

I strongly OPPOSE the proposed sand mine at Sutton Forest. This rural area contains residences, small farms, state forests and places of worship spread I cannot agree to the ecology of the area been seen as secondary to the destructive mining process. I also fear that the extra trucks on the road will make this a very accident prone area.

The removal of sandstone and its critical biological role in filtering water will affect the purity of water not just in the area but the water flowing into the Nepean Catchment area, which forms part of The Sydney water supply. We should be confident that our water supply remains clean and free from contaminants and should not be under any threat at all from contamination. There are always mishaps that are a threat to our environment. This area should not be risked.

The increase in heavy trucking on the Hume Highway will cause additional stress on an already busy and dangerous road. As a motorbike rider I have had first hand experience of difficulties faced when travelling with trucks. In congested traffic, trucks tend to change lanes and are not often aware there is a bike in their blind spot. An increase in heavy, sand laden trucks will just increase this risk. That part of the Highway is notorious for truck accidents. South of the truck exit onto the highway there is a slight incline where trucks, cars and motorbikes roar up there doing at least 110km/hour. The trucks would exit in between this incline and the Sally's Corner Service Centre where vehicles slow to change lanes and exit the Highway. An extra 300 trucks a day exiting onto the Highway and increasing speed as cars slow and change lanes to exit puts the lives of motorists at risk. This should not be considered a safe exit for trucks. It might look a really easy solution on paper but in reality it is very far from it.

The Monastery at Penrose Park is under threat. Why is there no consideration that this is a sacred place for thousands of people? How can a mining company put in a proposal to create a huge mine with all its associated noise, air and water pollution so close to an established place of worship? I strongly object to a well established, place (viewed as sacred by so many local, national and international visitors) being put as secondary over the mining company. This is not an acceptable place for a sand mine.

My friends and I are regular visitors to the Highlands as the pace of life is so much more relaxed than city living. We breathe the fresh air, enjoy all the bush walks in the area and visit wineries and other tourist attractions. All this is about to change and I am concerned on the effects of mining on tourism in the area. The livelihood of not just the farmers, but local business owners is under threat from the air, water and noise pollution created by the mine.

This proposal should be rejected outright. This is not the place for a huge sand mine. It is residential rural country and should remain that way.

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