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SAND FIGHT OVER MINE PLAN

Sound Telegraph, Rockingham



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EXCLUSIVE

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The Kwinana council could take legal action after a controversial mine got the go-ahead from the Federal Government.

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Mine 'threat' to bushland

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A proposal by mining company, Hanson, to clear vegetation to undertake sand extraction on Lots 53 and 1320, Banksia Road, Wellard, was approved by the Department of Agriculture, Water and Environment in June.

But the City was blindsided by the approval and says it only found out a few weeks ago.

Dust, noise, truck movements and loss of wildlife, including Carnaby's black cockatoos, are among residents' concerns.

Kwinana Mayor Carol Adams said the City was shocked and disappointed and was exploring all legal options. "As a council, we still maintain the view that

this site should not be cleared for the purposes of mining operation, due to a number of ecological impacts," she said.

"Furthermore, this site is currently managed by the City as a flora and fauna conservation reserve, due to its excellent condition and its high species richness and diversi-

ty." She said the City was not advised of the decision and only found out after it asked for an update.

The City has the backing of Stop the Banksia Road Sand Mines action group that claims the project will destroy the "ecologically unique and diverse" bushland.

The group say it is a "great shame" the Federal Government granted ap-

provals given the number of "errors and omissions" in the environmental report, the "non-conformance" to buffer zones and impacts to surrounding residences, which "remain unaddressed".

"This is the best piece of Banksia bushland in any of the metro area — it's the jewel in the crown of Kwinana bushland," president Steve Sturgeon said.

"We're a long way from giving up."

A Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment spokeswoman said residents had opportunities to make submissions as part of the assessment process, and issues raised were taken into account.

"There were multiple op-

portunities for public submission and the final approval was notified publicly," she said.

The decision could be subject to judicial review by the Federal Court.

An application for judicial review must usually be made within 28 days of receiving the statement of reasons for the decision.

A Hanson spokesperson said the company was committed to the protection of the environment, and continuous improvement of production and environmental practices.

"Hanson is confident it can meet the stringent air quality and noise management conditions required by relevant government authorities and is committed to implement-



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ing a sustained community consultation process to ensure that there is no significant impact on local residents.”

The spokesperson said community representatives, as part of the consultation group, would play a key role.