



*Gareth Ward — Member for Kiama  
Parliament of New South Wales  
Macquarie Street  
Sydney*

## **DUNMORE LAKES SAND EXTRACTION PROJECT**

Wednesday, 7th August 2019

***PRIVATE MEMBERS STATEMENT***  
*New South Wales Legislative Assembly*

**Mr GARETH WARD MP (Member for Kiama – Minister for Families, Communities and Disability Services) (7:55pm):**

In my inaugural speech in this place I talked about how important preserving and protecting our local environment is for me and our community. Since becoming a local MP, I have been strident in standing up for our community on such important matters as coal seam gas in water catchments as well as the need to preserve and protect prime agricultural land and farmland from destruction. But tonight I bring to the attention of the House both my and our community's opposition to a proposal for the Dunmore Lakes sand extraction project. I will outline the reasons for opposing this application that covers two areas, known as 5A and 5B.

First, the proposal before the Independent Planning Commission is a modification to an existing consent. Indeed, sand mining in our region is not new. However, when this application was approved in 1999 only four stages of the original sand mine were sought. In what seems to be an extraordinary stretch, the applicant has asked for a modification to an old consent for a fifth stage at a location over a kilometre away. When only four stages were applied for, it seems odd that a modification could be considered in this way. It is with concern I note a similar move in relation to extensions of a sand mine at Gerroa. Unlike the existing extraction areas, the proposed site has the potential to impact on coastal wetlands and endangered ecological communities such as the Bangalay Sand Forest, in addition to impacts on tourism and the scenic amenity so valued by residents and all who visit my beautiful electorate.

Secondly, having been heavily involved in the development of the Illawarra-Shoalhaven Regional Plan, I am acutely aware that this plan identified strategic assets in our region. These include sandmining assets. The proposed extraction area known as 5B was not identified as a mineral resource area in the plan. The Shellharbour Local Environment Plan has also identified part of the proposed extraction area as E3 Environmental Management. Both the local and State strategic documents simply do not permit this proposal due to the manner and form of this

application. Thirdly, I note that the environmental assessment shows that stage 5A covers flood-prone land including Rocklow Creek. Stage 5B covers the Minnamurra River.

Our community holds concerns that an extractive industry of this nature could result in ground surface erosion and result in siltation of local waterways. Indeed, locals will tell you that the area covered by 5B is very low lying, which could have deleterious impacts on groundwater resources and surface water with significant impacts of adjacent wetlands. Those risks are simply too great to satisfy a mining company. My concerns around groundwater and hydrology are compounded when considering the proximity of this proposal to the Minnamurra Waste Recycling Depot. If this matter is not given surgical attention, like our community I am concerned that leachate-contaminated ground under the landfill could move towards the dredging site or the neighbouring estuary and the impacts if that should occur. From the documents available, the attention given to this concern is manifestly inadequate.

Fourthly, I am concerned that neither council nor the community have been given access to the 5B area to undertake an inspection. I would ask the department to allow a small delegation of councillors and community representatives to inspect the site—after all, what does the department have to hide? Two public meetings have been held in relation to this matter, the second one attracting over 1,000 people. A community resolution was passed.

For the benefit of the House, it read: "This meeting of concerned residents of Kiama, Shellharbour and the wider community present are totally opposed to any sand mining proposal in the flood plain and on land adjacent Riverside Drive adjoining the Minnamurra River. We are in full support of both Shellharbour City Council and Kiama Municipal Council who are strongly opposed to this proposal".

It was moved by the Friends of the Minnamurra River, who have been active on this particular proposal. It is also important to note that both the Kiama and Shellharbour City councils oppose this proposal. Time does not permit me to go into the level of detail I would like to provide on each of the above points of concern.

However, this proposal simply burdens our community and our natural environment beyond any reasonable expectation. From the manner in which this proposal has been lodged, through to the bewildering lack of detail on key questions that must be answered by the assessor, this proposal raises far too many questions that have simply not been resolved. For these reasons I join with my local community in opposing this proposal. When an application of this significance is made it is important to have sound detail. It is this detail and these questions that I ask the assessors to consider when determining this application. I call on the Independent Planning Commission to reject this proposal.