



Section 5

Engagement

PREAMBLE

This section provides an overview of the engagement undertaken by Cleary Bros and its consultant team during the preparation of the EIS to identify the environmental, social and economic issues of interest to the surrounding community and relevant statutory agencies to be addressed in the EIS. The approach to, and results of, the engagement for the Project are fully documented in the Social Impact Assessment for the Project (Element, 2022). The section concludes with an outline of Cleary Bros' intentions for future community engagement should the Project be approved.



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5.1 Local Community

5.1.1 Introduction

The Project Area is located within an area recognised over the past six decades as a critical resource area for construction materials for the Illawarra-Shoalhaven Region and, in recent years, the Greater Sydney Region. As such, there has been little change in land uses and property sizes within the recognised planning buffers or transitional areas around the designated resource areas which have effectively been enshrined within the various regional and local planning instruments over that period.

As a consequence of the planning instruments, the number of landowners in the area between the Project Area and the Princes Highway, i.e. within approximately 1.1km of the Project Area remains comparatively low. Cleary Bros has maintained periodic contact with its fence-line neighbours for many years and, where/when appropriate, responded to matters and/or complaints raised about its operations. Cleary Bros has particularly maintained open dialogue with the owners of “Figtree Hill” in recent years regarding its operations given they own the land immediately to the north and east of the Company’s current extractive activities. Meetings have been held on a regular basis throughout 2021 and 2022, particularly in relation to negotiating an agreement between the parties to address matters such as noise and visual amenity.

As discussed in Section 2.3.3, the properties around the Project Area are substantial rural landholdings owned either by other resource companies or by private individuals many of whom have lived on their properties for many years. The “Figtree Hill” property immediately to the north of the Project Area has been in the same family since 1865.

By contrast, the land to the north and east of the Princes Highway has been developed for residential housing in the suburbs of Shell Cove and Flinders. The contrast between the large landholdings south and west of the Princes Highway and the residential development in Shell Cove and Flinders is displayed in **Figure 5.1**.

5.1.2 Engagement Carried Out

Engagement undertaken for the Project was undertaken through a variety of means. **Table C.1** (in **Appendix C**) lists the engagement tools and the various stakeholder groups approached during the preparation of the EIS.

The Dunmore/Croom area is recognised by the wider community as a “Quarry Area” in a rural setting, particularly for those residents who have relocated to the surrounding suburbs over the past 20 years given quarrying activities have been underway in that area for over 100 years. As such, engagement carried out for the Project resulted in the bulk of the interest in the Project being from the owners/occupiers of the larger land holdings surrounding the Project Area. A community survey also garnered some input from the wider community, with the majority of feedback obtained from local businesses.

An appreciation of the issues of concern to the local community, particularly neighbours on the adjoining rural land, was also gained from a review of the complaints recorded over the past five years.

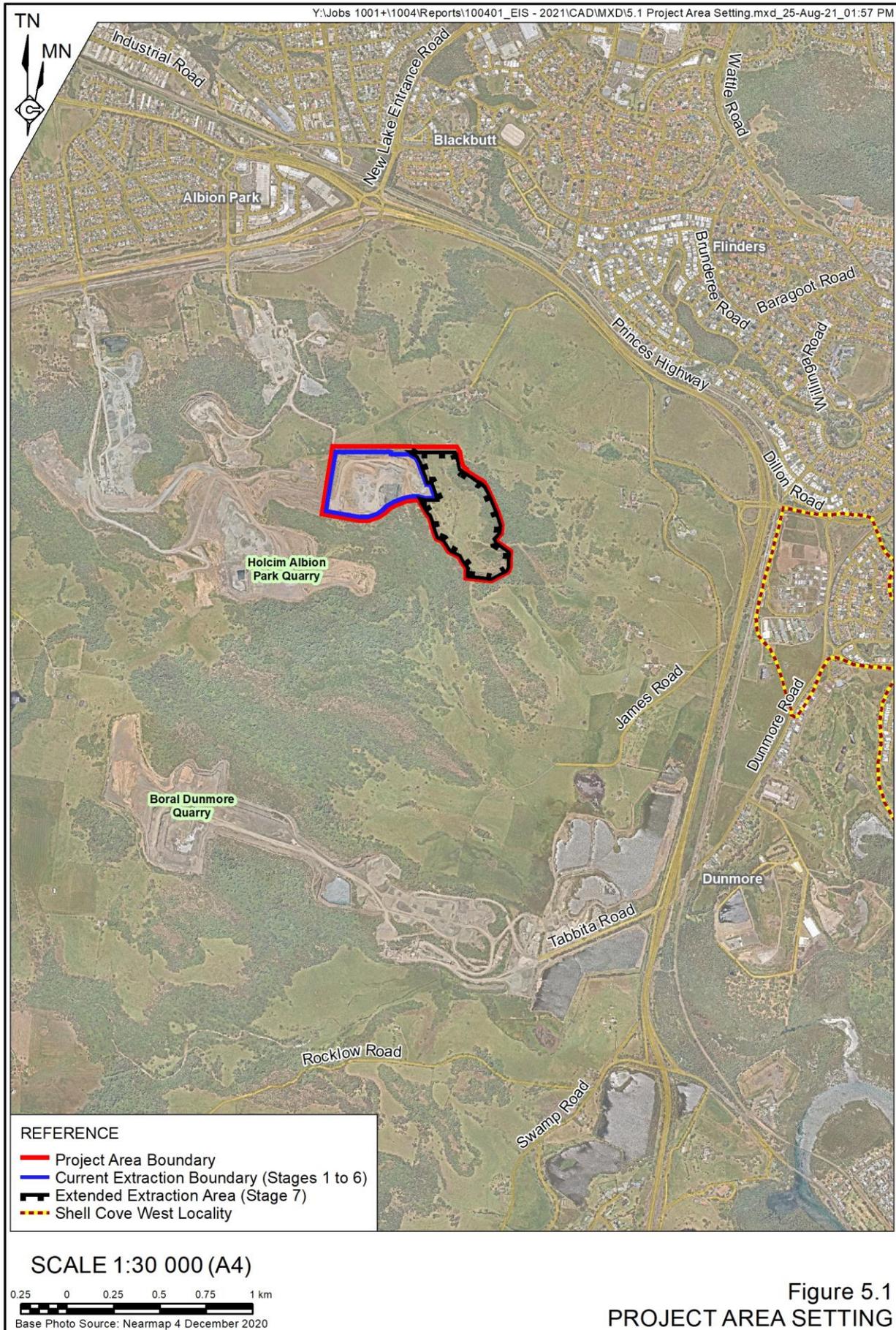


Figure 5.1
PROJECT AREA SETTING



Cleary Bros (Bombo) Pty Ltd
Albion Park Quarry Extraction Area Stage 7 Extension

5.1.3 Community Issues

The issues raised during the engagement with the community are considered in three categories, namely environmental, economic and social. Each of the issues discussed below are listed in **Table C.2 (Appendix C)** together with the relevant section(s) of the EIS and Specialist Consultant reports where each issue is addressed.

Environmental Issues

Noise from machinery operating within the extraction area, particularly given the proposed extraction activities would be closer to some surrounding rural residences than the existing approved operations, is a concern to some neighbours. At times, the cumulative noise generated from the approved extraction activities of the quarries in the area has been considered disruptive to normal daily activities. Essentially, noise impacts from the extraction operations are considered to periodically affect the resident's amenity and way of life.

Air quality, particularly dust with its potential health impacts, is a concern to some surrounding residents. Uncertainty exists whether the dust fallout from the extraction operations is affecting the quality of water in their rainwater tanks resulting from rainfall washing dust from their roofs into their tanks. Concerns were expressed that Cleary Bros may not have enough water to manage dust within the extended extraction area. The adequacy of the air quality monitors is a concern to the owners of "Figtree Hill".

Physical health concerns related to the chemical content of the blast fumes and the risk from crystalline silica in the rock that is blasted.

Noise and vibration from blasting has been a concern to some neighbours on occasions principally with respect to the perceived risk of structural damage to their homes, and potential long-term deterioration of their historic buildings.

Flyrock from blasting is a concern to the adjoining neighbours on "Figtree Hill", potentially affecting their personal safety and the safety of stock.

The destruction of native flora and fauna and habitat for fruit bats created by the planned removal of the large Moreton Bay Fig trees within the Project Area.

The reduction of flow in local springs upslope from the Stage 7 extension area is of concern to the owners of "Figtree Hill".

Each of the above issues was also referred to in the context of the cumulative impacts of Cleary Bros' extraction area with those of the nearby quarries operated by Boral and Holcim (see **Figure 5.1**) and Hanson at Bass Point (to the east of **Figure 5.1**).

Economic Issues

The potential for the ongoing operation of the extraction area to impact upon property prices and saleability of properties was raised by some surrounding rural land holders. Some expressed a concern that close neighbours to the extraction area are bearing the cost for the benefits of the wider community that need/use the Quarry's products.

Business opportunities to develop farm stay and B&B accommodation and other land uses would be adversely affected by the extended extraction operations.



The enhanced community wellbeing from continuation of job opportunities and community investment was noted as a positive impact.

Social Issues

Mental wellbeing concerns centred on the following.

- The frustrations and stresses caused by living with cumulative quarrying impacts.
- The associated decline in rural and social amenity and the devaluation of properties.
- The stress and uncertainty about the Project and changes to adjacent land use.
- A lack of trust in systems used to influence project design and operational management.
- The removal of heritage items (i.e. the “Belmont” Main House and related structures) and further changes to land use in the Wentworth Hills was a concern in terms of the sense of loss of community character.

Reduced visual amenity and changes to surroundings arising from views of the extraction area and extraction activities is a concern to the owners of “Figtree Hill” as the Stage 7 extraction area would be potentially visible from the residences on the property and the rural farm land within the property. The extraction operations in Stage 7 would progressively become more visible than the current extraction operations in Stages 1 to 6.

5.2 Government Agencies

5.2.1 Engagement Carried Out

Cleary Bros initially consulted with the then Department of Planning, Industry and Environment (DPIE) (now Department of Planning and Environment (DPE)), as required under Schedule 2, Part 2(3)(1) of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Regulation 2000* to obtain the Planning Secretary’s Environmental Assessment Requirements (SEARs) for the Project. This consultation involved providing the Department with a Scoping Report introducing the Project and providing an overview of the Project, its environmental setting, strategic and statutory context and proposed community engagement.

The DPE circulated the Scoping Report to a range of State Government agencies and Shellharbour City Council seeking their respective requirements for issues to be addressed in the EIS for the Project. The DPE’s requirements and those provided by the State Government agencies and Council were collectively assembled and forwarded to Cleary Bros as the Project SEARs on 3 October 2019. Supplementary SEARs were provided by then DPIE on 11 March 2021 principally reflecting the input from the Commonwealth Department of Agriculture, Water and Environment (DAWE) following the submission of a referral to the Department on 24 December 2020 in accordance with the provisions of the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999*.

RWC subsequently followed up each of the State agencies nominated by DPE in the initial SEARs to seek any additional requirements beyond those provided to the DPE. **Table 5.1** lists the agencies approached by DPE for their requirements together with the agencies subsequently approached by RWC on behalf of Cleary Bros.



Table 5.1
Government Agency Consultation

Agencies Consulted by DPE	Agencies Consulted by RWC and/or Cleary Bros
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shellharbour City Council • DPIE – Biodiversity and Conservation Division • Environment Protection Authority • DPIE – Division of Resources and Geoscience • DPIE – Water Division • NSW Rural Fire Service • Roads and Maritime Service 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DAWE – Commonwealth Department of Agriculture, Water and Environment • Department of Premier and Cabinet – Heritage • DPIE – Division of Primary Industry • DPIE – Crown Lands • South East Local Land Services • Water NSW • NSW Health

Note: Agency names correct at the time of initial consultation. Some agency names have changed in the intervening period.

5.2.2 Government Issues

The issues that the NSW Government agencies, Shellharbour City Council and DAWE have requested to be addressed in the EIS were provided in correspondence from the respective agencies. It is recognised that some requirements provided were generic in nature and not relevant to the Project. Those issues that are relevant to the Project are listed in **Appendix A** together with the section(s) where each issue is addressed. In some cases, the issues are addressed in the Specialist Consultant Studies that accompany the main volume of the EIS.

5.3 Future Community Engagement

Cleary Bros proposes to maintain a proactive approach to ongoing community engagement through the implementation of the following.

1. Direct contact with its fence-line neighbours at a frequency agreed upon with each neighbour, including an invitation for a site visit to view the proposed activities operating within the existing quarry.
2. Direct contact with other surrounding rural property owners when approached or at a frequency that is otherwise reasonably requested by the property owner.
3. Ongoing participation in the Community Consultative Committee.
4. Posting the following information on Cleary Bros' website.
 - Cleary Bros Environmental Policy
 - The current EIS and supporting documents
 - The current Development Consent and Environment Protection Licence
 - All current environmental management plans
 - Recent Annual Reviews
 - Recent Environment Protection Licence monitoring data
 - Recent minutes from Community Consultative Committee meetings
 - Recent Independent Environmental Audit reports
 - Complaints register
5. Continued engagement with the wider community on Cleary Bros' activities through social media channels.



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