

C/M 28.6.10

Unimin set to return to court

Brian Williams

BELGIAN sand miner, Unimin, will front the Brisbane Magistrates Court next month over charges it took sand from North Stradbroke Island without appropriate approvals.

Unimin has sought to have the charges struck out, arguing its predecessor, ACI, had approval to remove the sand dating back to 1995.

However the matter was adjourned until next month during a brief hearing in the Cleveland Magistrates Court last Friday.

The matter depends partly on whether the sand is deemed a mineral or a building material. A second case will determine that.

Stradbroke Island Management Organisation's Jan Aldenhoven said the sand belonged to the island and should have been used for rehabilitation.

Conservationists have asked the Government not to renew mining leases on the island after Premier Anna Bligh announced half of North Stradbroke would be declared national park within 18 months.

C/M 1/7 to edit 28.6.10

New outlook for Straddie

IT'S great that the State Government has announced that most of North Stradbroke Island will be declared a national park by 2027. However, I'm worried about the amount of damage to the island that will be done if the Government also allows mineral sands extraction to continue until then.

The island has suffered enough damage. Its koala population is under significant threat. Mining cannot coexist with creating a real national park that preserves and protects the remaining natural forests and land forms of the island. The Government should not renew any mining leases, especially for a company that showed blatant disregard for the law by taking and selling sand to industry without permission.

Rehabilitation after mining is a very poor, second-rate substitute for natural landscapes. It's time to focus on building new, sustainable industries.

Mary Barram, Point Lookout