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Castle - Collins Sands

## **Cabbage Tree rd, Sandmine**

I am opposed to this sand mine and I am opposed to it on many different levels, not just because it will devalue my already near worthless contaminated property two doors up, not just because it will lead to an untenable situation for myself and my parents, who live also just up the road along with all my friends and neighbours getting on and off the road, not just because of the threat of silica dust wafting over my place and not just because of the noise increase. I am opposed to this sand mine first and foremost because the entire process for instigating this sand mine was done so without any form of consultation with the people who would be most affected by it's operation.

It was done in a manner which would minimise any form of scrutiny and objection with little if any need to reference the suffering imposed on anyone in the vicinity or the lack of financial return due.

The fault here lies within the Port Stephens Council, an organisation which is in place to look after the people in this area, but one which took a quick cash grab above human beings as it's directive.

The lack of concern over us has not been limited however to people living in this area, it has extended as far as all of the rate payers of Port Stephens and anyone visiting this area.

This cash grab gives back as little as 0.108% return on the estimated value of this asset, that's like a farmer who has a cow worth \$1,000 getting \$1.08 for it and then having the buyer being able to leave any bits they do not want on his property. That's correct this is nowhere near a good deal for PSC or the people of the council area and indeed for this state. The revenue from this asset should be returned into infrastructure which benefits all, not 5. An example of how this should have played out is in a comparable valued asset recently sold by the state government, The Port of Newcastle, sold for \$1.7b and \$600m returned to Newcastle council. At the states own return of revenue calculations Port Stephen's Council should be getting back \$500m and in a lump sum not trickled out over 15 years or so from the asset sale profits.

Yes It IS a good deal for the company planning to dig it up and flog it off, but not for anyone else.

All they have to do is scrape off the top bit, which can be left behind if they don't want to run it through a separator, dig up and load onto trucks the clean stuff underneath. Hardly a process worth a mark-up of nearly 1000%.

There is also a question of this companies being able to operate within the area without being true to the rules. The company given the lease was Castle Quarry Products, (whose manager was the best man at the mayor's sons wedding and low and behold is now a director of this mob), that company he led was evicted from their last location and were given the lease without even meeting the tender requirements. From the start the rules were being bent and we residents left out in the cold. Even at council meetings some councillors expressed their views on this process, Cr Tucker even described the whole thing as "Smelly".

Further to this at a meeting with WSS at the Sir Frances drake I asked if they were open to assisting the most affected residents in some way. Their response was "well what would you want" my reply was well as a start would you look at some sound attenuation at the front of those houses near the entrance like double glazing their front of house windows. We left the meeting with an impression that this would indeed be a possibility only to get a letter in the mail with a flat out NO to any form of assistance to anyone around the sand mine. At their first opportunity to show their intentions WSS showed that their profits were their motivation and nothing else. In other words The proposed sand mine operators are not going afford any community benefit local or state.

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You see we have levels of government which are there to provide the best outcomes for the people of the area, the state and the nation. This is a case where the project was too large for the local council and they should not have been able to make a determination which was beyond their capabilities.

I have been told that this sand mine is to be determined on a state significance benefit base. If that is in fact true then there can be no other decision other than to deny the operation.

We have been told that there will be no extra truck on the road, ie no extra jobs overall just a shifting from one supplier to another.

We have been told this is silica sand for glass production. There is already an abundance of glass now, so much so that it is being stockpiled after being sorted in recycling plants. We have a glut of useable product now.

The argument is that it is cheaper to produce new glass than recycling, once again a company financial benefit not a community or state benefit. Actually it is to our states detriment as the stockpiles will have to go somewhere even into landfill sites.

There is no state benefit to this particular sand mine there is only a personal company benefit accompanying local community detriment, distress and hardship

I am not here to ask you to deliver an outcome against a sand mine. I am here to ask you to deliver an outcome which is as common sense would dictate against a flawed proposal which does not benefit the State of New South Wales. This asset belongs to Port Stephens Council and in turn NSW and the benefits must go back into the state of NSW in the form of public benefitting infrastructure.

It will not happen if this company is given a green light. I urge you to think about this when making your decision, is this a true benefit in it's entirety or just allowing unscrupulous profiteering at everyone else's expense. Thank you