

I wish to register my objections to the proposed Bobs Farm Sand Mine. I am very concerned that the proposed mine, located adjacent to the Bob's Farm Public School, will significantly adversely affect the local school and community.

Bobs Farm Public School is the focal point of the community. The school and the adjacent Community Hall are important institutions to local families. The operation of a massive sand mine next to it will generate increased traffic, dust, and noise and must clearly adversely affect the viability of the school and community hall. If the school closes it will destroy the community. If the sand mine goes ahead, the number of school enrolments would be expected to drastically reduce due to fear of serious health and safety issues arising from increased dust, noise and traffic. Local families and their children should not face this dilemma of choosing between their kid's health and a local education.

The school employs up to 13 people at any one given time and that is just one employer in the area. There are many businesses in the area which will suffer from the impact of having this sand mine approved. Closure of the school would result in School staff having to find positions elsewhere, negating the 8 proposed on site jobs in the mine.

The proposed sand mine is expected to extract and process approx. 750,000 tonnes of sand per annum over fifteen years, and transport the extracted materials off site via local roads starting 8 meters from the School. It is stated that 180 double dog trucks would enter and 180 double dog truck exit the quarry each day 363 days of the year for 12 hours per day if not more depending on demand for the product. Trucks laden with stage 3 and 4 Silica sand will encircle the school, local businesses and residences. Silica, a component of the sand proposed to be mined is a known carcinogen. How anyone can consider putting children and people in the local area at risk by mining it? Silicosis is the 'new' asbestos. There is little or no reference in the EIS to the concerns raised in the public consultation meetings about silicosis and its potential long-term health threats.

It is noted that the Project will follow WH&S protocols for its truck drivers in regards to working with silica sand. How will the proponents safeguard children, school staff and community members' health in the district when wind blows fine silica sand particles up to a 10 km radius of the mine?

Both the issue of the Silica sand and the existence of the school are rarely mentioned and downplayed, presumably deliberately to mislead and deceive persons responsible for assessing this proposal and anyone else reading the proposal or subjected to its impact. Most everyday people do not understand the terminology used. So, this is a misrepresentation of facts and Tattersall's spokesperson was caught out at a public meeting, by local air quality scientists who derided the spokespersons generalisations as inaccurate.

The school and local residents have tank and bore water only. We are not on town water. The mine will likely affect the local water table due to the depth of the mine. So coupled with concerns of airborne silica dust poisoning, there are real concerns about contaminated drinking water or even toxic compounds in the local water.

The proponents state that the water flow from dredging 15 m below sea level will occur towards the north of the mine back to Tilligerry Creek. That means it will flow back towards the school and we will potentially be flooded with salt water throughout the year. So the water issue needs further investigation. Any potentially affected residents would likely need to be connected to town water at significant cost. Realistically, such infrastructure should be put in place by the proponents before any activity at the proposed mine commences. We don't want a situation such as Williamstown water contamination disaster down the track with people dying of preventable diseases. We should have learnt from this environmental disaster and not be allowing a sand mine of this magnitude to be built in Port Stephens.

We have several special needs students who attend Bobs Farm Public school, due to its nurturing, quiet, rural, family like atmosphere with passionate teachers, who understand and support their families. It is not a satisfactory option to just send them to another school if this sand mine goes ahead.

Loss of Tourism and associated jobs in the Port Stephens vicinity would also negate the casual truck driving jobs proposed by the Project. The projected profits for Ammos, the project proponent, is forecast at \$69 million dollars. They will not pay royalties to the State Government as sand is not categorised as a mineral.

The Bobs Farm Sand mine proposal is to mine a stable and ancient sand dune ridge covered in Swamp Sclerophyll forest with endangered native wildlife which is irreplaceable. The ridge can never be replaced and the devastation on the air quality, water quality, noise pollution, loss of native habitat, acid sulphate soils, huge increase of double dog trucks laden with silica sand and traffic issues could be catastrophic.

Another issue is the policing of truck movements. There are already illegal truck movements on Marsh Rd which has a 3 Ton load limit. Will the State government commit to a transparent and escalated enforcement regime on Marsh road traffic if the mine goes ahead?

Nelson Bay Rd and its users will be severely negatively impacted with the onslaught of 180 additional double dog trucks movements each way every day, in addition to the other sand mine operations in progress. Will the company be spending their profits to maintain the road? There is only one road in and out of the Bay. The tourist season will be a nightmare as Nelson Bay Rd is a bottleneck as tourists flood Port Stephens in the summer and special weekends. Many tourists will eventually stay away and go elsewhere - another foreseeable loss of employment in the local area – significantly outweighing the possible creation of a few sand mining jobs.

The trucks loaded with silica sand and traffic will bank up along Marsh Rd and affect children travelling, walking, bicycle riding, busing and parent drop off and pick up zones from school - Also traffic flows downhill at 80kph on Nelson Bay Rd making it a another very dangerous scenario as the double trucks enter the main road hauling sand. To introduce the significant numbers of large sand laden trucks in this traffic environment is not consistent with safe school zone principles and is fraught with danger.

The health, safety, economic and social risks of this sand mine are extremely high:

- Silica dust
- Water contamination to a community who rely 100% on ground and tank water
- Huge increase in heavy vehicle traffic – and the associated risks to other road users, the public and students risks – as 180 or more truck movements in and 180 or more truck movements out each and every day happen only 8 metres from a successful and innovative primary school with a rich 150 year history
- Increased industrial noise levels in a beautiful pristine, historically rural, hobby farm area
- Likely local job losses far exceeding the few sand mine jobs created
- Increased damage to local roads, infrastructure and environment due to increased vehicle movements

It really is incredible to even consider the project which could become a massive environmental and community catastrophe. Please do not approve this sand mine.