

Dept of Planning and Environment

Development Assessment Systems and Approvals

GPO Box 39

Sydney NSW 2001

Manager : Mining Projects

To whom it may concern,

Re: SSD4978

I wish to lodge my objection to this proposal. I wish to object on the following grounds:

This proposal does not achieve any of the objectives of the RU1 Zone and it does not fulfil any of the objectives of this zoning. To mine opposite a State significant site is a planning disaster. I acknowledge the mine has been in operation for so long but to increase production and hours of operation will negatively further impact the 246 species of animals that live on the site.

The report lodged by the applicant advises that there are threatened species on site and in particular that it is koala habitat even though the report bases its recommendations on a report into local koala numbers which was dated 2007. Development which occurs in a RU1 zone is meant to promote the conservation and enhancement of local native vegetation including the habitat of threatened species such as the forest owl, the masked owl, 849 grevillea parviflora, Holland mouse, Rosenberg goanna, scarlet robin and also that council has advised that it is a wetland habitat. To allow mining of this scale on this site will be contrary to this objective for the zoning of this land. The report lodged by the applicant acknowledged that this site maybe core habitat for koalas and it therefore should be further protected not destroyed to this scale.

Any development in a RU1 zone must also occur in a way that does not have a significant adverse effect on water catchments, including surface water and groundwater quality and flows, land surface conditions and important ecosystems such as waterways. Tinda Creek flows into the Wollemi National Park and this is of State Significance. The government's own website [depi.vic.gov.au](http://depi.vic.gov.au) acknowledges the negative impact sand dredging has on waterways. In particular it acknowledges the leaching of additional nutrients into the river system resulting in algal blooms. The algal bloom nightmare costs our local council millions of dollars and it directly impacts our river system, one which the farmers rely on. To allow dredging of this scale is ludicrous particularly when the scientific community is well aware what impact sand dredging has on local river systems and habitat.

Mining royalties should not be advanced ahead of the public interest. We rely on the water from the Hawkesbury to drink. Our kids swim in it and to allow leaching of heavy metals and to actually allow an increase in mining production of this scale without proper compliance with best practice is just against public interest. We have had a problem with algal blooms in our River system and to encourage further production on this scale is unfair and unjust and then to expect the ratepayers to have money diverted away from our council to address this issue is just corruption at its worst. The voters in the Hawkesbury deserve proper management of state significant assets not just quick fixes to generate mining revenue.

Any development in a RU1 zone is not meant to detract from the existing rural character or create unreasonable demands for the provision or extension of public amenities or services but to place a mine opposite a national park is just poor planning. To have a beautiful scenic park like Wollemi on one side of the road and an eyesore of a mine on the other is just beyond comprehension. The Wollemi National Park and Yengo State Forest are both state significant assets and to allow mining of this scale for another 30 years considering that the miners have acknowledged in their own report they haven't bothered to rehabilitate what they have already damaged because they can't source the product required for rehabilitation is just environmentally irresponsible. Also what impact will it have on Tourism – tourists won't want to come to the forest if on one side you have beautiful scenery and on the other you have an environment totally barren of trees and wildlife. It detracts from the area. I acknowledge that the miners have agreed to give the NPWS one little area as an offset but so what – 24 hectares of potential habitat will be removed as a result of this project!!! What they are offering is hardly generous considering the amount of destruction they are proposing. The people of the Hawkesbury need to ensure that any negotiations which take place are fair and equitable and just because an offset is being offered doesn't mean that it is acceptable to destroy a native wetland on this scale for the next 30 years!

The miners have agreed to leave a couple of trees as a buffer zone around the site but so what! Inside the clearing of native vegetation and the mining of sand will continue and the environment will be destroyed. The noise will not impact neighbours but it will impact native wildlife and in particular the 246 species of animals which live on site and it will impact the animals from Wollemi and Yengo and to allow this to happen is contrary to current noise control legislation.

The one thing that really bothers me about this operation is that they are going to drill down and I don't understand why they need to drill at all with a sand dredging operation. The dept's own report talks about the need to monitor for air particulate emissions such as PM10 and PM2.5 and I ask that no further mining be allowed until this is undertaken by an independent organisation. Air quality is important and considering that they are not using much water then the impact on the health and safety of the workers and on surrounding people is of great concern. This issue needs monitoring by the EPA and by someone who actually cares about the environment and a State Significant Asset such as the Wollemi National Park, and to date I have seen no evidence of the dept even caring about this issue.

I notice that this organisation is a private company limited in liability and I wonder about the feasibility of allowing such an organisation to continue to operate the mine in this manner. Algal blooms negatively impact our local economy and our livelihood in the Hawkesbury ! Wollemi National Park is a place of state Significance and I am amazed that the government is allowing an

organisation limited in liability to continue with its sand dredging operation knowing full well that any additional nutrients entering our waterways will negatively impact our river system and local economy.

I am requesting that this proposal be rejected because this is a doubling of production and I am requesting that the government be pro-active and actually attempt to protect a native wetland as opposed to encouraging its destruction for another 30 years.

State Significant assets need to be properly managed with due regard for the future. Quick fixes such as a buffer zone and the donation of a small area in order to allow for environmental destruction of this scale for another 30 years opposite a World Heritage Area is just beyond comprehension. The people of the Hawkesbury deserve due diligence particularly in regard to an area opposite a state significant asset. No token gestures should be accepted in order to facilitate poor planning in an environmentally sensitive area. I am disappointed that the Commonwealth regulator has decided to allow a State Agency to determine this project. The Commonwealth has legal obligations in relation to State Significant assets and I am hoping that mining revenue will not deter from these obligations because public interest should never be compromised for mining royalties under due diligence.

I request that this proposal be rejected because of its negative impact on our local economy. The creation of a handful of jobs in order to destroy an area of this scale is not really facilitating our local economy. Algal blooms do impact our local economy and to allow this increase in production without proper environmental controls in place is just unfeasible, particularly by a private organisation limited in liability. The government has a duty to ensure due diligence and being aware of all the facts in relation to sound financial management and environmental management.

The disadvantages of this proposal far outweigh the advantages. I realise that 140 million dollars is at stake but what is our National Park worth and what is our River worth over 30 years. I am asking you to consider what the local council has had to spend per annum to clean up the algal bloom issue and the amount of tourism dollars the Wollemi and Yengo bring to our local economy. These issues cannot be ignored!

I thank you for taking the time to read my submission and I hope that public interest will outweigh mining royalties. I am hoping that in considering whether to approve this increase you also consider due diligence and good governance. Areas of State Significance are important assets to our local economy and to the future sustainability of our local area. We need to preserve such areas and ensure proper planning and due diligence for future generations. This proposal does not meet any of the objectives for RU1 zoning and areas adjoining State Significant Areas need to be properly planned for and managed, in compliance with legal environmental obligations particularly in regard to World Heritage Listed areas.

Please be advised that I do not wish any of my personal details to be published or to be accessed by any members of the public or the applicant. My address and personal details are to remain confidential.

Yours sincerely

