From: [redacted]
To: IPCN Enquiries Mailbox
Cc: IPCN Enquiries Mailbox
Subject: Cabbage Tree Road Sand Quarry (SSD 6125)-D500/18
Date: Monday, 5 March 2018 3:37:23 PM
Attachments: Cabbage Tree Road Truck Movements 310717.xlsx

Dear Sir/Madam,

I wish to make the following submission to the Planning Assessment Commission re: the above sand quarry.

Air Quality:

The study was carried out with 3.1m/s winds and as we regularly experience W/NW winds of over 70kmh, i.e.>20m/s, these results and the subsequent conclusions are wildly inaccurate. Obviously water sprays will need to be used to control dust and windblown sand as at other bulk handling /mining facilities, however, this water will no doubt be sourced from the subsurface aquifers which could possibly contain PFAS.

Employment:

The employment argument for the project is weak, as this is another physically large scale operation for very few permanent positions.

Traffic:

While the actual quarrying operation may have little impact on the ambient noise level, the noise from the accelerating fully laden sand trucks travelling up the merging lane in Cabbage Tree Road will result in a definite increase to ambient noise levels. And I believe an additional condition if the project is approved is the erection of noise abatement barriers for those residents opposite the truck accelerating/decelerating zones to reduce this noise, as is currently the accepted practice along many roads and motorways.

The study states there will be 63 trucks per day entering and exiting the quarry via the new intersection which allows only a left turn on exiting, i.e. eastern travel only. Now it also identifies that 40% will be travelling to Sydney and the Central Coast, 36% to the Maitland Area and 24% to Newcastle and the Lake Macquarie Area. Based on these figures and current sand truck movements, it is reasonable to assume say half of the Newcastle and Lake Macquarie trucks will travel via Kooragang Island and the rest, together with all the other trucks will have to travel up to the Nelson Bay Road Roundabout and then come back down Cabbage Tree Road to travel to their destinations. This will therefore result in a total of not only the 63 trucks travelling east, but the 55 trucks that have travelled up to the roundabout and then come back down Cabbage Tree Road. So total truck movements in Cabbage Tree Road will increase by 118 per day. The study fails to acknowledge these dual movements and the noise they will generate.

These extra 118 truck movements will also affect traffic on Nelson Bay Road, the major arterial road in the Tilligerry Peninsula, as these truck will be required to use the roundabout at the intersection of Nelson Bay Road, Cabbage Tree Road and Lavis Lane to perform a U-turn to come back west on Cabbage Tree Road.

Also recently, other sand mines further up the Tilligerry Peninsula have applied for increased truck movement limits, again compounding the traffic volumes and noise.

Another real road safety concern to residents, and in fact other road users, especially those exiting Cabbage Tree Road to a private address involves trucks travelling too close to the car in front, whether it is the turning car or a car in the queue behind the turning vehicle. It is only a matter of time before a serious rear end shunt results from this behaviour. There have been several close calls to date, however the increased truck movement will only increase this risk.

A more sensible proposal for access to the site would be via the rear of the site, i.e. the northern side, using many of the existing roads used during previous mineral sand mining, resulting in the trucks entering and leaving via Masonite Road. This entry/exit is relatively remote from housing, and thus the vehicle noise problem would almost disappear, as would the dramatic increase in truck movements in Cabbage Tree Road.

Another possibility is the use of portable conveyors to transport the sand from the mine site to a truck loading facility at the rear of the site, and then again use the roads used during previous mineral sand mining, resulting in the trucks entering and leaving via Masonite Road.

Please see the attached spreadsheet of truck movements on Cabbage Tree Road I conducted on 31/07/2017. (Note this spreadsheet excludes trucks less than 5 tonnes, buses, tourist coaches, cars, vans and 4x4 vehicles.)

Vegetation:

The proposal in no way proposes to replace the existing environment. Where are the cycads, xanthorrhoeas, blandfordias and other unique plants referred to in the proposal? The reafforestation will result in yet another virtual mono culture, so typical of previous mining sites in NSW. The environmental offset to this proposal, is similar to most other environmental offsets in NSW. I believe most of these offsets are at best a token gesture to gain project approval. The offset in no way replaces the area destroyed.

Water:

The removal of the vegetation and the disturbing of the natural ground levels risks the possibility of flooding and further damage to the underlying aquifers which form part of the Hunter's water supply. A supply that is already in decline and compromised due to the shutting down of Hunter Water's Pump Stations 5, 7 and 9 due to PFAS concerns.

As PFAS disperse primarily via the surface water, will the lowering of the ground level affect this contamination spread as the ground level will be much lower and subject to possible inundation during adverse weather conditions? There also doesn't appear to be any allowance for predicted rising sea levels, or rain events similar to February 1990, where we received almost 500mm in 4 days, so where exactly is the base of the mine?

Wildlife:

The area is a well know koala habitat with koalas regularly sited and travelling across Cabbage Tree Road to the Eucalypts on surrounding properties on the southern, eastern and western side of the proposed quarry, and with declining koala numbers in NSW, this is a real concern to future koala survival in the wild.