

MERIDAN PLAINS SAND RESOURCE AREA

INFORMATION SHEET – October 2010

BACKGROUND

The Meridan Plains Extractive Resource Area is located on the western fringe of the coastal urban communities of Caloundra West and Kawana Forest. The Area is situated just south of the proposed future Greenfield Major Development Area of Palmview and the existing urban community of Sippy Downs. The Area is generally bound by Caloundra Road to the south, the Bruce Highway to the west, Laxton Road to the north and Meridan Way in the east and is estimated to be 1095 hectares in size (which is made up of approximately 714 hectares of potential extraction area and 381 hectares of proposed separation/buffer area).

The Meridan Plains Extractive Resource Area is identified as Key Resource Area 49 (KRA 49) for the extraction of fine to coarse-grained sand under *State Planning Policy 2/07 – Protection of Extractive Resources*. (See attached map) The South East Queensland (SEQ) Regional Plan 2009 – 2031 also identifies and protects the Mooloolah River floodplain for extractive resources.

The KRA is recognised and protected under Caloundra City Plan 2004 as an Extractive Resource Area but was not intended to be exploited during the life of the Caloundra City Plan 2004, so as to enable resolution of long term land use strategies for the area.

Caloundra City Council on 7 December 2006, resolved to proceed to undertake investigations in relation to the Meridan Plains Extractive Resource Area, subject to the resolution of cost recovery arrangements with landowners and other interested stakeholders within the Meridan Plains Extractive Resource Area, in accordance with the Council's *Policy Statement No. 769 – Cost Recovery Arrangements for the Supply of Planning Services in respect of the Meridan Plains Extractive Resource Area*.

Caloundra Council drafted a planning scheme amendment (Amendment 3C to Caloundra City Plan 2004) to facilitate appropriate development of KRA 49. Prior to drafting the planning scheme amendment, Caloundra Council arranged for landowners within the KRA to contribute funds towards targeted preliminary investigations. These investigations informed the preparation of the draft planning scheme amendment. The draft amendments were considered by the state government before public notification occurred.

The Sunshine Coast Regional Council publicly notified the amendment during March to May 2009. Council received and considered 15 submissions from the community.

On 10 December 2009, Council resolved to forward the draft amendments to the Caloundra City Plan in relation to Meridan Plains Extractive Resource Area (as amended after considering public submissions) to the Minister for Infrastructure and Planning for final consideration of state interests. Council has received the final

response from the Minister to proceed to adoption of the draft amendments, subject to conditions.

These amendments and a Council resolution dated 10 December 2009 required the preparation of a lake management plan, landform design and site rehabilitation plan and a site management plan. This resolution also identified the need for a funding group to be established in order to determine a funding model for the establishment of further investigative studies.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

1. *Why does sand need to be extracted from this area?*
South East Queensland is in short supply of this resource, given the high rates of growth occurring in the region. This resource will supply the greater Sunshine Coast Area for up to 60-100 years. The extent of the resource exploited and the end use will be carefully considered, given the sites proximity to urban areas.
2. *Meridan Plains is close to residential areas – is it suitable for this purpose?*
The Department of Mines and Energy identified the Meridan Plains Extractive Resource Area (MPERA) as a significant sand resource for South East Queensland. The department concluded the use could likely co-exist with nearby existing and future residential development.
3. *Will there be effects on local residents from noise, dust, transport trucks or other activities at the extraction site?*
Extraction and washing of sand is generally a 'wet' process, with little opportunities for dust resulting from this process. Each approval for sand extraction will have conditions relevant to the Environmentally Relevant Activity (ERA) and council conditions will mitigate potential airborne particulates from quarry activities, on site and along haulage routes. This will include the implementation of a site-based dust management plan that will include the covering of trucks during transportation and water trucks to wet the roads. Extraction areas are limited to small areas within the site at any one time, combined with progressive land rehabilitation through the implementation of a site rehabilitation and landform design plan. The development includes the provision of visual/vegetation buffers, a total area of 381 hectares.
4. *How far away is the closest residence to the resource area?*
The closest residence (south of resource area) is approximately 100 metres from the edge of the resource boundary. Other residences are located between 100 metres and over 1 km away. The location of the residences to the resource does not mean that they will be located within that distance, to the activity. It is expected the first activity will commence nearer the middle of the site, where this nearest residence is approximately 690 metres away from any initial activity (located north, north-west of resource area). See attached map 'Distances to Residences'.
5. *What public consultation has been undertaken for this proposal?*
Public consultation occurred as part of the process of amending Caloundra City Plan 2004. The draft planning scheme amendments were placed on public display from 30 March 2009 to 15 May 2009 in accordance with Schedule 1 of the repealed Integrated Planning Act 1997. A total of 15 submissions were received in response.

6. *Is the Meridan Plains Extractive Resource Area recognised within the SEQ Regional Plan?*

The Meridan Plains Extractive Resource Area was identified as a significant extractive resource in the former 2005 version of the SEQ Regional Plan and this status has remained unchanged in the current 2009-2031 version of the Plan, referred to as Map 8 'Rural Production and Natural Resources'. The site is located within the Regional Landscape and Rural Production Area.

7. *What is the nature of draft planning scheme amendments relating to Meridan Plains Extractive Resource Area?*

Council Officers will seek Council adoption of draft scheme amendments, providing Council agrees with the funding strategy. A summary of the draft Planning Scheme amendments are as follows:

- Amendments to the Mooloolah Valley Planning Area Code to provide for extractive industry to occur within the Meridan Plains Extractive Resource Area during the life of the Planning Scheme.
- Amendments to the Development Assessment Tables to make extractive industry code assessable within the Meridan Plains Extractive Resource Area. Code assessable applications are not publicly notified.
- Amendments to the Extractive Industry Code to include a new section relating specifically to development in the Meridan Plains.
- New specific outcomes relating to Master Planning & Development Principles, and Site Management.
- New maps that refine the potential extractive outcomes for the KRA.

8. *Have studies been undertaken to determine what impacts may occur on the local environment?*

In 2007/2008 select investigative studies were undertaken to inform the preparation of the amendments to Caloundra City Plan 2004. Further studies are required as determined by the planning scheme amendments and Council resolution OM09/378, 10 December 2009. This resolution required the identification of a funding strategy that enables the development of the Lake Management Plan, Final Landform Design and Site Rehabilitation Plan.

9. *What will be the size and duration of the project?*

The potential extraction area is 714 hectares with 381 hectares of proposed separation/buffer area. There is approximately 100 million tonnes of fine to coarse-grained alluvial sand with an average thickness of 10 metres, with overburden ranging from 0.5 metres to 7 metres in depth. Potential extraction activities may extend up to and beyond 60 years, depending on demand.

10. *Are there any approvals over the site and what process is required for development applications?*

Council has received an impact assessable application for development of Lot 4 RP210048 (application number 2009/61-00001). This site is approximately 30 hectares in size. Information regarding this application can be accessed via PD on line at Council's website. Once the planning scheme amendments are adopted, all applications will be code assessable, provided they comply with the applicable codes in Caloundra City Plan 2004.

11. *What degree of vegetation is to be lost in the development of this site?*

Most of the vegetation in the Key Resource Area is located adjacent to Mooloolah River and will be retained within a 60 metre buffer area. All other vegetation that is considered significant (south eastern corner and small section within north-

eastern portion of the site) will be retained and protected by a 50 metre buffer. In other parts of the site, there is minimal vegetation, due to past cane growing and grazing activity. Extraction activities are limited to small areas within the site at any one time and are combined with progressive land rehabilitation through the implementation of a site rehabilitation and landform design plan.

12. What will be the route followed by trucks transporting sand?

The haulage route will utilise Sattler Road and Westaway Road, connecting directly to Caloundra Road.

13. Is this site to be used for sand mining?

The proposed sand extraction activities involve the wet extraction and processing (generally screening and washing) of sand. This activity retains the physical properties of the sand. Sand mining on the other hand, goes through a process in which the physical properties of the sand are changed (foundry purposes eg. sand casting). The sand properties within the Meridan Plains Extractive Resource Area are suitable for, and will generally be utilised in its natural form for construction purposes (eg. concrete).

14. Is the generation of silica dust likely?

The generation of silica dust is unlikely due to the nature of the wet removal and processing of the sand (see response to Q.3). Development approval under the *Sustainable Planning Act 2009* and *Environmental Protection Act 1994* requires that any person carrying out an environmentally relevant activity (ERA) must hold, or be acting under, a registration certificate for that activity. This activity will be subject to ERA conditions and relevant Council conditions. An Environment Management Plan (including an air quality management plan) is required for such activity and provides the framework for environmental management on the site and is a practical guide at the operational level to contain environmental impacts.

MERIDAN PLAINS KEY RESOURCE AREA MAP

The attached map identifies the extent of KRA 49. The details of the map illustrate the Resource/Processing Area, the Separation Area (buffers) and Transport Routes.

In the near future Council will further consider a planning scheme amendment map that refines the potential extraction outcomes for the KRA. The map will be publicly released after Council has made its decision.

