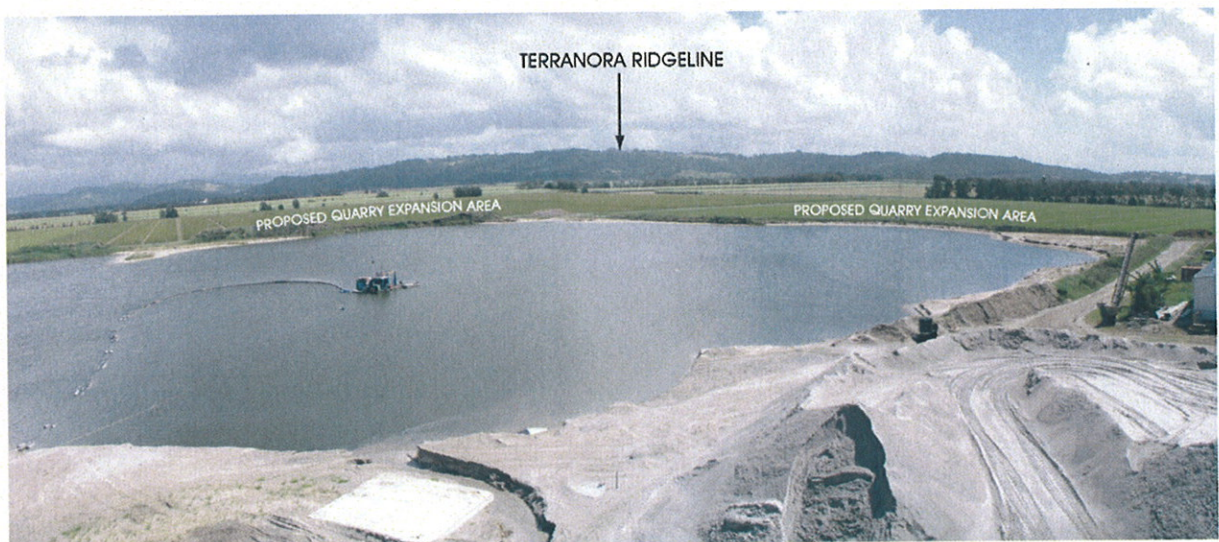




NSW GOVERNMENT
Department of Planning

ASSESSMENT REPORT:
Proposed Expansion of the P. Guinane
Sand Quarry, Cudgen



Environmental Assessment Report
Section 79C of the
Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979

July 2006

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1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

P. Guinane Pty Ltd (the Applicant) is proposing to expand a sand quarry on the Tweed River floodplain near Cudgen, in the Tweed local government area. The dredge quarry has been operating since the 1980s, and has so far extracted sand from areas referred to as Phase 1 and Phase 2 (see Figure 1).

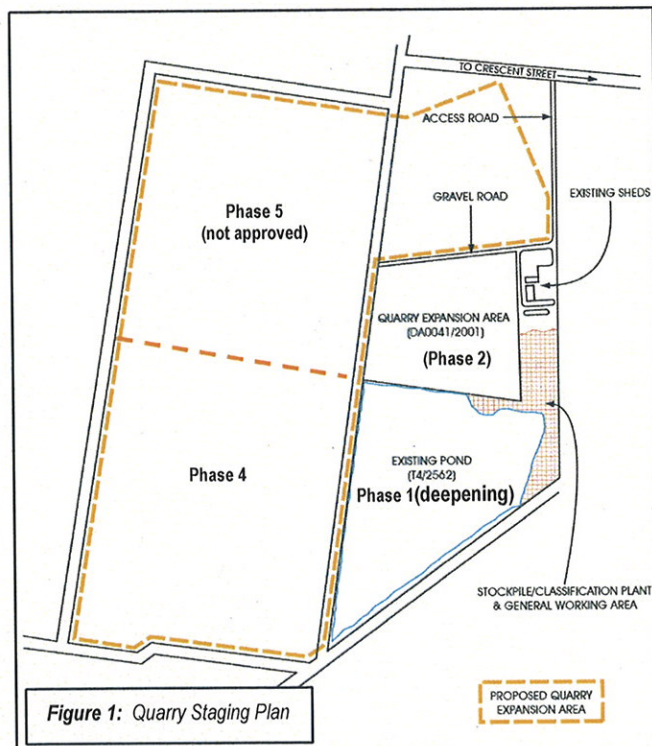


Figure 1: Quarry Staging Plan

The Applicant now proposes to expand the quarry into Phases 3, 4 and 5, and to also carry out a small-scale recreational fishing facility within the quarried dredge pond. The expansion would involve:

- extracting approximately 8.7 million cubic metres of sand, over a total site area of about 70 hectares, using two suction dredges;
- processing the resource using the existing processing facility, to produce 150,000 cubic metres of sand a year over 58 years;
- distributing the processed material to market via road; and
- progressively rehabilitating the site to allow its ongoing use as a recreational fishing facility.

The Applicant lodged a development application and Environmental Impact Statement for the proposal in June 2005, under Part 4 of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979*. The Department subsequently exhibited the DA and EIS in accordance with the requirements of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Regulation 2000*. In response to the

exhibition period, the Department received 9 submissions on the proposal: 4 from government authorities and 5 from the general public. All 5 public submissions objected to the proposal.

Key issues raised in the submissions and/or identified during the Department's assessment included water related impacts – water pollution (especially blue-green algae), groundwater table drawdown, and flooding – acid sulfate soils, noise, traffic, site rehabilitation and the scale and duration of the project.

The Department has assessed these and other issues associated with the proposal, and following this assessment is satisfied that the impacts of the proposal can be mitigated and/or managed to ensure an acceptable level of environmental performance, subject to strict conditions. The integrated approval bodies – the DEC and DNR – are also satisfied and have provided their General Terms of Approval for the proposal.

The Department has recommended a comprehensive set of conditions for the development, including limiting the quarry extension to Phases 3 and 4 only (reducing the duration of the quarry to a more acceptable 30 years), and requirements on the Applicant to design and rehabilitate the pond to ensure a natural-looking and long-term stable final landform, to lodge substantial rehabilitation and long-term management bonds, to develop and implement a range of environmental management and monitoring plans (including a blue-green algae management plan to mitigate existing elevated algal levels), and to involve the community in the rehabilitation and environmental management of the development.

Importantly, the proposal would provide significant social and economic benefits to the Tweed Shire and North Coast region, by guaranteeing a local supply of fine construction sand for the next 30 years, as well as providing continued direct employment for 10 people.

On balance, the Department believes the benefits of the proposal outweigh its potential costs, and subsequently believes it is in the public interest and should be approved.