

30/11/23

I Strongly object to the proposed Sutton Forest Sand Mine.

I live within 1km of this disastrous quarry proposal. I have lived here for 20yrs. We love the rural outlook & lifestyle. This quarry will completely ruin our lives here. We have an extensive family who frequently come, visit and stay, this includes small grandchildren who enjoy the freedom our farm which gives them to run & play.

I have many concerns as listed below

Traffic

Whilst the documentation has many shortcomings it is the number of heavy vehicle transport movements, to and from the proposed mine and the close proximity to Sally's corner service centre (and my front gate) that is causing me a major problem. The new road onto the highway leaves very little distance for trucks to get up to speed and safely allow vehicles from the highway to safely get across into the service centre.

The data grossly underestimates the number of vehicles using the Hume hwy, they must have collected data on the quietest day of the year! This is a busy area with many people coming in and out of the service centre. There have been many accidents near this area, including some recent fatal accidents.

Heavy vehicles are more often involved in road accidents, in my view, just accidents waiting to happen. Both the northerly exit and southerly entry have poor vision. This intersection is currently used by many vehicles both day and night and does not need to be compromised by more "cowboys" driving heavy vehicles 344 times a day.

I note these numbers only relate to sand trucks coming & going for sand deliveries. What about the trucks bringing in the fill, when they start filling this massive hole. Those numbers do not appear to be captured anywhere. So double the numbers. What goes out, must come in.

I do not think that the existing "U turn" over the Hume highway at the Hoddles creek Illawarra Hwy has been designed to take the number and weight of the heavy vehicles loaded with sand and towing a "dog" or double trailer on it 24-hour 365 day per year for 30 years+. Visibility is already poor at this intersection. Will this be modified prior to any sand being removed from the quarry? I doubt it.

Light pollution.

This Quarry is 24hrs a day. The light pollution from this quarry at night will be enormous. Even with the lights pointed downwards which is a pathetic attempt at mitigation. We currently have great night views of the night sky & milkie way. Again this will just be a huge glowing mess in the dark landscape. I cant imaging the problem this will cause the nocturnal animals that use this part of the Great western corridor for nesting nearby. I guess the sad reality is they wont be nesting nearby if this goes ahead. The dust, noise, light and lack of trees will drive them away.

Dust

I am very stressed & anxious about the whole concept of this quarry, but I am particularly worried about the Sillica dust that the westerly winds (they are the dominating winds at our place) will cover my farm & home with. There is NO safe level of silica dust exposure. We will be exposed to this dust 24hrs a day every single day for 30 yrs. How is that safe. It took us too long to take Asbestos seriously. Lets not gamble with people's health and lives with Silica exposure. Hi-Qual consultants put a flimsy dust monitor on my property years ago, no body has been back to even check it!! That says what quality of research is being done.

Environment

As you well know by now, this quarry is at the most narrow part of the Great Wildlife Corridor. This quarry will have a huge impact on the birds and animals that use it. The government are spending big dollars to protect and improve this corridor, through local council project such as Land care, Land for Wildlife, Glossy's in the Mist, the Koala project and many others.

We help plant over 800 trees with the Glossy's in the Mist project, all to help build up the habitat of endangered birds in this area, as have many of the nearby neighbours. That effort will be wasted because these blokes want to make a profit.

Noise

This quarry will be noisy, I can here my neighbours dogs barking from 800mts away, and when he's using a chainsaw. I will be able to hear the bulldozers and crushing plant works. It will be construction level noise. We live in the country to get away from that. I don't believe the projected data on sound studies or what they say is acceptable low level sound disturbance. It will be disturbing and it will be relentless. 24hrs a day.

Tourism

Effect on Tourism

This is the entrance to the Southern Highlands, Tourism plays an important part of our economy.

There are many properties in this area who rely on Air B&B type accommodation for income, there are Several Wineries and Restaurants and thousands of visitors come to the area for the Church services at the Shrine of Our Lady of Mercy. They do spend money in the area. They come for the tranquil peaceful environment. The noise and dust this quarry will generate will ruin peoples livelihood and income.

Many more Jobs are generated by this tourism in this area than would be by having a quarry.

The location of the proposed mine is in a very tranquil and peaceful part of the Southern Highlands. Popular with visitors from all over Australia and internationally.

The Shrine of Our Lady of Mercy, Penrose Park also brings thousands of people to the area for the services.

They too will have their religious ceremonies disturbed.

Visual impact

This quarry will be a visual disaster as you are driving along the highway. This is the entrance of the Southern highlands and the first thing you see is this stark dry, dusty hole and processing stockpiles. Even the proponents state in their report, mitigation tree planting will not reduce the visual impact from the highway. From my place, I will loose my native bush land views and see dust & dirt. Thanks Hi-Qual!

This will lower property values in the area

So much for the Intergenerational wealth creation they espouse in the Social impact statement. **Not for my Family**

Water security

This project will lower the watertable, that is a fact as stated in the Hydrology report. What is uncertain is How much it will drop, again these are there words. Again there is differing and conflicting numbers and statements in various parts of the reports and Executive summaries, which is frustrating and misleading. We need the water security of our bores for personal water supplies, irrigation and water for our animals. This water is a high level of quality and consistent supply. This quarry states, “impact to water quality is Moderate” and will be affected.

I am also concerned about the quality of water going into Long Swamp with the ground water effects of silt flowing into it. This is headwater for the Sydney water supply. Of particular concern is the pollution and breakdown of unknown fill going into this pit to refill this huge hole. It will be different to the pure sandstone that they will remove, it will have a very different chemical composition and the risk of pollution is REAL.

Critical Need for sand not proven.

They have not justified the NEED for this sand, they just say, sand is critically needed. Green valley Quarry 4km down the road whose licence was given in 2005 or near then, they are only trickling out small amounts out just to keep the licence going. There are so many quarries in this area. We don't NEED it at this stage , they just want to make money NOW.

Cumulative effect.

My concern is if this gets approved we will double the effects of this quarry, As stated above, Green Vally quarry 4km away is of similar size, If they are both up & running at capacity together this area will be a wasteland. That quarry is also in the wildlife corridor, so compounding all the environmental, traffic & health issues for local residents.

What a disaster that would become.

Does that get taken into consideration by the DPE, the Number of current licenses already existing in the area, or could we have 10 quarries within this small fragile location?

So if Green Valley quarry starts producing , do we expect to see 700 extra truck movements on this highway?

EPA fines

EPA history POOR. At least 24 fines in NSW since 2012 , currently 33 charges in VIC We don't trust them Nor should Government departments with this level of disregard for regulations. .We do not trust them

This is Environmental Vandalism to even propose such a large & dangerous project like. The Amendments do nothing to improve or mitigate the risks this quarry poses to the environment and the local population.

It is causing us all untold stress and anxiety.

No, I do not support this project.