



saveoursandz@gmail.com

## Save Our Sands Alliance **CALL TO ACTION**

21/11/2023

Dear Neighbors and Friends,

After 5 years, the Sutton Forest sand mine has raised its head again. For those new to the area or unfamiliar with it, this sand mine will be located just south of Sallys Corner (see map). When proposed in 2018 it faced fierce community opposition. *Save our Sands Alliance* formed then to coordinate community responses and commission expert reports. The proponents have finally lodged responses to community concerns.

The mine proposal is to clear 110 hectares of land, mostly native bushland and mine sandstone to a depth 60 m below ground level - well below the water table. The silica rock will be processed on site by crushing to sand and trucked out 24/7, 365 days for 30 years. The pit will eventually be filled with trucked-in waste, becoming Sydney's new tip. The size of the proposed mine and plant is massive; half the Sydney CBD and more than 5-times that of Hi-Quality's operations at Windemalla and Menangle. This is in the middle of the rural-residential community of the Southern Highlands.

Our local communities, specialist experts and Government Departments and Wingecarribee Shire Council have serious concerns about this project. The mine company proposes only minor changes to the initial plan and our concerns remain valid. If approved it will have enormous impacts on the local environment and all but destroy our local community.

Issues are:

- environmental destruction through water runoff and aquifer pollution,
- location at the most fragile point of the Great Western Wildlife Corridor, a region targeted for biodiversity, and the unique Long Swamp ecosystem, which is listed as a threatened ecosystem.
- endangering threatened fauna and flora species identified on site and surrounds,
- air and water pollution with serious health, farming and environmental consequences,
- polluting the headwaters of the Sydney water catchment,
- long term health risks to neighbouring and Highlands residents from dust through mining and high-grade silica rock processing and transporting,
- disturbing on-site indigenous heritage rock-cave art, deemed highly significant by the OEH and local indigenous communities
- pollution damage to surrounding bushland, crops, gardens, solar panels and residences,
- removal of sandstone with its critical role in the ground water hydrology of the wider area,
- lowering water table an undetermined and unpredictable amount affecting local water supplies,
- noise, vibration and light pollution. 24/7 disturbing the peace and tranquillity of local residents, wildlife and The Shine of Our Lady of Mercy, a large church and monastery on the mine boundary,
- traffic safety and danger with up to 344 trucks a day (250 average), 24/7 for the next 30 years leaving and entering the Hume Highway,
- the visual horror of a 110-hectare pit replacing native bushland and farmland,
- there is no need for this mine as nearby Green Valley sand mine extracts token amounts just to keep its licence active.

The mine company "Hi-Quality" has an appalling record with 24 EPA NSW penalties and, now that it has established in Victoria, it and the company director, Patrick Hallinan, already face 33 new EPA charges. This is not a fit and proper operator that can be trusted to abide by governing regulations.

This is being done to our beautiful Southern Highlands by a Sydney developer without benefit to our community and only damage to our environment. A mine like this has no place in any environmentally sensitive or populated area.

**We ask everyone to act now and oppose this mine. It's easy. Lodge or re-lodge a submission at the DPE website. You only have until the 4<sup>th</sup> December. Make it count!**



## MAKE A SUBMISSION OPPOSING THIS MINE

A simple, broad objection is sufficient to have your objection recorded. Reasons for objection can be simply stated as *"environmental concerns"* *"biodiversity threat"* *"dust pollution"* *"traffic"* etc. The already-identified major concerns are a good starting point.

If you make a broad objection now before the cutoff on December 4th, you can add to your submission later with more detail.

Numbers matter! The more community members who object with more concerns the better.

IMPORTANT: Each objection must use a different email address or they will count as one.

### HOW TO MAKE A SUBMISSION

Go to website:

[www.planningportal.nsw.gov.au/major-projects/projects/sutton-forest-sand-quarry](http://www.planningportal.nsw.gov.au/major-projects/projects/sutton-forest-sand-quarry)

**1. Register or login here (email & password)**

**2. Submission here**

**Mine plan is here. Warning: 3,000 pages!**

*The Environment and our Highlands Community thanks you.*