

Limesand Extraction - Lancelin
Endeavour Resources Limited

Report and Recommendations
of the
Environmental Protection Authority

Environmental Protection Authority
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1. BACKGROUND

The issue of sand mining in the Lancelin dunes by Endeavour Resources Limited was initially referred to the former Department of Conservation and Environment, by the Shire of Gingin, in October 1985.

Following initial discussions with the Shire and the Department of Mines on this matter a number of pending mining tenement applications were later referred to the Department for comments and recommendations. On the basis of these referrals conditions were recommended to the Department of Mines to ensure that the aesthetic nature of the area was retained and recreational activities were not interfered with.

These conditions were generally imposed upon granting of the various tenements. This included a condition requiring that all operations cease on 30 June 1987 or after a total of 2 000 tonnes of limesand had been removed, whichever event would occur first, and no further mining operations being carried out until:

- (i) the lessee has submitted a plan of all proposed future mining operations and measures to safeguard the environment; and
- (ii) the plan has been approved by the Minister for Minerals and Energy.

2. PROPOSAL

In accordance with the conditions of the mining leases, a mining plan was submitted to the Department of Mines by Endeavour Resources Limited to continue mining operations in the Lancelin dunes. These plans were subsequently referred to the Environmental Protection Authority for assessment with respect to the environmental aspects of the proposal.

This proposal discussed various stages of development through the perceived life of the project: initially removing sand from low lying dunes west of the main dune system where previous operations were carried out. This would have required transport of material through the Lancelin Townsite.

A modified proposal has since been submitted to the Authority proposing to re-locate the sand mining operations to an area in the vicinity of the Shire's rubbish tip and sand pit. Access to the site will be gained via the existing tip road, south of the townsite. This would remove the need for trucks to pass through the Lancelin townsite.

In the Company's revised proposal it is estimated that approximately 1 000 tonnes of sand will be mined in 1988 with tonnages likely to increase by 1 000 tonnes each year to a maximum extraction rate of about 30 000 tonnes per year. This would result in around 15 000 tonnes of sand being removed from an area of about 0.3 hectares over the next five years.

3. ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

As this proposal was identified as being likely to attract a high degree of local public interest the Authority determined that the proposal would require formal environmental impact assessment under Part 1V of the Environmental Protection Act, 1986.

The Authority also determined that the level of assessment would be Notice of Intent and that the mining plans submitted by the Company would be suitable for that purpose.

4. CONCLUSION

Upon assessment of both the initial and modified mining plans, it was recognized by the Authority that the likely environmental effects during the initial stage of the proposal for the removal of 15 000 tonnes over the next 5 years would be manageable as the area affected is primarily unstable mobile dunes devoid of any vegetation. It is also considered that this quantity of sand would represent only a minor proportion of the entire dune field.

5. RECOMMENDATION

The Authority concluded that the first stage of this operation would be environmentally acceptable subject to initial approval being limited to the extraction of 20 000 tonnes of material over the next 5 year period.

It is therefore recommended that the following conditions be imposed on the operations.

Mining to be limited to:

- (i) the removal of a total of 20 000 tonnes over the five year period from 1988 through 1992; and
- (ii) further extraction of material in excess of the cumulative 20 000 tonnes for the specified period or continued operations past 31 December, 1992 would require a further report to be submitted to the State Mining Engineer describing proposed operations and likely environmental effects; and approval being given to those operations by the State Mining Engineer following referral of the plans to the Environmental Protection Authority for assessment.