

Report to TRRA Inc.

For consideration by TRRA Committee

Several Committee Members attended this Public meeting which was to update on progress with the application and the strategy of the Bob's Farm locals to oppose the development. Econetwork were represented. No Councillors were present.

The Bob's farm people have formed a committee as a sub-committee of the Tilligery Land Holders Group Inc. The secretary will send us a membership list. They are full of enthusiasm and have drafted a letter to the relevant ministers, started a petition, secured the interest of the Environmental Defenders Office and started a local campaign with stickers etc.

Details of the proposal are provided in the attached flyer. It is bigger than Macca's sand operation and would seem to have serious environmental negatives especially if the approval is given to go down 15 metres below ground level. The flyer does not mention the visual impact on the gateway to the Port Stephens which was mentioned by several speakers last night. A buffer Zone (uncleared vegetation) of only 15 metres is proposed which in our opinion would not shield the mine from Nelson Bay Road and may not even be viable if it is bordering a deep excavation.

Given the scale of the development, PSC will not have any responsibility for the approval, which will go to the State Department of Planning. The key document to be submitted by the proponent is an EIS which is nearing finality. This will be subject to normal processes including public consultation and exhibition. Apparently sand mining is an acceptable use in the current zoning. We were advised that PSC Mayor Mackenzie has signaled his strong support for the proposal.

We both spoke at the meeting and I urged the locals to engage with the key interest groups on the Tomaree peninsular to encourage them to separately lobby government and to participate in any consultations. I mentioned Econetwork, Nelson Bay and District Business Association and Tourism Port Stephens. I agreed to report back to TRRA and to open up discussion of what we could do to assist.

One or two in attendance said that they felt that there was little knowledge of the project in the Nelson Bay area. At this stage they do not have a website but do have a Facebook page.

My initial view is that the series of detailed maps from the EIS are difficult to read and do not get the message over as to the full extent of the mine or its proximity to the small village of Bob's Farm (its SCHOOL) and Nelson Bay Road. They need a more colorful diagrammatic map to punch home the issues. Can we help in this regard?