

Department of State Growth

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Ms Ann Cunningham
Tasmanian Planning Commission
By email: tpc@planning.tas.gov.au

George Town draft LPS Response to directions and further comments

I refer to the hearing into the George Town draft LPS and the subsequent directions letter dated 31 March 2023. The Department of State Growth (State Growth) makes the following response and additional comments.

State road casement

No recent or current road upgrade projects in the George Town municipality and therefore no changes are requested to the Utilities Zone applying to the State road casement.

Mineral resources (sand)

In response to the Commission's direction of 31 March 2023:

- 177 Saltwater Road, Pipers Brook (folio of the Register 221927/1) contains 8,342,000m³ of estimated sand resource. The conservation covenant was created on 23/2/2011 and was assessed by Mineral Resources Tasmania (MRT) in 2011 and remains available under the *Mineral Resources Development Act 1995* (MRDA);
- 95 Gees Marsh Road, Bellingham (folio of the Register 121822/2) contains 3,270,000m³ of estimated sand resource. The conservation covenant was created on 10/1/2013 and was assessed by MRT pre-2016, and remains available under the MRDA; and
- 94 Gees Marsh Road, Bellingham (folio of the Register 121822/1) contains 5,678,000m³ of estimated sand resource. The conservation covenant was created on 19/5/2006 and was assessed by MRT in 2011 and remains available under the MRDA.

Sand resource estimations are derived from the MRT 1:25,000 geological mapping. Please note, the estimates provided are conservative and are in the order of lower estimated resource. Definitive sand resource estimates would require on-site evaluation, including extensive exploration works.

MRT does not have any direct input into the creation of conservation covenants. They are managed by the Department of Natural Resources and Environment Tasmania (NRE Tas) under the *Nature Conservation Act 2002* via the [Private Land Conservation Program](https://nre.tas.gov.au/conservation/conservation-on-private-land/private-land-conservation-program)¹. However,

¹ <https://nre.tas.gov.au/conservation/conservation-on-private-land/private-land-conservation-program>

conservation covenants once registered against a title are **not** automatically excluded from the *Mineral Resources Development Act 1995* (MRDA). MRT is provided annually with a list of all conservation covenants. MRT assesses all new conservation covenants and makes a determination on whether to exclude the area within the conservation covenant from the MRDA or for it to remain available. This assessment is based on the potential resource contained within the land parcel. For instance, 177 Saltwater Road, Pipers Brook, 95 Gees Marsh Road, Bellingham, and 94 Gees Marsh Road, Bellingham are all available under the MRDA.

As noted at the hearing, continual removal of land from the accessible resource base has led to sand resource constraint issues in the south of Tasmania. The resource in the northern region is therefore strategically important, as it holds the most significant and easily accessible sand resources in the State.

Fragmentation of the region through changes in zoning could sterilise significant sand resources as has occurred in the south. State Growth reiterates the comments made in the representation in relation to the Northern Tasmania Regional Land Use Strategy, specifically noting Action ED-A12 to *'Identify and protect extractive and mineral resources for potential future extraction... and protect these, ensuring that planning preserves the opportunity for discovery and development of new resources in appropriate areas'* (underline added).

Bell Bay

State Growth's representation on the George Town draft Local Provisions Schedule included the following paragraph:

The retention of general industrial zoning over the entirety of PID 252678/1 is recommended for review. This zoning precludes use of the area for extractive industries despite the prospective nature of this area for development associated with industrial activities and proximity to the Bell Bay Port for export.

As this was not explored at the hearing, the following additional details are provided.

A large portion of folio of the Register 252678/1 sits to the east of the East Tamar Highway (Plate 1) and the geology is mapped as Tasmanian Dolerite. Much of this same area is overlaid by contain Exploration Release Area 1189 (ERA 1189). ERA 1189 is the result of a previously held Exploration Licence that defined a Dolerite resource. The previous licensee relinquished the tenement and the area is being made available by MRT as an Exploration Release Area due to its high prospectivity.

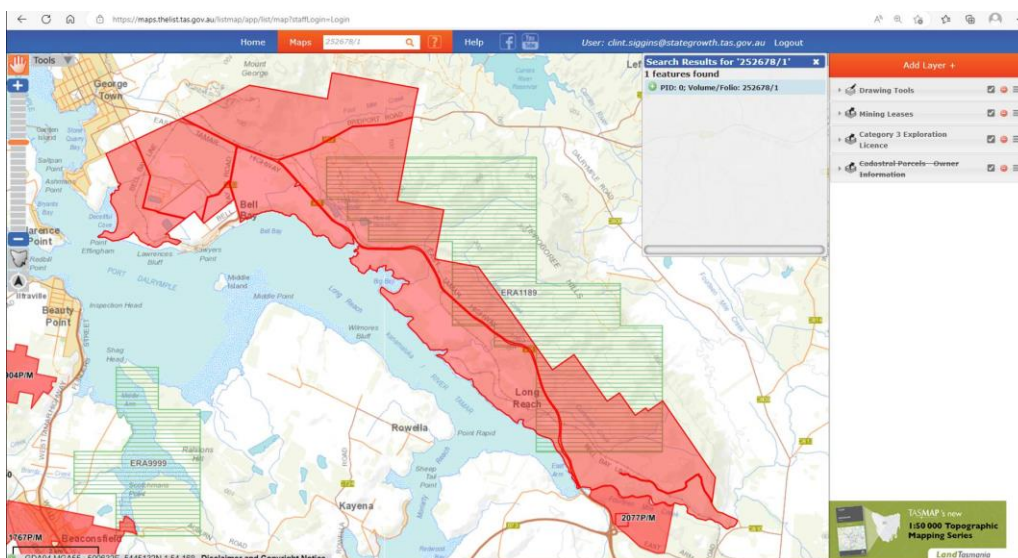


Plate 1: PID 252678/1 with Exploration Release Area (ERA 1189) overlay

The General Industrial Zone prohibits extractive industries. Given the high prospectivity of the land to the east of the East Tamar Highway, the Department of State Growth recommends that George Town Council consider including a site-specific qualification to allow Extractive Industry use and development. This would provide the opportunity to potentially develop construction mineral resources in the area that is already has a defined resource and is an easily accessible resource for local domestic or interstate/international markets with close proximity to road, rail and sea transport options.

Please do not hesitate to contact Claire Armstrong, Senior Strategic Planner on (03) 6166 3397 or email planningpolicy@stategrowth.tas.gov.au who can coordinate engagement with relevant State Growth officers.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'J Verrier', with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

James Verrier
Director, Transport Systems and Planning Policy

28 April 2023