

ATTENTION: MELISSA ANDERSON
DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND ENVIRONMENT
GPO BOX 39
SYDNEY NSW 2001

31 January 2019

Dear Melissa,

Re: Bobs Farm Sand Mine Project (SSD 6395)

Property: LOT: 254 DP753204, LOT: 51 DP1015671, LOT: 10 DP1071458
3631 Nelson Bay Road, Bobs Farm

Reference is made to the above State Significant Development application which is currently being assessed.

Council objects to the proposed development for the reasons outlined in this submission. A summary of the key issues associated with the proposed sand mine is provided below:

- Traffic and safety concerns
- Proximity to the Bobs Farm School
- Impacts on ground water
- Environmental and ecological concerns
- Public Interest

These issues are discussed in more detail below.

TRAFFIC AND SAFETY CONCERNS AND PROXIMITY TO BOBS FARM SCHOOL

Council have a number of traffic and safety concerns in relation to the exit route being along Marsh Road. The proposed operations are located within close proximity to the Bobs Farm School and the proposed haulage route will see heavy vehicles exiting the site into a school zone. In this regard, the proposed haulage route will directly conflict with local and school traffic and raises significant vehicular and pedestrian safety concerns.

IMPACTS ON GROUND WATER

Local land holders have approached Council raising significant concerns with the potential impact of the proposed sand mine on the ground water. The ground water is likely to be affected by the mining activity which could threaten the quality and flow of the aquifer. The importance of the groundwater at the proposed site is due to its location within the Stockton Sandbed Aquifer. This aquifer is important in supporting local agriculture and vegetation, and also provides a backup water source for the supply of Grahamstown Dam in the event of future water shortages. This groundwater aquifer has potential interactions with the neighbouring Tomago Sandbed Aquifer, which supplies 20 % of the lower Hunter's drinking water.

Further, it is understood that potential acid sulfate soils have been recorded on site. Considering the proposed interaction with groundwater that is connected to the drinking water catchment, extractive activities that interact with the groundwater are considered to have a high risk of potentially serious impacts. This could impact on the viability of the surrounding rural land uses and is not acceptable.

ENVIRONMENT AND ECOLOGY

A number of representations have been made to Councillors raising concerns with the potential environmental and ecological impacts associated with the proposed development and the rehabilitation of the site following the end of the quarrying activities.

Council staff have reviewed the proposal and have provided its comments to the Department. Those comments highlight deficiencies in the ecological assessment and Council, through this submission, wishes to reiterate those comments and request that a full and thorough ecological assessment be provided.

Further, it is noted that the proposed rehabilitation plan lacks detail and significant concern is raised that the mining activities will leave a void that will remain in perpetuity and would have lasting legacy issues within the area. This is not considered to be an acceptable outcome.

PUBLIC INTEREST

For the reasons noted above, and noting the number of representations made to Council from the community raising concerns with respect to noise impacts and air quality, the application is not considered to be in the public interest. These concerns are exacerbated due to the close proximity of the proposed development to the Bobs Farm School site.

Should you require any further information in relation to this matter or have any questions, please contact me on the details below.



Yours sincerely,

Ryan Palmer
MAYOR OF PORT STEPHENS

31 January 2019

Telephone enquiries
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Please quote file no: 25-2018-8-1

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