



SAND QUARRY RECEIVES CONDITIONAL APPROVAL TO EXTEND OPERATIONS

16 November 2020

The state's independent planning umpire has conditionally approved an extension of a major sand quarry in the Illawarra Region.

Dunmore Sand & Soil Pty Ltd (the Applicant), a wholly-owned subsidiary of Boral Resources (NSW) Pty Ltd, had sought to modify the existing development consent for its Dunmore Lakes Quarry at Dunmore, south of Shellharbour, to extract around 1.35 million tonnes of sand from two new pits over three to four years.

It currently has approval to mine up to 800,000 tonnes of sand a year until 2030; providing high-quality construction sand products to the Illawarra and Greater Sydney Regions.

The Department of Planning, Industry & Environment finalised its whole-of-government assessment of the modification application in September this year. It came to the Independent Planning Commission for determination after the Department received objections from Shellharbour City Council and more than 50 members of the public.

Commissioners Dianne Leeson and Peter Cochrane were appointed to consider the application and make a determination. The Commissioners met with the Applicant, Department, Shellharbour City and Kiama Municipal Councils and conducted an inspection of the site and surrounding area.

They also hosted an electronic public meeting to listen to the community's views. Concerns raised during the live-streamed public meeting related to ecological impacts; ground and surface water impacts; acid sulfate soils; heritage impacts, including Aboriginal cultural heritage; traffic and transport; and impacts on local amenity and tourism.

After careful examination of all the evidence and weighing the community's views, the Commission has today (Monday 16 November 2020) determined to approve the modification application, subject to conditions.

"The Commission finds that on balance, and when weighed against the Objects of the [Environmental Planning & Assessment] Act, [ecologically sustainable development] principles and benefits, the impacts associated with the Application are acceptable and in the public interest," the Commission said in its Statement of Reasons for Decision.

"[T]he Application would extend the life of an established quarrying operation and would ensure the continued delivery of high-quality construction sand products to the Illawarra and Greater Sydney region," it found. "[T]he continued development and recovery of a State significant sand resource is an orderly and economic development of the Site" and "will generate economic benefits for the region and for NSW and will also provide ongoing social benefits through continuing employment."

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“[I]mpacts on water quality, groundwater, flooding, coastal wetlands and flora and fauna have been adequately assessed and where there are predicted impacts, mitigation measures have been implemented as far as practicable,” it added.

The Commission also stated that impacts on amenity, including air quality, noise and visual impacts, can be mitigated in accordance with the imposed conditions; traffic and transport impacts can be managed subject to the preparation and implementation of a Traffic Management Plan; and potential impacts of the Application on historic heritage values, namely the Dunmore House heritage item, are relatively low and can be adequately managed through rehabilitation of the curtilage, as required by the imposed Conditions.

“[I]n relation to Aboriginal Cultural Heritage, the Commission acknowledges that a massacre of Aboriginal people is likely to have occurred in the broader area and is unlikely to have occurred within the proposed disturbance area. The Commission finds that the current legislative framework provides appropriate protection against any further impacts to heritage values and has therefore imposed conditions of consent to ensure the preservation and protecting of Aboriginal objects and Aboriginal places within and also outside the Site,” the Commission concluded.

The Commission’s Statement of Reasons for Decision is available here:

<https://www.ipcn.nsw.gov.au/projects/2020/09/dunmore-lakes-project-modification-2>

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