

GUNDAGI QUARRY, BANGOR DPEMP - SUPPLEMENT



CONTENTS

SCOPE..... 3

STORAGE AND HANDLING OF DANGEROUS GOODS.....3

TRAFFIC ASSESSMENT3

SURVEY WORK - BIODIVERSITY3

PAF4

BUFFER ZONE4

FINAL LANDFORM.....5

RESIDENCE LOCATION5

SCOPE

This EER Supplement has been prepared in response to a Supplement request issued by the Environment Protection Authority. The Council received 3 representations on the application which they provided to the EPA as part of the Level 2 assessment process.

STORAGE AND HANDLING OF DANGEROUS GOODS

The amount of fuel used on any given day will, like any quarry or activity that utilises machinery, be dependent upon the type of machinery being used and the amount of time it is operated. A fuel tanker of 400L capacity (an amount that is unlikely to be entirely used on any given day) will be used to store fuel at the quarry on the days that it operates – the fuel will be removed at the end of each day.

TRAFFIC ASSESSMENT

The TIA states –

‘The proposed development will not increase peak daily generation from the quarry, but will enable the quarry to produce more on a yearly basis. For this reason, the various junctions within the surrounding road network will continue to operate in a safe and efficient manner.’

Page 12 of the TIA states –

‘Whilst the overall annual production is proposed to increase, the peak daily and peak hour activity will remain the same. This is due to the constraints of daily production – the size of the quarry and the production techniques utilised results in a physical limit to the daily output of the quarry. The increased annual production is a result of more frequent higher outputs when demands increase.’

As described above, the peak daily generation and hourly generation of trucks can remain the same despite the quarry producing more material – there are simply more days per annum when carting occurs. Furthermore, the additional 1 hour (from 0600 to 0700 hrs Monday to Friday) requested through this development application does not automatically mean that there will be more trucks on each day – the operating hours are unrelated to the total number of daily vehicle movements, it is related to being able to start work at a time that allows cartage to works areas that is appropriate for the end user.

SURVEY WORK - BIODIVERSITY

We note that PCAB have criticised the apparent lack of detail in the DPEMP which, according to them, did not allow them to determine whether or not the quoted survey effort and methodology were appropriate. We further note that PCAB is unable to make an assessment of the likely impacts of the proposal on natural values.

The DPEMP states ‘The Mining Lease has been surveyed for its ecological and natural values in 2010 by Trawmana Environmental Consultants. The ML was re-surveyed in August and September 2014 by Van Diemen Consulting Pty Ltd with the findings provided here.’

The majority of the Mining Lease (and the new areas to be quarried) is existing pine plantation, evident by Figure 4-7-1. Only minor ‘slithers’ of native vegetation will be disturbed by the quarrying works – none of the vegetation communities present are of any conservation value. On this basis and the fact that when ecological surveys were conducted there was nothing of any conservation consequence to report it seemed unnecessary, both then and now, to compile a separate report.

To clarify here, no threatened flora species are known to occur in the ML based on Natural Values Atlas records, nor were any found during surveys of the ML – the native vegetation areas were surveyed for threatened flora species but none were found. A survey coincided with the flowering period of *Pterostylis grandiflora* (a species that has been recorded nearby). The other nearby recorded species, *Pultenaea mollis*, is an obvious shrub whether it is in flower or not – the species was not observed during either survey of the ML. Other species that occur within the region, such as *P. curviflora* var. *gracilis*, *Poa mollis* and *Pomaderris intermedia*, were also not observed within the ML.

No threatened fauna were recorded in the ML, nor was there any evidence (eg scats) of their presence in the ML. That said, most Tasmanian ecologists are aware that species such as Tasmanian devil, spotted-tailed quoll and eastern barred bandicoot are habitat generalists and consequently they occupy a wide range of habitats across a landscape – they are not necessarily limited geographically to a specific habitat type or location. Within the ML there were no visible signs of use of either the pine plantation or native forest areas by any conservation significant mammal species – there was also no evidence of dens or nests. While these animals may (and presumably do based on NVA data, Figure 4-7-2) exist in the area it is unlikely that the activity would have any substantial impact to any of them.

The Dam Permit issued by the ACDC considered both the impacts of the dam construction and its ongoing existence on the aquatic environment in the drainage line where the dam is to be constructed and downstream impacts. Furthermore the EPA standard conditions of water testing would presumably apply to this expanded activity as they have to the current activity. We have no reason to question the previous assessment conducted by the ACDC for its issuing of a Dam Permit (which included an assessment of giant freshwater crayfish habitat), which was included within an EPN by the EPA for the dam construction works.

As noted in the DPEMP, the activity will have no significant impact to any threatened species (flora and fauna) or vegetation communities.

PAF

The occurrence of PAF in the quarry has been the subject of considerable discussion with the EPA, and additional information on the matter (including the Petrology Report) was included in the DPEMP which was subsequently advertised pursuant to the statutory public comment period of 28 days.

No samples from the *new* areas proposed for quarrying have been tested for the presence or otherwise of PAF parent rock material– however comparable parent rock material and geological formations occur within the areas as those that are currently being quarried.

As noted on page 19 of the DPEMP there is a Commitment to test, by way of analysis comparable to that done for the Petrology report provided in Appendix , If PAF rock is detected in the quarry during works then further petrological testing could be conducted by MRT to confirm this. The proponent has considerable experience with the material being quarried and can visually identify rock material that may be of concern.

Indicators which will aid the early detection of PAF will include for example –

- Low water pH (<5.0) in water testing,
- Iron-staining in stagnant water bodies and drains,
- Suspicious parent rock/soil material – eg. black/brown shales, rocks with excessive/distinctive brown staining and leaching into surrounding rocks, clays and soils, and
- Presence of pyrite and/or other sulphide compounds (visibly detectable by yellow bands and streaks).

Also noted on page 19 of the DPEMP is that water testing of the water **discharging** from the pond (and also of the new pond once constructed). Of note is that the Dam Permit requires water testing be conducted during the dam construction works **when** there is flow. No additional water quality testing has occurred beyond that which is stated within the DPEMP as there has not been a discharge/flow to sample.

BUFFER ZONE

The Lease between the quarry applicant and the Minister administering the Mineral Resources Development Act is not part of nor open to consideration by this development application. The Lease, and its requirements of the Lessee, is a separate matter and its terms and conditions will be complied with under the Lease. Notwithstanding this, it is easily seen on the Extraction Plan maps (which are **clearly** identified as such) that an area of land is to be retained between the extraction areas and the boundary. For the existing pit, the drain at the southern edges an effective barrier to further south-ward extraction works.

FINAL LANDFORM

Benches will be reduced in height to comply with the Quarry Code of Practice 1999 upon closure. The cross-sections provided in the DPMP are to illustrate the act of benching in winning material and not the final landform, this will be subject to further review as the area being quarried is nearing exhaustion.

Semi-native vegetation is a term we have used to broadly encompass 'vegetation' that would include the presence of native and exotic species. As the quarry will be rehabilitated with tree and shrub species, and that it is not a natural environment (it is an anthropogenic one), it is reasonable to expect that the rehabilitation works will include some exotic species, especially those of widespread occurrence in disturbed areas (eg pasture herbs, thistles, grasses and daisies). Some areas may be reinstated as pine plantation. Therefore, final land use is to be woody vegetation (of variable species composition – native to the area and with some exotic species which would reflect the disturbed nature of the ground) and, where possible, some reinstatement of pine plantation on areas where the soil is suitable and slopes appropriate for the reforestation and future harvesting of pine.

RESIDENCE LOCATION

As the Lease is existing, the relationship of the activity to sensitive uses is of no relevance to MRT. Figures 4-4-3, 4-4-4 and 4-4-5 indicate the sensitive uses (dwellings) of relevance to this assessment process. Any other structures show in the aerial imagery, but not referred to as a sensitive use in the Figures, is not an approved dwelling based on the records held by the Launceston City Council that were provided to the consultant preparing the planning documentation.

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Document Status

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