



Illawarra Birders Inc. PO Box 1355, 116 Auburn St, Wollongong 2500.

Submission re-proposed Quarry at Sutton Forest NSW Application Number **SSD 6334**

Illawarra Birders are a group with over 100 members based in the Illawarra Region of NSW. Our birdwatching area boundaries encompass Sutton Forest so this is a part of where our records for bird sightings can be recorded. Many of our members regularly bird the Southern Highlands so any development in this area is both important and relevant to our club.

This proposal was brought to our attention by some concerned residents. Our club has a reputation as caring about conservation and the natural environment – in particular birds.

The points we wish to make are some of those outlined in the environmental impact statement in relation to the flora and fauna in the area that will be directly impacted by the mines development.

The proposed sand mine will:

- Result in the clearing of 62 hectares of forested area.
- Clear forested areas that are decades old - over 50% of the area to be cleared is pristine forest while over 40% is forest that has regenerated.
- Impact at least **NINE** threatened fauna species as well as 2 threatened plant species. Threatened Species are identified because they **need** protection, particularly from habitat fragmentation!
- Result in a project that is stated to have a **significant** impact on threatened bird species
- Create a need for significant biodiversity offsets as these have been deemed to be the method that will be used to mitigate the project's environmental impact.
We object strongly to this as our members feel that offsets should be **the very last** resort and ideally should not be needed. The reason for this is that if biodiversity values are so high that impacts to them will result in the creation of offsets then it should scream at us that this land should NOT be impacted at all and **whatever** is proposed on that land should be reconsidered.
- Impact an area that is identified as part of a regional wildlife corridor in the Illawarra Regional Environmental Plan. What is the point in paying to have an environmental plan mapped out if in the future the plan is ignored when development is proposed that will directly impact areas that fall within the plan.
A wildlife corridor is only a good thing if it is kept intact. Corridors are supposed to prevent habitat fragmentation. If development chips away at them then the effect of the corridor is lost!
- Directly impact KNOWN HABITAT that is utilized by Glossy Black Cockatoos. Planting more trees in other areas is proposed as a remedy for this – Young trees will NOT bear the cones that the cockatoos rely on for food – trees take time to grow. Also how will the birds be given the memo as to where they need to go to find these new trees??



We strongly object to a Sand Mine in this biologically sensitive area. This area has some conservation protection that was put in place to PROTECT it. Please do this and reject this proposal.

Yours Sincerely

Michelle Rower
Conservation Officer
Illawarra Birders Inc.