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I am very concerned by and oppose this proposed sandmine.

As indicated in my letter of opposition in mid 2018, I am a grandson of the original owners of the neighbouring property 'Danellen', (Eugene and Maureen Fitzpatrick) and have spent all my childhood on that property. I now have four young sons and regularly visit to get away from Sydney. There is an enormous amount of family history and work invested in the orchards, gardens and buildings. The proposed sandmine will destroy this, which at a personal level will be devastating. My family looks forward spending a lot of time there over the coming years.

The proximity of the mine to our family property and the suggestion that the 'revisions' to the last iteration of this proposal could sufficiently ameliorate the impacts on our property and the local environment remain, in my opinion, insulting. The proponent knows that it will make our property unlivable but, with the backing of an army of consultants and funds, bravely makes the case that the noise levels will be manageable and that it doesn't really matter anyway as we are only 'weekenders'. What of course is most important is the profits that the proponent, who has an awful record of EPA infringements, will extract from a sandmine positioned so close to Sydney.

It is also appalling that privately owned land can be "developed" to the complete detriment of neighbouring properties and with such a minimal opportunity to debate, scrutinize and consider appropriate alternatives to this proposal. Affected neighbours like us are afforded mere days to meaningfully consider and respond to the self-interested documentation that the proponent has produced over years.

The EIS put forward is contradictory, ambiguous and patently self-serving in respect of many critical risks arising from this proposal. Standing back from the barrage of jargon and pseudo-scientific studies, what is plain is that:

1. This is one of the largest sand mines in Australia, almost 5 x the size of the proponents operations at Windemalla and Menangle. A 110 hectare pit to a depth of 60m below ground level and well beyond the current water table is going to have an irreversible effect on the bores on which so many locals depend

for agriculture, business and life generally! And it is only going to increase in size as neighbouring properties 'give up' in the face of the destruction.

2. Removing the sandstone and its critical biological role in filtering water, and then dumping 8 million cubic metres of Sydney fill into the pit is just madness. VENM will not filter the water the way the sandstone currently does and will itself significantly increase the sediment levels into Sydney's water supply. And it is, in reality, unlikely to be VENM. It will be landfill. The scant detail on remediation and fill in the EIS, and the fact that the proponent in part comprises the interests of a tipping company, assures that this is what is intended and will eventuate if permitted.
3. The mining will pollute and damage with dust Long Swamp and its aquifer which clean and supply Sydney's Nepean water catchment by overflow and leaching mud and finings from the pit.
4. The real risk of adverse health effects of airborne dust (asthma, silicosis, fibrosis, cancer) carried by prevailing winds across the population centres of the Highlands, which appear to be expanding rapidly, has not been properly considered in this EIS. There are alternative, less populous areas from which to source sand. This use of private land is a blatantly opportunistic cash grab, made with disregard for the health of the community.
5. Property values in the area will plummet, and the lives of neighbours will be severely disrupted without compensation or redress. All for the supposed positive impact of a handful of 'jobs'. Measured against the profits that will be realized (billions) this spin on positive impact is laughable. There will be no positive impact from this proposal, other than the wholly private gain of the proponent.
6. Land clearing 110 hectares of native bush to narrow critically the most fragile section of the Great Western Wildlife Corridor, seriously harming the native flora and fauna, including endangered species.
7. The wider effects of noise, blasting and light pollution 24/7 for 30 years will destroy this critical habitat.
8. The damage to the peace and tranquillity at The Shrine of Our Lady of Mercy - Penrose Park, will be irreversible.
9. There will be a significant increase in heavy trucking on the Hume Highway (up to 344 trucks a day, average 250). The close proximity of this mine to the highway is a significant drawback. Expect accidents to increase significantly as a result.

I am a lawyer by profession and from a legal perspective, I am concerned by the the proponent's dealings with Crown Lands in relation to use of the road reserve and appalling track record in terms of infringements of environmental laws. The scale of the proposal means there are simply no viable safeguards against future breaches of any conditions that might be placed on the proponent if successful. The cat will have been let out of the bag if this proposal is accepted. The damage

will be irreversible. More generally, there seems to be a fundamental unfairness in allowing one owner the right to mine their land for profit to the severe detriment of the local community.

We all understand the need for sand to fuel Sydney's construction industry and which has to accommodate Sydney's burgeoning population and wealth, but there is no good reason why this particular proposal, which is in real terms too close to Sydney's borders (bearing in mind the proposed end of the project in 2063), should be approved to proceed. It is lazy planning for an area that critically needs to sustain its environment, particularly its water and air quality, to properly accommodate and grow sustainably into the future.

Proper consideration needs to be given to alternative location(s) for sourcing sand, and there are many, rather than latching on to this proposal and a short-sighted 'private' fix. Sydney will grow at the Southern Highlands expense, with devastated water supply, significant health risks and happy in the knowledge it has been earmarked for Sydney's tip. What a great opportunity!!!

In all seriousness, to allow this proposal to proceed would be madness and a victory only for the convenience and profits of the proponent. There are alternative locations for a sandmine or quarries likely to have far less impacts than this proposal and they should be studied and assessed carefully and proactively by government. To be responding passively and quietly in the interests of the proponent in the way this proponent is inviting the Department and NSW Government to do, " , is a recipe for an environmental and social disaster.

This is a flawed proposal and I urge the Department and NSW Government to reject it.

I have not made a reportable political donation.

Yours faithfully

Daniel Fitzpatrick