



Your ref: 42-11174

EPA R&R No: 1423

MINISTER FOR ENVIRONMENT

EXPANSION OF JURIE GYPSUM MINING OPERATION ML70/1161, SHIRE OF DANDARAGAN, – PROPOSAL UNDER S46 OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION ACT 1986 TO AMEND CONDITION 8-1 OF MINISTERIAL STATEMENT 730

I refer to your letter of 1 December 2011 requesting the Environmental Protection Authority (EPA) inquire into and report to you under section 46(1) of the *Environmental Protection Act 1986* (EP Act) on CSR Gyprock Fibre Cement proposed changes to the implementation condition 8-1 for the Expansion of Jurie Gypsum Mining Operation (Ministerial Statement 730).

The following is the EPA's Report and Recommendations (No. 1423) to you pursuant to section 46(6) of the EP Act.

Introduction

The proponent, CSR Gyprock Fibre Cement, was granted approval (Ministerial Statement 730, 27 September 2006) for the mining of 12.7 hectares within Lake Gypsum and processing of approximately 1.3 million tonnes of gypsum recovered from within Mining Lease 70/1161 in the Shire of Dandaragan, approximately 10 kilometres north of Jurie.

In March 2010, the Office of the EPA (OEPA) conducted a site inspection of the proposal and identified that the proponent had dredged an area of under 12.7 hectares as approved, however the disturbance was outside the approved footprint allowed under Condition 8-1. Also identified, were discrepancies between mining operations and the description of the proposal as provided in Table 1 of Schedule 1 of Statement 730.

Following review of information provided by CSR, the OEPA determined that the disturbance outside the projects approved footprint had not resulted in additional environmental impacts and no further action was required.

The reasons for the activities occurring outside of the currently approved mining boundary have been the subject of detailed investigation by CSR. These investigations identified the causes to be due to the mining contractor not being properly aware of the correct coordinates of the approved mining boundary due to an obsolete scope of works document being provided, along with the lack of a formal survey of the approved boundaries prior to works commencing.

In response to this, CSR has undertaken a full management review of all implementation conditions relating to the site and has implemented an environmental management system to address previous issues. In addition, CSR engaged Jurien Surveys to undertake a detailed survey of the approved mining boundaries and to clearly re-peg the boundaries. The revised boundaries if approved, would be similarly pegged and then clearly communicated to the mining operator in line with CSR's revised environmental management system for the site.

In October 2011, CSR lodged their request under section 46 of the EP Act with new co-ordinates, the subject of this report. The amendment would mean that the size of the area to be dredged remains unchanged at 12.7 hectares; with only this area to be realigned. The revised area transposed from revised co-ordinates, is shown in the attached Figure 2.

CSR have continued monitoring since the commencement of mining and conducted a review of the surveys carried out since 2003. Other data analysed included surface and groundwater chemistry and hydrology. In summary, the findings from this review with regards to the aquatic biota, waterbirds and hydrology concluded that there is no foreseeable additional impact from CSR undertaking mining activities in the area outside the approved implementation area.

Discussion

During the evaluation of the section 46 request, advice was sought from the Department of Water and the Department of Environment and Conservation, and the proponent's information on the aquatic biota, waterbirds and the hydrology of Lake Gypsum was assessed.

Based on this consultation and information, the EPA is of the view that the continuation of mining within the revised area, would be unlikely to have any detrimental effect on the environment different from or additional to the original proposal. As a result, the EPA recommends that the existing co-ordinates in Condition 8-1 be amended to reflect the proponent's proposed change.

Condition 8-1 of Ministerial Statement 730 requires the proponent to ensure the implementation of the proposal is restricted by the 12.7 hectare area designated "X" within Mining Lease 70/1161, as shown in Figure 2, Schedule 1, and is contained within the geographical information system (GIS) co-ordinates listed in this Condition. The proponent has requested that Condition 8-1 be amended to refer to a revised Figure and revised GIS co-ordinates for the amended 12.7 hectare area.


In summary, if the amendment to Condition 8-1 is approved, the size of the area to be mined remains unchanged at 12.7 hectares; it is only the location that will change slightly.

EPA Recommendation

That the existing Condition 8-1 in Ministerial Statement 730 be revised so that it reads as follows:

8-1 The implementation of the proposal is restricted to the 12.7 hectare area designated "X" within Mining Lease 70/1161, as shown in Figure 2, Schedule 1, which is contained within the following co-ordinates, in eastings and northings:

Point 1 (308548.85 Easting; 6657270.11 Northing)
Point 2 (308622.89 Easting; 6657780.61 Northing)
Point 3 (308632.01 Easting; 6657843.00 Northing)
Point 4 (308857.64 Easting; 6657806.27 Northing)
Point 5 (308757.43 Easting; 6657238.31 Northing)



Dr Paul Vogel
CHAIRMAN

14 December 2011

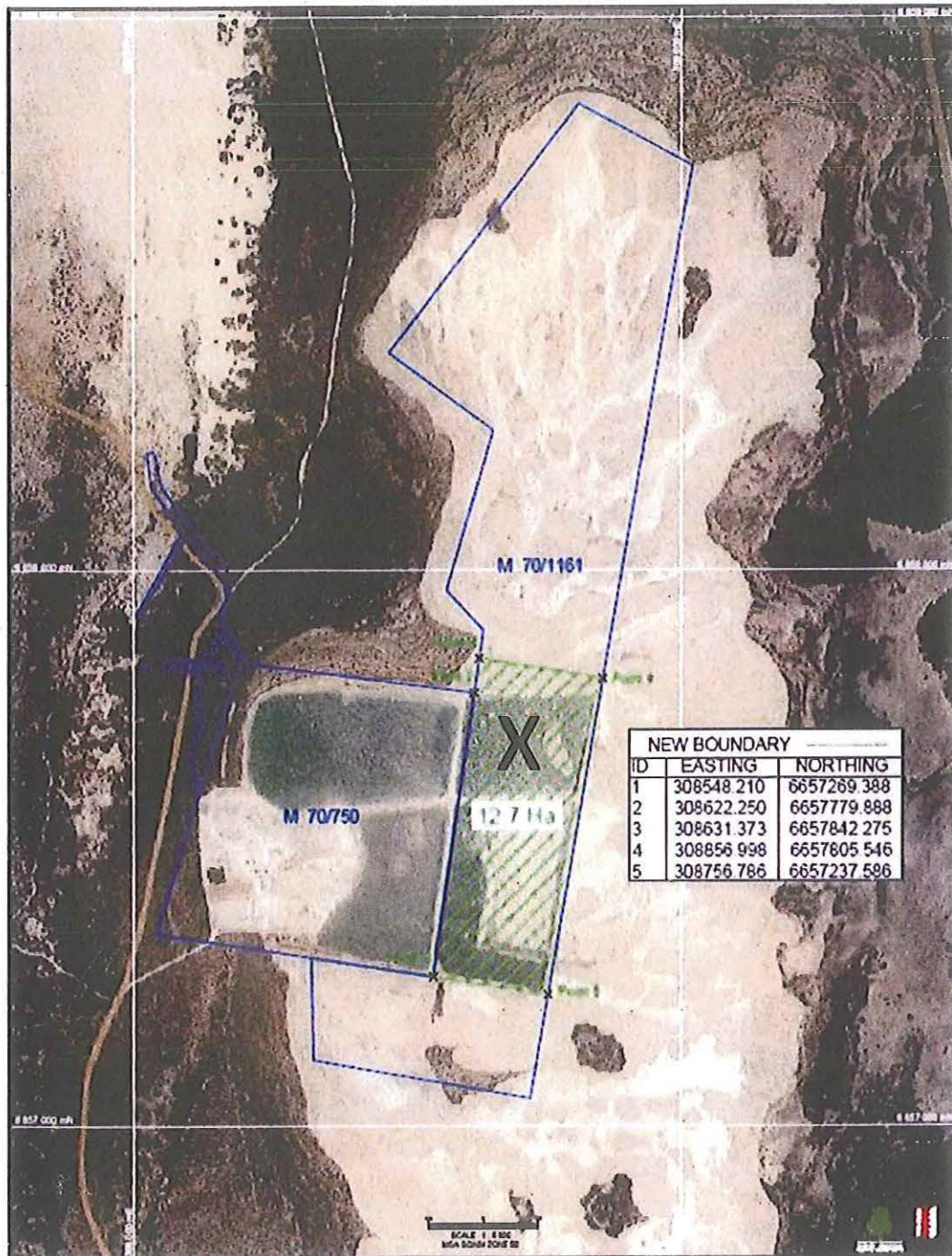


Figure 2 Implementation of the proposal restricted to 12.7 hectare area designated "X" within Mining Lease 70/1161