved development is inclusive of safe transport of all material from lot 218 through the neighboring Towers Family property onto Lavis Lane connecting Williamstown Cabbage tree Rd intersection, a high volume two lane roundabout which minimizes risk to the traveling public in the transfer of an annual volume of up to two million tonnes of sand per annum onto a critical regional road system.

The proposed intersection onto Nelson bay Rd. as part of this DA modification is designed as a left turn only; a high risk strategy considering the high volume of truck and dog vehicles and the critical nature of Nelson Bay Road, a high volume critical regional transport route. The modified proposal would allow up to two million tonnes of sand removed from the mine site lot 218 annually to equating to over 200 truck and dog movements per day in each direction at this intersection. Maximum vehicle movements would occur every few minutes providing few breaks for high volumes of passenger vehicles to merge in safety within an 80 km zone. The proposed left turn only intersection will be located on the Newcastle side of a long blind curve in an 80km per hour zoning on a high volume regional carriage way with limited options for emergency vehicles and close to a very busy Regional airport. The location has a high accident rate record and the severely damaged and abandoned church on one of the bends close to this location is evidence of the high levels of transport accident risk.

The proposed route is to be built on what is classified as coastal flood plain land and will divide water movement on land which has been used for agricultural purposes, following removal of coastal vegetation it was initially used for dairy production and now beef cattle and some small cropping, run off from this area is critical to health of water ways in Port Stephens as it ultimately feeds into Port Stephens waterways and any infilling or division and damming of land must be considered very carefully with regard to the longer term environmental sustainability of our coastal wetlands and diminishing agricultural lands.

Nelson Bay Rd is the major regional arterial link between Newcastle and the Nelson bay peninsula which houses more than 40% of the residents living in Port Stephens, Richardson Rd. can be used as an alternative route in an emergency however the number of vehicles would make the option problematic at peak periods of the day. A blockage of Nelson Bay Rd. would force all peninsula traffic past the Williamstown RAAF Base entrance hindering its ability to operate safely and in times of critical security incidents this Rd can also be closed to traffic. Forcing empty sand trucks back to the Richardson Rd Nelson Bay Rd intersection adds further to road user's risks with large numbers of empty truck and dog vehicles circulating around this very busy intersection every few minutes, it is notable that this intersection is poorly engineered with an incorrect camber on some legs of the intersection.

The owner of Mackas Sand is a Port Stephens Councilor and currently popularly elected Mayor, he has used his influence in the period he was Mayor from 2008 to 2010 to have council staff pursue and register Stockton Bight Track, Port Stephens Council has spent considerable monies in relation to this matter. This exercise has cost ratepayers in Port Stephens over \$500,000 in legal and compulsory land acquisition costs and the Towers verses Port Stephens Council case is still unresolved. The Minister for Resources and Planning is being requested to sign off on rescinding compulsory acquisition of the Stockton Bight Track land, this request was made many months ago and no word has been received on its status.

In Summary.

Approval of an alternative route onto Nelson Bay Rad has serious safety implications for the travelling public and an approved viable alternative is already in place. No modification to the existing DA is warranted or required, the applicant simply needs to meet the agreement he made with neighboring property owners and get on with development of his mining site. The Port Stephens Council Traffic Officer has been asked to review this item and make comment and this item is included in the RMS Traffic Committees inspections on Wednesday 21st November so Council will potential not make any submission on this matter. The environmental impact of this road across coastal wetlands has yet to be assessed in terms of long term environmental impact and downstream implications for constraints with flood water movement.