

**Submission re Exhibition of Environmental Assessment.**

**Mackas Sand Project- S75W Modification**

**Submission Date:** Thursday 16<sup>th</sup> February 2012

**Submission from:** Cr. Geoff Dingle, 43 Kirrang Dr. Medowie 2318.

**Reference number:** 08 0142 MOD 1

**Position:** I object to this proposal.

**Reasons:**

The Stockton Bight Track has been gazetted as a public road since the early 1900's but most of it has not been constructed or accessed as there has been no requirement for access to any linked properties to date this continues to be the case. The DA supporting Mackas Sand mining project to lot 218 already has an approved suitable access route which does not include Stockton Bight Track.

Contrary to the Port Stephens Council reports Stockton Bight Track is not and will not be used by the general public for access to Stockton beach. The access to Stockton Beach is via Lavis lane extended.

Realignment of Stockton Bight Track will disadvantage the current property owners in terms of current sand extraction and plant operation.

Realignment of Stockton Bight Track will result in damage and removal of aboriginal artifacts; this has been reported by local members of the Worimi who act as archeological agents for local developers but not invited to join this exercise.

The Worimi local land Council has a vested interest in completing this access as quickly as possible, they therefore have a vested interest as owners of the mine site and have contracted to Mackas sands to receive royalties, and they therefore have serious pecuniary interest and should not be involved in approving deviation approval for this road. An independent assessor should be engaged.

The owner of Mackas Sand is a Port Stephens Councilor, he has used his influence particularly in the period he was Mayor from 2008 to 2010 to have council staff pursue and register Stockton Bight Track, Port Stephens Council has spent considerable monies on this exercise and the Council report is biased in support of the recommendation to provide a deviation to this road. This again evidenced by their report suggesting this route can be used by the general public which is not the case.

An agreement exists with the Towers family supported in the existing and approved DA for shorter more direct route which does not require native vegetation removal and disturbance of aboriginal artifacts. The owner of Mackas sand is looking for an alternative route to that approved to avoid paying a small levy per ton to haul sand over this approved route per the agreement. The alterations to the Stockton bight Track which currently exists on paper only is designed to service and access the proposed sand mine on lot 218, it will be gated route, not accessible by the public so I therefore see no reason why a public road should be constructed and realigned.

There is currently no agreement with Mackas Sand and Port Stephens Council that Stockton Bight Track will be maintained by Mackas sand for the life of the road. A statutory payment per tonne will be insufficient to maintain this road which will be heavily utilized by heavy transport. The life of this mine could well exceed 20 years it has approval for with drifting sands refilling the mine site and the road if constructed is in a location which has deep peaty sand subsoil as a foundation requiring extensive repairs and upgrades over its life. Port Stephens Council cannot meet the maintenance requirements on its existing road network and does not need Stockton Bight Track added to the schedule.

**Political Donations:**

I have made no political donations in the past two years and received no donations as an elected Councilor. This can be verified through the regular reports I have submitted to the Electoral Office as part of my commitment as a current term elected Councillor.

Yours Faithfully,

Geoff Dingle