



If it's going to be – it's up to me!

BOBS FARM PUBLIC SCHOOL

764 Marsh Road

BOBS FARM 2316

Phone: 02 4982 1179 Fax: 02 4982 1982

Email: bobsfarm-p.schools@det.nsw.edu.au

Website: www.bobsfarm-p.schools.nsw.edu.au

Principal: Megan Elliott B.A., M.Ed. Stud

I wish to register my objections to the Bobs Farm Sand Mine going ahead for the following reasons;

The proposed state significant sand mine will extract and process approx. 750,000 tonnes of sand per annum over fifteen years, and transporting the extracted materials off site via local roads starting 8 meters from the local Bobs Farm Public School. Site access throughout the life of the project would be off Nelson Bay Rd with egress via Marsh Rd and back onto Nelson Bay Rd. It is noted that there are two egress points onto Marsh Rd from this development. Consequently it could be surmised that these double dog trucks laden with stage 3 and 4 Silica sand will encircle the school that has existed for 100 years. 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. Silica, a component of the sand proposed to be mined is a known carcinogen. How can you contemplate 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.

Bobs Farm Public School is the focal point of the community. The school and the adjacent Community Hall are highly significant focal points for the community. Threaten the school with a massive sand mine behind it and you destroy the community. If the sand mine goes ahead, the enrolments would drastically reduce due to fear of serious health issues. Casual and temp school staff would have to find positions elsewhere, negating the 8 proposed on site jobs in the mine. It should be noted that there are currently 13 people employed at the school in various capacities. Additionally in any given year another 6 or more casual teachers are employed.

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? The proponents' advise "impacts **will generally** not exceed acceptable limits and that overall, dust is **not expected** to be a nuisance." To say that **generally** it will be **low** impact is unacceptable. Dust sources within the site will be numerous, including removed and stockpiled top soil, excavation activities, screening, sand stockpiling, exposed batters and work faces, loading of trucks and internal tracks and work areas. It is not practical for suggested water spraying to cover these areas and therefore dust particles and eventually silica dust particles carried more than 10km radius off site is very high.

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. The DA or EIS only mentions sand component particle size and sand mined would be used for LED TV etc. and does not specifically state that the sand needed to make LED TV's is Silica. Most lay 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 "old hat". The Tattersalls spokesperson did not understand the detrimental effect of silica or how to measure it! Even though the sand mine proponent authored the alleged community consultation summary, the anger and disbelief of the community members present, towards this irresponsible sand mine proposal, is still evident.

The school and local residents have tank and bore water only. We are not on town water. There is not only the fear of air born silica dust poisoning but drinking water poisoning. The water issue needs further investigation and all affected residents should be connected to town water before the mine could be contemplated and this should be paid for by the proponents of the mine who are contaminating the air and water. We don't want a situation such as Williamstown water contamination down the track with people dying of preventable diseases.

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. See Community Consultation meeting.

The curriculum teaches children Sustainability in our World, we have entered students in to Hunter Water competitions, Council Environmental Awards, Heritage competitions and won many accolades. How do we explain to children in all the local schools, that a huge silica sand mine gets the go- ahead next door to a school playground?

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. These children have special needs and their needs are being disregarded completely. 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 Nelson Bay vicinity would also negate the casual truck driving jobs proposed by the Project. Instead of "Welcome to Blue Water Wonderland," sign, it will be "Welcome to Silica City!" at the gateway to Port Stephens. 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. It is stated there will be 8 new on site jobs and casual truck driver jobs, who could be employed at the many other sand mines in the area who mine Stockton Beach dunes which are moving dunes. 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 is already illegal truck movements on Marsh Rd which has a 3 Ton load limit. They go past the school, which vibrates and the noise makes teaching difficult and announcements and assembly time outside is impossible while they move past. It is not the responsibility of the school to report these illegal trucks but who will police a Sand Mine and their truck movements? What transparency and enforcement will there be on the mine when it is in progress?

Nelson Bay Rd and its users will be severely negatively impacted with the onslaught of 200 additional double dog big rig 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 they wreak havoc on? Will the sand mine company pay for ambulances, tow trucks, police, and other services and medical costs to persons injured or killed in road crashes if these additional trucks are the cause. The traffic statements as indicated in the proposal are extremely misleading and deceptive because the four lanes further west along Nelson Bay Rd merge back into a one lane each way undivided road which extends for several kilometres before reaching a narrow and dangerous bridge across Tilligerry Creek. Additionally there are already many other sand mine trucks which turn onto and off this undivided road which the traffic study ignores. As it is, this is an extremely dangerous section of road, which will be made far more dangerous.

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. There is only one road in and out of the Bay! Or will tourists eventually stay away and go elsewhere- so up to 8 new jobs! What about everyone else affected negatively!

The trucks loaded with silica sand and traffic will bank up along Marsh Rd and affect children travelling, walking, bicycle riding, bussing 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 risks of this sand mine are potentially extremely high; silica dust, water contamination to a community who rely 100% on ground and tank water, 180 or more truck movements in and 180 or more truck movements out each and every day 8 metres from a successful and innovative primary school, amplified industrial noise levels in a beautiful pristine, historically rural, hobby farm area is madness to even contemplate!

Attached is a recent YouTube video of our Bobs Farm Public School celebrating 100 years of quality public Education with its community. Compare this to the aerial photo of a proposed silica sand mine behind a school on the door steps of Port Stephens, which will only benefit Ammos and its few shareholders who could not make a go of their fig farm or so greedy that it doesn't matter destroying everything around the community where they use to live due to greed, but sadly where people still do live and make an honest living in a quiet, rural, eco-tourism environment. This is not progress, but greed and madness, where the proponents have paid for reports to favour their cause.

This proposed sand mine surrounding Bobs Farm Public School will be a catastrophe in waiting if it goes ahead on so many fronts as argued already!