

Operation of a Decomposed Basalt Rock Quarry "Red Hill", Munsies Road, Uralla NSW 2358

Statement of Environmental Effects

Development Description

The main development objective is to increase water security on Red Hill and utilize the extracted rock material to diversify farm income.

The proposal is to operate a Tier 3 commercial quarry on an existing quarried area for the extraction of gravel. The existing quarry has previously been a commercial operation supplying road base to local council and the DMR as noted in Attachment 1 and 1B, quarry no. 87. The former pits have produced three, so far, large farm dams which are used as farm stock water, tree line water and provided for free to contractors and Uralla Shire Council, to fix or maintain gravel roads in the local area and is also a good and clean source of water for use by Local Bush Fire Brigades as needed.

The main purpose of extending the gravel pits is as part of a property management plan to increase water security, as it is from those dams that water is pumped by solar pump to troughs around the property. The extracted broken stone will then be made available for use for local construction projects. This will provide the owner with a source of income diversification to offset risks produced by severe weather conditions such as drought on his agricultural business and to offset the cost of expanding the existing water storage capacity on farm.

There are very few local sites still in operation down from 140 plus quarries to around 20. Costs to haul material long distances involves a significant increase in cost to purchaser and vehicles on road for distances that could be reduced. Should this operation recommence it would provide an excellent resource for the Uralla and southern Armidale areas.

Extraction - will be by means of Caterpillar D8N Dozer. The material will be loaded onto trucks by both Case W20B Front End Loader or Komatsu Excavator PC95 and delivered as required.

Hauling - trucks for hauling away and delivery of the gravel will almost always be that of the owner and operator and will be a Semi-Tippers or Truck and Dog combination. These are smaller than the current B Double vehicles that use the Munsies Road for stock transport.

Traffic - The road that the current dams sit either side of is the Munsies Road. The gravel pit (and new dam) is proposed to be extended only on the southern side and further from the road than the existing dams (attachment 3). Munsies Road is used primarily by the Munsie family and their employees. Munsies Road is accessed off the Big Ridge Road, north east of the Uralla Village. All extraction, stockpiling and loading will take place away from the road and well within the owner's property (Attachment 6). It is proposed that an average 1-2 truck movements a day would be needed to cart the material from the quarry. There would be many days of no movements and some days of several movements. The owner/operator is very aware that dust

may be produced from the gravel road for one local property close to their home. This home is largely protected by vegetation, and the truck movements from the quarry should be no more than usual traffic (stated above smaller than B-Doubles that currently use the road). As the owner/operator of the quarry is local, a farmer and an experienced truck driver of over forty years he will ensure his driving of the trucks do not negatively impact his neighbours or community.

Road maintenance. Very few truck movements are predicted on the Munsies and Big Ridge Roads for haulage. As the trucks that will be most often used are already onsite and used locally by the owner, it is expected that any damage to the roads caused by these truck movements are in keeping with usual repair and maintenance requirements.

Employment

It is not intended to employ anyone to work at the quarry. However, employment will be offered to a part time diesel mechanic to maintain the quarry and other farm equipment and a full-time person for stock work elsewhere on the properties.

Quarry Operations

The site has historically operated concurrently as a grazing and quarry operation. It is proposed that this continues during operation of the quarry.

Tree species on the existing and proposed site have largely been cleared by previous owners. The quarry operations will not restrict access to water or the passage of stock or native animals and birds.

It is proposed to remove less than 30,000m³ per annum. This amount will always be less than the 30,000m³, as denoted by the NSW resources regulator as a tier 3 quarry, and will be determined by the time available by the owner and gravel requirements for local projects. It is proposed that extraction works will move in a southern direction, away from the Munsies Road. The gravel will be extracted in the direction of the centre of Red Hill rather than toward any neighbouring properties. It is not intended that very large stockpiles will be stored for indefinite amounts of time.

The hours of operation are proposed to be between 7.30am and 4pm Mon-Fri. The quarry will not operate every day, given that the owner has an agricultural operation that utilizes much of his time.

The quarry is determined to be a Tier 3 category operation by the NSW Resources Regulator and all conditions and safe work practices will be adhered to. The NSW Resources Regulator will regularly inspect records, operation practices and the site. Records of all weights and delivery addresses will be kept as per regulations and Uralla Council will be paid royalties or contributions for all deliveries outside of the Uralla Shire area.

Given the area of extraction is estimated to be 1.05ha and a maximum depth of 15 metres at less than 30,000 cubic meters a year, it should take a little over five years to complete the works, depending on the gravel being onsite. The new dam proposal is smaller than two of the three existing dams. The largest dam on Red Hill is 21 metres deep (Attachment 2 and Attachment 3).

Overburden will be stored in stockpiles and used on farm in erosion control projects, contour bank construction or for site rehabilitation. As this site has very little topsoil that is not gravel, there should be very small amounts of overburden produced.

Rehabilitation

At the cessation of operations the gravel extraction sites will form an increased dam capacity. The land immediately surrounding the quarry will continue to be natural pasture grazing land and padded out with stands diverse local species of trees and shrubs to provide shade and shelter to native fauna and stock. The owner has already completed a Biolinks project and plans to extend his commitment to the property's native diversity by planting many thousands more trees and shrubs.

Water

All stormwater run off will drain to the existing dams or pit floor. The loading and stockpile area should remain mostly dry. Operations will cease should the surrounding area become waterlogged by huge downpours. As noted by the topographical map – (attachment 5), the dams sit in a depression. Any overflows will drain to a dam further down on the map on the same property as seen in attachment 5 and marked with an **

The dams onsite currently provide water for the upkeep of the local roads to earthworks companies and council free of charge. It is the owners intention that this supply will be unaffected by the quarry operation as the existing dams will be unaffected.

Noise and Air Quality

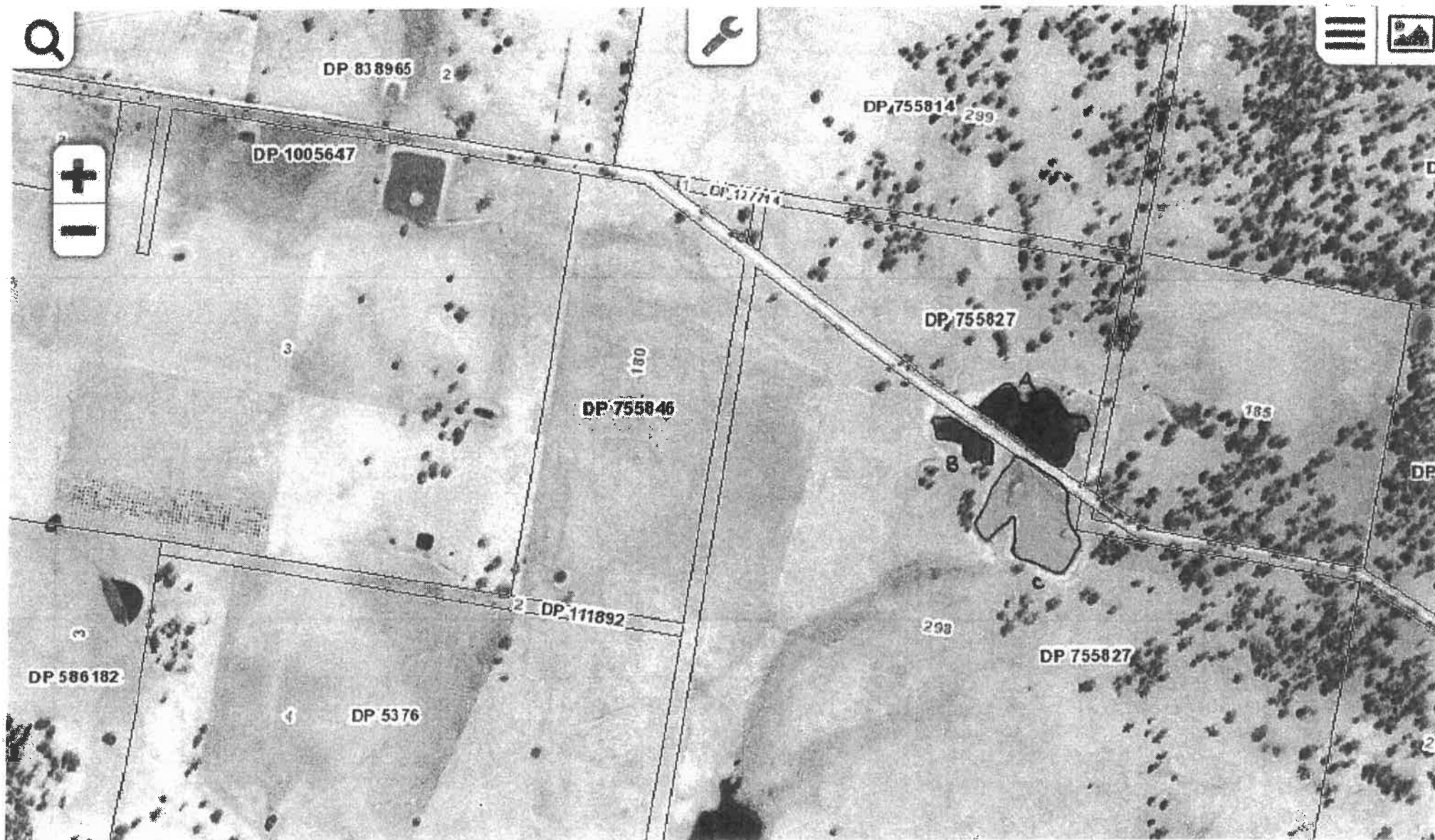
Noise levels will be consistent with the rural nature of the land. All machinery and vehicles used in the extraction, loading and hauling of the rock material are currently owned and used onsite for agricultural purposes by the owner. Air quality will remain unchanged given that all machinery is currently used on the farm. Any dust caused by the extraction should fall on the property and be buffered by trees and surrounding hills.

Zoning

The site is currently zoned rural. The extraction of the material to increase water security for agricultural purpose is consistent with this zoning. The quarry is currently used privately for on farm projects and has been previously operated commercially. (Attachment 1, No 87).

Neighbouring Residences

The nearest residential dwellings are more than 1.3km from the site as shown in Attachment 4 . All are shielded by surrounding trees. No neighbouring residence should have loss of visual amenity given the distance and topographical position which is in a depression with hills and rises in between the site and residences. (Attachment 5). The impact on local residents should be small to none. Given the site's isolation and distance from residences, the small amount of material to be removed annually and the infrequent nature of the operation.



1:9,028
0 0.1 0.2km

Approx existing area of dams
 A 1.056ha area
 450m perimeter
 B 3215m²
 275m perimeter

C 1.3787ha
 1.227KM

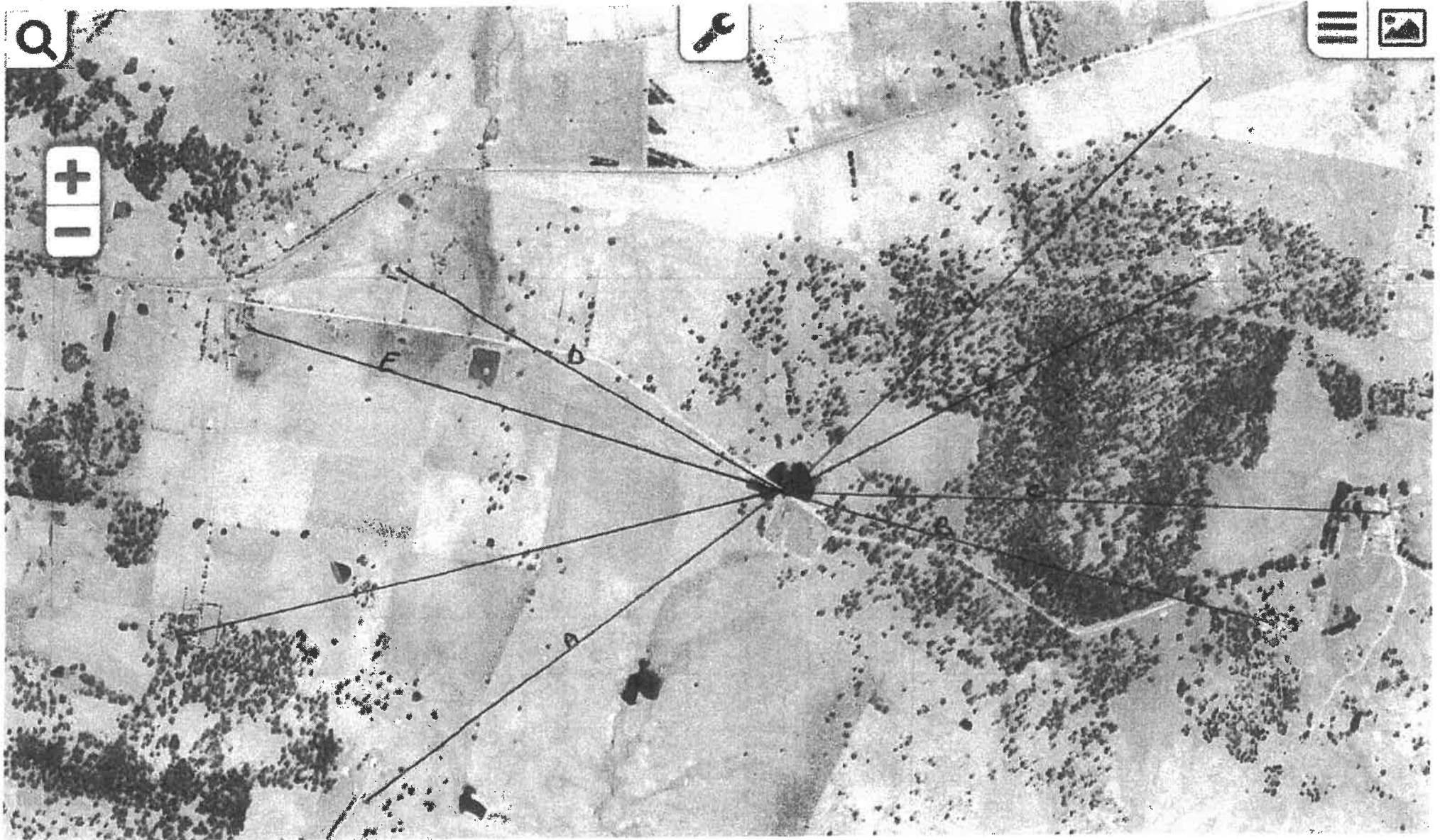
Attachment 2





Attachment 3

1:4,514
0 50 100m



Distance

1:18,056
0 0.2 0.4km

<https://maps.six.nsw.gov.au>

A 1.554km

B 1.493

C 1.807

D 1.862

E 1.731

F 1.858

G 1.432

H 1.782

Attachment 4

