

James Faulkner

756 Marsh Road, Bobs Farm. 2316.

This is my personal submission OPPOSING the approval of the Bobs Farm Sand Mine Project proposed by AMMOS RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PTY LTD in collaboration with Tattersall Lander Pty Ltd.

Background.

My wife and I have been long-term residents at Bobs Farm since the mid-late 1980's and have raised our family at my home at 756 Marsh Road, Bobs Farm. My property is approximately 30 metres to the west of Bobs Farm School and shares two boundaries to the south and the west with property identified by AMMOS RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PTY LTD as Mining Site land. All of my four children went to Bobs Farm School. The proposed egress point of heavy vehicle mine traffic is about 100 metres from the front corner of my house block, to the east. The internal roadway for this heavy vehicle mine traffic runs parallel to my east boundary from the south-eastern corner northward for approximately 100 metres, only 30 metres from my fence line. This internal roadway has been built up to be approximately 1.2 metres above the pre-existing ground level (and the level of my neighbour's and my land). I already receive dust fallout frequently from heavy vehicles traversing this route, and the construction of the roadway and filling of the land around it has altered the natural surface water runoff adversely affecting my property and my neighbour's. I have lived with this for the time being in the light of trying to be good neighbours.

In my travels to and from home 98% of trips involve going through the intersection of Marsh Road and Nelson Bay Road about 200-odd metres from my driveway, to the east. Over the years I have had the odd occasion where trucks entering or exiting Hay Enterprises driveway (the proposed Mine Site heavy vehicle egress point and light vehicle entry/exit point) have caused issues of concern, and I have witnessed near misses that have occurred. The Go-Karts driveway next door to there has created similar problems, particularly in peak tourist seasons.

I have no town-water supply provided to us, nor sewer, and so rely on rainwater catchment for household purposes and bore-water for stock watering, gardens and many other uses not able to be met by limited tank-water supplies. In drought times this bore-water supply becomes all the more important to us, and if needed would supplement my drinking water supply after being filtered/treated. My rainwater catchment is the roof of my house, and the quality of that water is dependant on air quality, as dust and debris that lands on my roof contaminates my drinking water.

I moved to Bobs Farm 32 or more years ago to escape the 'rat-race' of Anna Bay. I yearned the 'quiet life' and wanted to live a life in peace and harmony with the environment, supplementing my pantries with home grown produce and home-reared livestock. This is all in jeopardy as an inappropriate, unsustainable development is being proposed that threatens not only my happy lifestyle, but the whole community around us. My health and wellbeing are under threat, the choice for a country school education for my grandchildren is in doubt, my safety on the roads is becoming less and less secure, and the lovely environment surrounding us is being plundered by a few greedy outsiders at the expense of those of us who have loved and cherished this area for decades.

Specific Items of Concern.

- The “Need” for this proposed development is Profit, for only a few, not the Community. It is a proposal to extract (as stated by Robert Lander at a Community Meeting) “Hundreds of Millions of dollars’ worth of material out of the mine site” over the life of the mine. The beneficiary of this massive cash haul will be Ammos Resource Management Pty Ltd, and in the short term, those such as Tattersall Lander Pty Ltd and other paid consultant firms. There will only be a small handful of ancillary workers taking salaries back to local families. The rest will go elsewhere.
- The nature of the proposal is out of character with the surrounding area, which consists mainly of semi-rural and rural pursuits, small agricultural operations, tourist developments, and lifestyle seekers seeking a ‘tree-change’ lifestyle. The proposed mine is in direct conflict with these pursuits, for example the (2014) approved DP for Eco-Cabins on Nelson Bay Road adjacent to, or almost adjacent to the proposed mine site.
- The potential for adverse environmental impacts..... this could become an Endless list of concerns. (1) Groundwater interference – the proposal is to dredge to -15m AHD, or simply put, 15 metres below the Australian Height datum which is a mark set at about 0.00m above/below mean sea level (Australian Government – Geoscience Australia - Geodetic Datums and Projections). The proposal is to dredge approx. 15 metres below mean sea level, thereby having a dramatic affect on the water table, not only in the immediate vicinity of the mine, but for a huge area of surrounding land. No other sand mines in the region are allowed to operate closer than 1 to 2 metres ABOVE the existing water table, and this sand mine, if approved, should not be allowed to either. In addition to this, the aquifer for Hunter Water exists directly across the road (Nelson Bay Road, to the south), so the potential for disruption and contamination of that aquifer is significant, if not assured. Other elements of the environmental impact are also disturbing. There will be wholesale stripping of vegetation, topsoil, animal and birdlife habitat, with NO proposal to rehabilitate the area to pre-mined status or anything remotely resembling it. A huge salt-water dam, unable to support much of the previous wildlife, will remain. The air quality will be dramatically affected, with few mature trees remaining as a natural filter and producing Oxygen, and during the life of the mine, much bare sandy ground with machinery and vehicles producing fine dust to disperse over the surrounding landscape (and properties). Fine particulate silica dust is a known carcinogen. There are too many more environmental issues to discuss in this submission, but all of them are significant.
- Traffic and Noise – These issues raise some serious concerns. The proposed egress point for heavy, fully laden trucks with dogs (trailers) is on Marsh Road, 25 – 30 metres from the Bobs Farm Public School, and within the School 40kph safety zone. Port Stephens Council, in their response to the DGRs request, stated that they object to the use of Marsh Road as an egress point for heavy vehicles as it is a huge safety issue due to its proximity to the School. The route the heavy vehicles must take to get to this egress point is parallel to my east boundary for 100m, then across the back (south) boundary fence of the School, then parallel with the School’s eastern boundary, separated by a narrow residence (about 25m wide), before exiting onto Marsh Road in the School Zone. At present, the movement of heavy, fully laden trucks through this route shakes the School buildings, my residence, and my neighbours’ residences. The movement of heavy machinery such as excavators exacerbates this situation. These movements also create dust issues for us and, depending on the wind

direction, impact on my water quality. This situation will worsen 20-fold or more if this mine is approved. This is Not Acceptable. The traffic described above is only a tiny proportion of the total traffic impact that will be created by this proposed development. The impacts on Nelson Bay Road, and the intersection of Marsh Road and Nelson Bay Road and the roundabout at the end of Port Stephens Drive, Nelson Bay Road, are of particular concern. Any adverse impacts on Nelson Bay Road has the potential to affect the appeal of the area to tourists, who are the lifeblood of the Port Stephens area. It is stated by the group "Destination Port Stephens" that tourists spend an estimated \$539million in the local economy, attracting almost 1.6million visitors per year. Any proposed development that jeopardises that should not be approved, at all. The proposed sand mine is in the 'Gateway to Port Stephens'. The safety and Wellbeing of motorists, both locals and my visitors, should not suffer from a proposal that benefits so few.

- Socio-economic, health and Wellbeing, and other impacts – This brings me to the future prospects of the Bobs Farm School. Anecdotaly, I have heard that some/a few parents have withdrawn their children from this school with the prospects of this mining proposal going ahead. I have also heard that the proponents actively seek to create a feeling of uncertainty over the future of the school to reduce the student numbers to the point that the Education Dept will close the school, thereby reducing opposition to the mine's existence. To actively seek this sort of impact on a Community is scurrilous, unconscionable, and underhanded, but it is plausible that it is occurring. Parents, local residences, and visitors alike, will consider health and Wellbeing impacts of a certain area. Those of us living here are stuck with the environment I live in. Those wishing to visit may reconsider. Let's not make it worse for us for the sake of lining someone else's pockets.

DO NOT APPROVE THIS SAND MINE PROPOSAL, please.

If approved, this proposal MUST be radically modified to;

- Not mine to or below the water table.
- Not use Marsh Road in ANY of its traffic plan and compensate any residents and the School for any adverse impacts created on them. This must include noise mitigation/insulation for all affected properties, dust incursion measures including sealing and air-conditioning of premises, and water filtration systems for drinking water catchment facilities and associated pumping systems (silica dust is extremely abrasive to pumping equipment). This may/should also include measures to provide for stock watering, garden maintenance and ancillary water usage if bore-water becomes un-usable.
- There must also be measures to remediate any damage to properties for vibration/ground movement damage (as has been the case in the upper Hunter Valley around existing Coal Mines). Anyone sustaining damages due to traffic created by the mining proposal MUST retain the right to litigate the proponent/s to the full extent of the law for damages incurred.
- Any effects on the social infrastructure of the area, in particular the Bobs Farm School, must allow for recourse against the proponent/s for added costs to the education, transport, and psycho-social impacts on affected families with school-aged children attending, or planning to attend the Bobs Farm School for, during and after the life of the mining project.
- Any property/properties affected adversely by the mining proposal, causing the occupants to wish to move from the area, should be purchased by the proponent/s at an agreed market value set or valued prior to the development application being publicly displayed (i.e. prior to Nov/Dec 2018 or earlier), as property values will be adversely affected by the

presence or the proposed presence of the mining development. This MUST be an AGREED value.

The above points should be NOT NEGOTIABLE amendments to the conditions placed on the mining project if the proposal is passed. I stand firm on these conditions and am prepared to take further action if the proposal is passed and these conditions not met.

Thank you for receiving my submission.

James Faulkner.