

21<sup>st</sup> March, 2022

## Objection to

### Proposed Maroota Friable Sandstone Extraction Project – Hill Shire

Application No.: SSD-10410

To Whom It May Concern:

This letter is to **object** the proposed establishment of a quarry to be located Lot 7005 DP 1055724; Lot 202 DP 752025; and Lot 213 DP 752025 located at Wisemans Ferry Road, Maroota.

1. **Failure to inform:** As a nearby resident (2 Mornington View, Maroota) noted in the proposal as being impacted by this quarry, I want to firstly let you know that we have NOT received any communication or notification of this proposal. As a directly impacted resident of such a huge and signification proposal that will bring negative consequences both to our quality of life and loss of property value that will come with residing in such close proximity to a sand mine, there appears to have been a purposeful failure to inform, we, impacted community members. I have only stumbled upon this and nobody that I know in the community seems to have received notification that would provide a fair opportunity to make a submission. We purchased this property 18-months ago and prior to purchase we examined the proximity to the mines and enquired to The Hills Council of any new mines earmarked in the area. I was told there were no plans for a new mine. We also identified a new subdivision (FR4-FR10) on the road that the rear of our property opens to and given the infrastructure there and that Council told us there were no mines, we believed that the current ridges provided a sufficient buffer to mines.
2. **Noise and safety proximity:** Currently, at our home at Mornington View (noted as a receiver of noise) we can **already** hear the jackhammering from the existing PF Formation Sand Mines. However, this proposed mine will be located much closer, a stone's throw from the rear of our property/community land, and will significantly increase both the noise heard at our home and silica dust particles in our air, given that our current 'buffer' will be gone. We work from home and daily extraction activities in such close proximity will impact our ability to maintain a tranquil place to focus on work. Our back gate opens to the road that will be the boundary for the proposed mine, and is the road our family, and the local children explore on their bikes – the well-established road leading to future residential sites developments including FR04, FR05, FR06, FR07, FR08, FRO9, and FR10. I'm concerned about the health and safety of our children riding their bikes this close to a sand mine, given silica dust particles in the air.

Rather than our homes having the current buffer of 2-3 ridges, this proposed mine will occupy and extract from these very ridges that currently provide noise and silica dust buffers. I do not believe that a proposal that encroaches upon residential

homes, and areas approved for residential homes, is appropriate or considerate to local residents given that there are many other ridges that could be mined instead. The areas behind PF Formation is a logical alternative that would see the expansion of mining area leading into the vast bushland and that would not impact the community with regards to noise and air pollution and the devaluing of property values. I suggest that rather than the consideration of the distance of haul through the mine and the inconvenience to truck drivers and mining personnel as the priority with regards to the location of the extraction plant and mine, the adverse impact to residents should be of paramount consideration. Even if there is an additional cost to the mining applicant for the establishment of mining to occur in areas that do not involve the encroachment upon and adverse consequence to residences.

3. **Road quality and Road Safety:** The submitted Traffic Crash Report is grossly misleading and deceptive with regards to the dangers brought by double sand trucks on our local roads of Old Northern Road and Wisemans Ferry Road. The report provided a *significantly reduced* and limited scope with figures only given to short distances from the proposed site intersection at Patricia Fay Drive on Wisemans Ferry Road merely to Cliftonville Road, Maroota; and on Old Northern Road to the short distance to Roberts Road, Maroota and Canoelands Road. However, these roads are not the trucks' 'final destination' – nor close to the closest major (double laned) road they travel on. Therefore, the report does not include the road safety and crashes involving or cause by trucks on these roads.

The reality is double trucks haul heavy sand loads on Wisemans Ferry road/Cattai Road, through Maroota, South Maroota, Cattai, Pitt Town, McGrath's Hill to Windsor Road – through winding inclines and declines including near Riverside Oaks, which is notorious for crashes and near-misses. **In the last year that we have resided in Maroota there have been THREE double Sand Trucks that have OVERTUNED on corners**, two of them were on this route. One was in Pitt Town enroute to Maroota, and the most recent case overturned in Maroota on the corner near the Stonehouse Café, subsequently spilling its sand load. In both circumstances, it was only luck that other vehicles had not passed at that precise moment.

Likewise, another double sand truck also overturned on the Old Northern Road route to Glenorie, in Forest Glen, spilling its load – making it the third sand truck overturn crash in the last year. The Old Northern Road route *does not* end at Canoelands Road as the parameters of the safety report would lead some to believe. It's ridiculous to select only this small portion to report on, given the trucks must travel about 20-minutes on a winding single lanes road until Glenorie – often exceeding the speed limit or not slowing for corners. Then they continue through Middle Dural, Dural, past Cherrybrook to Pennant Hills Road - be it at more controlled speeds due to concentrated traffic. Notably, it is the 20-minutes journey from Patricia Fay Drive to Glenorie that makes for a heart-jumping commute with my children for the morning

school drop off, for which close calls with trucks crossing the centre lines on bends, exceeding the 90km/hr speed limit or tail-gaiting is common.

The proposal of adding 100-120 trucks per day, means there will be approximately 200-220 truck journeys adding to the existing quantity and frequency, thus increasing the frequency of risk of trucks overturning or driving other vehicles off the road. The proposed mine is *significantly* larger in scope, capacity and production leading to a *significant* increased number of trucks traveling these roads – other mines are permitted about 30 truck per day, so this is a massive jump, which is certain to result in fatalities. Both my husband and I grew up in the area, with our families still living in Canoelands and Forest Glen areas – we are aware of the on-going issue and that we all have faced incidences of been run off the roads by trucks, if by nothing else than crossing the centre line on corners.

Just this morning (22.03.2022 at 10:10am) I had to call 000 while driving from Roberts Road to Glenorie to report the reckless and aggressive driving of one of the double-truck and trailer that continually drove aggressively to intimidate, for the entire 15-minutes' drive to Glenorie Village. No regard to the two child car seats in the back of the car he was endangering, tailgating to enforce through intimidation driver to exceed the speed limit to try and create a safer distance, only for continued tailgating at the higher speed and sounding the horn in excess when approaching Glenorie town. His behaviour could be heard by the police over the phone. While this behaviour was extreme, we car drivers are often intimidated each day on these roads by huge trucks crossing the centrelines and tailgating.

The road quality on Old Northern Road, in particular, cannot handle the current level of travel and a lack of maintenance is frequently an issue with enormous and deep potholes that force trucks and cars to cross the centre lines. This proposal aims to significantly increase the number of sand trucks by an additional 200-240 truck journeys each day; however, does not address the need for the entire stretch of Old Northern Road to be upgraded. The applicant of this proposal only states an upgrade of the road at the intersection on Patricia Fay Drive and Wisemans Ferry Road – this is not the area of danger for road users, the rest of the road to Glenorie is what the application should look to upgrade. There should be a commitment to make safe the rest of the road.

- 4. No intention to Rehabilitate the land.** While The Hills DCP provides the parameters for the requirement to rehabilitate the land, the proposal states: *“Given that the Maroota Sands Project is classified as a State Significant Development, there is no requirement to meet these provisions, however the Rehabilitation Strategy will be prepared in accordance with the requirements.”* The proposal states it does not intend to rehabilitate the land, as the State Government does not require it to; therefore, this whole rehabilitation document is merely to submit paperwork that gives the ‘appearance of a strategy’ and ticks a fake box. There is no intention or

commitment to rehabilitate, which is the pattern for Maroota Sand Mines that tend to leave piles like a dumpsite. I ask Council to provide any evidence and photographs that indicated that any previous sand extraction site has been successfully rehabilitated that would indicate rehabilitation in this case. The Hills Council should be putting the pressure on the State Government to shift to *require* land rehabilitation before approving further destruction of our land, particularly in today's day and age with all we know about Climate Change and our need to change our ways. When the state government can demonstrate and provide evidence that previously mined area in Maroota have been given the respect of the beginning of significant land rehabilitation – then The Hills Council can consider further mines in the area. Otherwise, council's DCP is worthless, as noted in the applicant's rehabilitation document.

Let it be noted that 18-months ago we bought into the Mornington View 'Community Title' property of which our native bushland (a stones through from the proposed mine) has been placed under very strict requirements from The Hills Council not to use this bushland in order to allow the native bushland to regenerate and ensure we protect for native flora and fauna, we are required to employ the services of an ecologist to oversee this conservation work on an on-going basis. This is the case for all community title subdivisions in the area. However, we find it is hypocritical and a real slap in the face for The Hill Council to require this standard to residential property owners on relatively miniscule properties, in comparison, if they are to permit such expansive total decimation of the same area land and flora, used by the same fauna.

In conclusion, while I have raised a number of issues in this objection and I certainly hope that The Hills Council exercise a capacity to find workable solutions for further mining that is respectful for our 'Garden Shire's' land and is considerate to local community residents who are impacted. I do not believe that the applicant's proposed location is suitable for a mine given the close proximity to residential homes and properties. It will have an adverse impact on our quality of life – significantly increase the noise from the mines that we can already hear, reduce the air quality for our family with silica dust particles, all which reduces our property value. We would not have purchased this property 18-months ago if we knew there was to be a sand mine in such close proximity to our residence. Mining the land behind the current mines of PF Formation is a more appropriate location as it does not further impose and adversely impact residential homes, as it's an expansion toward the bushland wilderness, not residential homes.

I also believe that The Hills Council needs to address the issue of 'requiring and enforcing' rehabilitation of the land of all sand mines in the area with the State Government before The Hills Council permits further disrespectful decimation of our native land, with no intent to rehabilitate. It is appropriate to hold companies to the same standard placed on residences with regards to land care. If we are required to employ the services of an ecologist to oversee the regeneration of our land, then it is

only appropriate that the State Government makes this a requirement also. I do not believe any further mines should be approved until the state government resolves this loophole and provides evidence that rehabilitation has occurred or is occurring at previous sand mines in Maroota. It's irresponsible and hypocritical for council not to firmly address this issue.

My husband and I, **firmly objection** to this proposal of this supersized sand extraction mine.

Regards,

Jacqueline Cain