

Kate Rochester

█ Cabbage Tree Road

Williamtown NSW 2318

Letter of Objection to the Proposed Williamtown Sand Mine

Application No. SSD6125

Letter of objection to the proposed Williamtown Sand Syndicate quarry Application No. SSD 6125

My Name is Kate Rochester and I strongly oppose the proposal for a sand mine operation at █ Cabbage Tree Road. I live █ the site, my family and I will be extremely adversely affected by all aspects of this proposed operation.

I will list my main objections under the following headings:

- * Noise
- * Pollution
- * Safety

Noise

Road traffic noise has been increasing in both duration and levels due to commercial developments at each end of our road (including the airport). Assuming a one way entry to the proposed site this would greatly increase the number and noise of traffic movements along the road. Empty trucks are noisier than fully loaded ones and with the use of air brakes etc to enter and leave the site directly opposite my driveway the noise will greatly impact on us.

Site operational noise - The proposed plan did not indicate the road pathways through the site just the exit. Trucks moving through the site together with the noise created by the operation itself will move directly towards us. The proposed "sound barrier" of 20 metres will be totally ineffective. The bush is a dry sclerophyll ie eucalypts with a base of ferns and small shrubs, grevillea, bottlebrush etc. This affords little protection from sound. With the proposed extension of the entry we will have no sound buffer at all – just trucks.

Airport noise - When the bush burnt in October 2013 the sounds from the airport could be heard much more distinctly than previously so removal of the bush for the mines operation will cause the same effect. Airport noise is expected to increase with more usage and the proposed F-35 fighter jet been stationed at RAAF Base Williamtown over time without the bush barrier that is currently there noise from this source will be amplified.

Pollution

Airborne materials - Dust, sand, vegetation particles made airborne due to mining operation itself together with dust created by trucks moving over gravel road must have an adverse effect on air quality. This was noticed after the fires when for months the slightest breeze picked up ash and other debris and carried it over the properties nearby. We are lucky to normally have breezes daily (many from the north east) but not if the breeze carries the wastes from an industrial site. These will cause respiratory problems among the old, very young and those like my granddaughter who are already experiencing breathing problems (asthma). Aside from good intention it is impossible to stop dust/silica from escaping the sand mine.

Water contamination -This area is already reeling from the RAAF contamination debacle (the "RED ZONE") Where does the mining company expect to source the water necessary for its operations, its workers etc? Surely not by the use of water trucks? From one of the many bores that appear to be located throughout the site? No the bores maybe contaminated and unusable even to wet down sand. From the Tomago sand bed one of Newcastle's main drink water sources? Any disturbance to the surface must impact on the ground water. At the moment the water table is only 10cm below the surface of our back paddock. The last rainfall caused widespread

flooding throughout the properties along Cabbage Tree Road and nearby areas. Although I realise that mining is not allowed below a certain depth but who will be there to monitor this? The mining would not be viable if it had to stop due to rain, flooding of the site, water table levels, contaminated water on the site etc (unfortunately our local farmers and fisherman have been stopped). There will be more water on this site the measured now due to the removal of vegetation. Each eucalypt removes an enormous amount of water from the soil daily. What will happen to this water if not drawn up by the vegetation but to either sit in the denuded area raising the water table and/or flow slowly due to gravitation over to surrounding properties including mine – Increasing my contamination risk. The problem of water contamination has not been fully explained or solved. More water flowing through from the vicinity of the airport is certainly not going to alleviate the situation. This is directly between us and the airport as water flows.

Safety

Cabbage tree Road has a 90 km/h speed limit. Most assume this is the **minimum** not maximum allowable speed. The demographic of traffic varies throughout the day. Greater proportion of trucks (empty) prior to 6.00am, smaller commercial trucks, cars, then buses (mainly tourists) throughout the day with large trucks (laden) and of course another influx in the later afternoon.

To access driveways is always a problem. The traffic following does not slow down particularly in line-ups as they simply overtake either side to pass a "slow" vehicle. With our driveway directly opposite to the proposed quarry entry I expect the situation will worsen with trucks entering and leaving, impatient drivers trying to get past the trucks as they leave who wants to sit behind a truck. There have been many incidents and near misses cars and trucks ending up over the road edges etc add to this what would appear to be a second lane and many more trucks in the area and this will be a disaster. Reducing the road speed limit would realistically be a waste of time as the majority of people using this road want to get from one end to the other in the shortest period of time.

I have read the proposal for this venture and realise that there are many factors and situations that have not been addressed, glossed over or in some cases offered "solutions" that are obviously severely flawed. It concerns me that the company has not fully analysed the effect of imposing a sand quarry in the middle of a semi-rural area.

The people here came to have their hobby farms, horses, cattle and sheep, their dogs, their chickens and vegetables etc – to become semi self sufficient. **Now** we can not use our vegetables, eggs, meat etc because they may be contaminated – being on town water and surface soil. If the surface contaminates them and us why is the sand over the road not contaminated? There is no logic.

Our lifestyle has been decimated by the contamination issue, our properties are (apparently) now worthless, we can't move away from this situation even if we wished. Yet you think it is in the public interest to allow this development.

Well Port Stephens Council may gain a financial advantage. Not that that will be passed on to this area in any way.

The owners of the Company (who don't live here) may gain a financial advantage – NO ONE ELSE.

There is absolutely no positive aspect of this development for any people trying to live in this area.

People live here because of its nature which the bush and its unique habitats are a part. The koalas, goannas, frogs, lizards and the variety of birds (whose character brings relief from traffic and airport noise) form an integral part of our lives. To remove bush removes their habitat forever. Covering the remains after sand is removed with grass does not work (ask any ecologist).

From the proposal my understanding is that the trucks coming into the site are travelling east at 90km (at least) having to drop to 60km to enter the site together with other site traffic – laden coming through the site road with little rear vision of the road at 60km to get to 90km within a very short time to force their way into traffic (can't see them stopping to let traffic flow past. If they have to stop that's going to be dangerous and a noisy exercise). Then travel 4 km to the roundabout at Nelson Bay Road. This is an extremely busy route and sure to get busier as Newcastle Airport becomes international, then they negotiate the roundabout to hurtle back past my home again – Great! And I **definitely oppose any early opening** – what a joke!

The people here are trying to cope and overcome the effects of the water contamination issue. We cannot deal with the profoundly negative impact that the introduction of a sand quarry will bring.

Yes, I positively could not expect anyone to purchase a supposedly contaminated worthless property that has a sand mine operating [REDACTED] from it. Obviously being unable to sell means I could not purchase anything, however humble, elsewhere.

My family would be the most affected by this proposal – what have the developers to offer us!

Yours sincerely

Kay Rochester