I write to express the following concerns about the Sutton Forest Quarry proposal:

The area and depth of the excavation is excessive, and far larger than the much smaller-scale friable sandstone quarries in the district. The fact that there are several existing mines and an approved mine that is yet to become operational (Green Valley) begs the question as to how many quarries and how much sand extraction is reasonable in this locality, especially given impacts on ground and surface water regimes and highly specialised ecosystems (upland swamps) that depend on them;

The depth of excavation is of great concern in relation to harm that would be caused to groundwater surface water systems;

The upland swamp and associated threatened flora and fauna (including *Eucalyptus aquatica*, downstream populations of *E. macarthurii*, and habitat for Giant Dragonfly) are variously dependent on groundwater discharge and surface water flows. Groundwater seepage maintains the swamp habitat through droughts. The habitat may also be used by additional threatened flora and fauna that do not appear to have been surveyed or presumed present but are known from similar habitat in the locality (e.g. *Carex klaphakei*, *Baloskion longipes*), despite the potential of the quarry to harm this environment. The fact that this habitat is within the 'offset' area does not mean that it is viable and conserved in that context, especially given hydrological impacts generated by the quarry, and risks associated with its operation e.g. failure of detention basins as occurred at a quarry in Penrose, with impacts to Hanging Rock Swamp;

The 24/7 operation of the facility is unreasonable given its context. Sand is an important building resource, but is not an essential service like a hospital. There is no social or safety-based justification to operate this facility continuously. Night shift work is well documented to be harmful to human health, causing, amongst other things, significant weight gain / metabolic syndrome. Having heavy vehicle drivers operating at night is a safety concern for them and for other road users. Were it to be approved, it should be constrained to normal work hours, 5 days a week;

The proposal is reliant on trucking sand to Sydney or other centres. This clearly adds to heavy truck movements on the highway and associated road network, increasing safety risks. Use of the rail freight network is preferable to get the sand from say, Berrima, to Sydney or Wollongong.

Whilst it might be legal, the proposed biodiversity offset arrangements would result in a net loss of native vegetation and associated fauna habitat. This is of additional concern given the threatened species involved, and the position of the site in a regional habitat corridor. Offsetting would not replace the habitat cleared for the mine. It would simply set aside the prescribed area and type of habitat (if the proponent opts for that method) elsewhere, irrespective of whether that land was actually at any risk of being cleared or significantly degraded;

The proposal could generate significant pollution in the form of noise, dust, vibration, and light. Whilst significant noise is already generated by the highway, the proposal would generate different types of noise, and would undermine the amenity of proximate properties. Some of those properties are religious / spiritual retreat centres of various kinds, meaning that noise and dust impacts may compromise their utility more-so than might be the case for other land uses;

Use of the mine pit to receive fill from the Sydney area may make sense in terms of filling a void and using returning trucks, but the nature and composition of this fill needs to be known before the effects of its dumping can be known. Some commentators have claimed that the fill would comprise hard waste i.e. the pit would become a landfill 'rubbish tip'. This was attempted in an earlier proposal and EIS at nearby Penrose, and was comprehensively ruled out due to pollution risks. Even if 'clean fill' were to be used, unless it comprises soil and rock of a similar composition to that removed from the quarry, its introduction risks changing a range of variables including nutrient content of ground- and surface-waters. The introduction of any kind of fill would necessitate independent monitoring to ensure that only the approved materials are placed in the void. This is difficult to achieve, and there are numerous documented, and no-doubt many more undocumented instances of illegal filling involving contaminants. It is hard to see how the State could ensure that fill brought to the proposed pit would never contain dangerous contaminants that pose a risk during transport and/or once dumped at this site.