

# New life for old rutile mine

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By Helen Manusu

GREATER Taré City Council is extremely excited about an eco-resort planned for Crowdy Head.

The developers plan to transform a totally degraded six hectares of former rutile mine into a 'model' tourist resort surrounded by re-established ecology.

They plan to restore the area to an ecologically sustainable habitat for flora and fauna.

They will provide low-level accommodation in the restored eco-system to allow visitors to enjoy the new surroundings, and especially locally based tourist and beach activities.

The land lies between Crowdy Head Road and the Pacific Ocean, at the entrance to the seaside village, and has been desolate since being mined in the 1950s and 60s.

Architect Tony Wheeler heads the firm Environa Studio Pty Limited, and has worked extensively in Fiji and Indonesia on projects which have made tourist resorts more environmentally aware.

Mr Wheeler has been congratulated by Greater Taré City councillors for his vision.

Cr Tuck said council was thrilled to see the innovative use of the land, with the project being an excellent boost to the local economy.

There was unanimous consent for the development application, which carries a number of conditions.

With the equivalent of about 20 acres, and just 20 cabins and a central complex, the eco-resort will be a huge under-development of what could be possible, the meeting was told.

Back in the 1980s the land was filled for a proposed caravan park and was the subject of a major rezoning proposal for tourist and residential development. The land opposite was acquired for an extension of Crowdy Bay National Park and the major rezoning proposal did not proceed.

Then in 1993 an application was lodged with council to rezone the land for residential development. Council said then it favoured tourist facilities on the site, but would be prepared to examine the application for residential purposes if the applicants carried out an environmental study at their own expense.

That plan, too, did not proceed.

This time round, council is very happy with the fresh input and ideas.

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THE site will be revegetated to provide habitat for local fauna, which is now non-existent on the

land.

Revegetated areas will be segregated from active areas to assist with growth.

The land borders a secondary dune with fencing to be erected to protect the dunes, and access to the beach being via an existing 4WD access off Crowdy Head Road.

The two-level cabins will have two bedrooms and shower facilities on their upper levels, with kitchen, dining, living and toilet on the lower level.

The central facility will contain a meeting area, restaurant and kitchen, natural therapy centre with spa, pool, manager's residence and parking for 40 vehicles.

The facilities will be available for use by the public.

An artificial wetland will be created on the site, there will be composting toilets, rainwater tanks, and all waste water will

be filtered onsite.

Council is particularly excited about the resort's role in promoting tourism for the area, and the social interaction that will occur with the community, with public use of the restaurant, natural therapy centre and possibly a function centre for the community.