



SOUTHERN DOWNS REGIONAL COUNCIL SPECIAL MEETING OF COUNCIL

Dear Councillors

Your attendance is hereby requested at the Special Meeting of Council to be held in the Council Chambers, Southern Downs Regional Council, 64 Fitzroy Street, Warwick on **Monday, 15 July 2019** at **1:00PM**.

Notice is hereby given of the business to be transacted at the meeting.

David Keenan

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

12 July 2019

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1. **ATTENDANCE**
2. **APOLOGIES**
3. **DECLARATIONS OF CONFLICTS OF INTEREST**

4. SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT REPORTS

4.1 The Australian Local Government Association (ALGA) Drought Submission

Document Information

 Southern Downs REGIONAL COUNCIL	Report To: Special Council Meeting	
	Reporting Officer:	Meeting Date: 15 July 2019
	Development Assessment Coordinator	ECM Function No/s: 15.28.03

Recommendation

THAT Council agrees to provide a response to the Local Government Association of Queensland for inclusion on the proposed drought submission being prepared for the Federal Government.

Report

It has been requested for Council to provide a response to the Local Government Association of Queensland (LGAQ) who are in the process of preparing a Drought Submission for the Federal Government, which will be tabled with the Federal Minister for Water Resources, Drought, Rural Finance, Natural Disaster and Emergency Management, the Honorable David Littleproud MP.

To prepare the submission LGAQ issued Council with a number of questions that required response. The attachment to this report notes the LGAQ questions and Council's proposed response for inclusion in the LGAQ Drought Submission to the Federal Government.

The Federal Government is to be commended for the Drought funding program and its support for drought stricken communities such as the Southern Downs. In times of hardship, communities need for all levels of government to work in unison effort and collaborate. In this situation with such extreme drought affecting all of the residents of SDRC, it is important for Council to work with the State and Federal government to ensure that our region continues to grow and prosper.

Budget Implications

Nil

Policy Consideration

Nil

Community Engagement

Nil

Legislation/Local Law

Nil

Options

Council:

1. Agrees to provide a response to the Local Government Association of Queensland for inclusion on the proposed drought submission being prepared for the Federal Government.
2. Agrees with the input to each question and provides additional items to be submitted to the Local Government Authority of Queensland; or
3. Disagrees with the input to each question and does not submit the response to the Local Government Authority of Queensland.

Attachments

1. 10 Minutes with a Master Customer Evaluation [↓](#)
2. Submission [↓](#)

DHS	RFCS	St Vinnies	R Health	DAF	Rural Aid	QCWA	Comments
10 Minutes with a Master Evaluation Form - Warwick 8 May							
1	1	1	1	1	1	1	I found each session attended very informative. All the Masters were very polite and friendly. Very glad the SDRC cares for all farmers! Well done all!!!
1	1	1	1	1	1	1	Very friendly and helpful. Non judging
1	1	1	1	1	1	1	Lots of information, positive, friendly, non-judgemental, very very very helpful. Felt very positive mentally on leaving
1	1	1	1	1	1	1	Had some reservations before coming here. We are pleased to say we go away with some very positive information and a very positive outlook.
1	1	1	1	1	1	1	All the information was very helpful. Very supportive!
1	1	1	1	1	1	1	CWA and Rural Aid were very helpful
1	1	1	1	1	1	1	Excellent
1	1	1	1	1	1	1	Very informative sessions
1	1	1	1	1	1	1	Very well organised and professional.
1	1	1	1	1	1	1	All the information today was extremely
1	1	1	1	1	1	1	This was very helpful. We thought we were not eligible for help and were shown clearly that we are. Thank you very much! We did not know where to turn for help. Now I can get my car serviced and rego and tyres for the ute and more
1	1	1	1	1	1	1	We are appreciative of the initiation shown by SDRC in getting this show to help farmers and business in this shire during difficult times
1	1	1	1	1	1	1	While I do not feel that I am in the need of a portion of the services, the information which was provided is of great benefit, especially if rain does not arrive soon. The Centrelink girls in Warwick have been a great help. The whole Farm Household Assist Team have been a pleasure to have dealing with. As much as I hate to admit it, I have to thank the Warwick Council for running these sessions!!! As well as the contact Charee

							provides. Chris emailed me after the event to say information from Michael Fagg was fantastic too.
1	1	1	1	1	1	1	Today was very useful. Great for Primary Producers
1	1	1	1	1	1	1	Most Informative. Everyone is friendly. Speaking everyday language. Face to face and personal. Keep it up. Thankyou!
1	1	1	1	1	1	1	Very good - well organised. Well done council. Reps from various agencies all helpful and cordial and friendly
1	1	1	1	1	1	1	Thank you to SDRC for organising these sessions. Very helpful
1	1	1	1	1	1	1	All very helpful
1	1	1	1	1	1	1	Very informative, good to communicate with as well
1	1	1	1	1	1	1	
1	1	1	1	1	1	1	Information was excellent and very helpful. This has been wonderful
1	1	1	1	1	1	1	Very Good
1	1	1	1	1	1	1	I am very pleased I took time off to attend today and have explained to me the help and aids that are available to farmers in these very hard times of drought and shortages of fodder and feeds. I had made the serious mistake of believing the widespread rumours that the paperwork necessary to access the aid was too onerous. It was explained to me that skilled people are only too willing to help with this. Because I am computer illiterate, my emails have to be accessed by one of my Toowoomba family. Thank you too to Rural Aid.
1	1	1	1	1	1	1	All very informative and well run. Thank you for giving us the opportunity to participate.

10 Minutes with a Master Evaluation Form - Stanthorpe 9 May							
1	1	1	1	1	1	1	All very good info and really lovely representatives.
1	1	1	1	1	1	1	Very well organised sessions. Good helpful information. Would recommend to others if on again
1	1	1	1	1	1	1	We would of liked more time with DAF and DHS
			1	1	1		Difficulty with eligibility for many subsidies as farm income is very low and had to increase off farm income to pay bills. This means off farm is now higher than on farm income
1	1	1	1	1	1	1	All the services were very helpful. Thank you!
1	1	1	1	1	1	1	Found information very useful. Rural Aid and CWA very very helpful
1	1	1	1	1	1	1	I am so pleased I came this afternoon. It has been very helpful to me. Thank all of you.
1	1	1	1	1	1	1	Interesting (all sessions) even though not necessarily services we need to access. Particularly interesting for me was DAF and DHS
1	1	1	1	1	1	1	Very beneficial and informative
1	1	1	1	1	1	1	Wat an absolutely wonderful, incredible, fantastic concept and implementation of 'ten minutes with a master'
1	1	1	1	1	1	1	Wonderful and VERY Helpful
1	1	1	1	1	1	1	Thank you SDRC for this opportunity and for making this information available. All the staff were very helpful and friendly
1	1	1	1	1	1	1	Very useful. Great information provided from the organisers for financial assistance and services available.
1	1	1	1	1	1		Very good

1	1	1	1	1	1	1	I found all the consultants very helpful and friendly and understanding. They were conversant with their field of expertise.
1	1	1	1	1	1	1	All useful information. Good to know there is help for farmers
1	1	1	1	1	1	1	Very useful.
1	1	1	1	1	1	1	There needs to be sessions available for people who slip through cracks. Not rural producers, but those still affected by the drought. Well set up. Clear instructions. Everyone helpful and delightful. Thank you.
1	1	1	1	1	1	1	Very helpful to have all the departments in one place. Good information provided. Thank you SDRC!

10 Minutes with a Master Evaluation Form - Stanthorpe 26 February 2019					
1	1	1	1	1	Thank you for this wonderful initiative. Very helpful in this difficult time.
1	1	1	1	1	Was going to attend only one session, but Charee talked me into attending all. Very rewarding experience. Much more came out of the sessions than I expected.
1	1	1	1	1	Being made aware of the assistance that is available has been very helpful. Great to financial assistance is available. Great to be aware of what can be accessed by the legal team.
1	1	1	1	1	Today's session was amazing. The help and guidance with all issues were handled professionally.
1	1	1	1	1	
1	1	1	1	1	This is a very useful & helpful event to put on. I hope it can keep being provided as a service to the community. Thank you to all involved.
		1		1	
1	1	1	1	1	Today has been very informative and helpful, we've got some great information and everyone is so caring. Thanks for your help and effort Southern Downs Regional Council.
1	1			1	Good to have people in one area to discuss what is available.
1	1	1	1	1	I give 10 to Council for organising this for the people in primary production. I now have a better understanding of what is available and a thank you for organising.
1	1	1	1		Great morning with great information.
1	1	1	1	1	Keep up the good work!
1	1	1	1	1	Council must be congratulated for organising this session. It was absolutely amazing! I was really impressed. This is a wonderful initiative of Council.
	1			1	Very good for the limited time available.
1	1	1	1	1	Great info, just need another 10 minutes.
1	1	1	1	1	Fantastic day! Well worthwhile. Found out about things I was not aware of. Thankyou!!!
1	1	1	1	1	Gained a lot more than expected.

1	1			1	Good to talk to the experts.
1	1	1	1	1	Great! Didn't know most of this help existed.
1	1	1	1	1	Very useful information and so helpful to talk face to face.
1	1	1	1	1	Thank you. This was very helpful and comforting to know someone cares.
1	1	1	1		
1	1	1	1	1	Has been very informative.
1	1	1	1	1	Very helpful.
1	1	1	1	1	Good.
1	1	1	1		All good as per usual. Well organised.
1	1	1	1	1	
1	1	1	1	1	
1	1	1	1	1	This has been fantastic information.
1	1	1	1	1	

10 Minutes with a Master Evaluation Form - Karara 21 February 2019									
1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	Very helpful
1	1		1	1	1	1	1	1	First Thank you! Yes it was very helpful and comforting to know someone cares. I found out help was available through my produce fodder store. They let me know that help was available. But getting the message out is not easy, for farmers to hear through mail from the Council was good.
1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	Very good information session. Thank you SDRC for putting it on and Charee for organising it.
1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	Very helpful!
1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	Great information, well organised. Although not all information directly relevant to ourselves it will be provided to others that were not able to attend. Good to see the Council supporting the people.
1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	Good information. Great to see smiling facing.
1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	Thank you SDRC for organising this.
1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	
1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	Very informative
1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	Staffed by helpful caring people
1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	All very excellent. People in their field experts. Thanks
1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	Found this day very informative. Thankyou everyone
1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	Great day. Friendly and helpful.
1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	A good way to find out what is available
1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	
1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	The sessions were well run and very informative. Even at short notice it was well worth the effort to attend.

10 Minutes with a Master Evaluation Form - Warwick 14 November 2018						
1	1	1	1	1	1	Very much appreciated receiving notification of these sessions via mail. Most of these services were unknown to us before hand
1	1	1	1	1	1	
1					1	Great work by all. Very useful and information worthwhile. Well organised
1	1	1	1	1	1	
1	1	1	1	1	1	Very informative
	1	1			1	
	1	1			1	
1	1	1	1		1	
1	1	1	1	1	1	We appreciated the organisation and work Charee and the Council did. The information sessions were really helpful. The time allocated went too quickly
1	1	1	1	1	1	
1	1	1	1	1	1	Wonderful idea and initiative. THANKYOU!!
	1			1		Good way to find out what is available as assistance
1	1					
1	1	1	1	1	1	Found it interesting to speak to all advisors. Obtained good information, very helpful
	1		1			
	1			1		
	1			1		Informative and educational. Thank you!
1	1				1	Very helpful advice. Very pleasant people to speak to.
				1		
1	1	1		1	1	Very knowledgeable people. Well presented forum.
1	1			1	1	An interesting format. The advisors were very interesting to talk to.

1	1	1	1	1	1	
1	1	1	1	1	1	Thank you, a wonderful informative day. Well organised and very much appreciated
1	1				1	Very informative, Thank you very much
						Unfortunately it did not relate to what we were doing. Very nice people though.
1				1		Well organised, valuable information
1	1		1	1	1	Thank you for putting this together. Most of the services are things we can use and did not know about.
	1	1	1			Thanks very much, very useful information
1	1	1	1	1	1	Thank you for providing these people to give advice. It is much appreciated.
	1					Very satisfying
1	1			1		
1	1	1	1	1		Thanks to all the team. Very very helpful
1	1	1	1	1		
1	1	1	1	1	1	If one person is helped then everyone will benefit. Very well carried out with information and in a thoughtful manner
1	1			1		Very good opportunity
1	1	1	1	1	1	Found the info sessions very helpful providing information and assistance we were not aware of.
1	1	1	1	1	1	
1	1	1	1	1	1	Very helpful and constructive
1	1	1	1	1	1	

Submission

Q1. What are your experiences on the ground? Are there gaps in what is being done by the Commonwealth now to address drought and community resilience?

- The impacts of the severe ongoing drought in the Southern Downs Regional Council (SDRC) area are far reaching. The drought is affecting all aspects of community life in the region, water restrictions are impacting on every household and business and many of our agricultural industries / farmers have had to destock, down size operations and manage severely depleted water sources. Planning for and managing the effects of the drought and the continuous supply of water for the region consumes much of SDRC's Officers time and resources. The community psyche and buoyancy of the region has experienced some negativity as a result of the drought. SDRC has invested significant time and effort into supporting events, and community gatherings that lift the spirits and hope of the community and provide relief from the presence of drought. Given the importance of tourism, hospitality, events and economic development for the region, maintaining visitation and supporting local tourism and accommodation operations is key to the continued vitality of the region, and this work cannot stop due to the effects of the drought.
- From the outset SDRC adopted a supportive and proactive approach to managing the effects of the drought on the community by employing a temporary drought coordinator role (known as the Community Development Officer). This Officer has played a hands on and leading role in assisting farmers access funding opportunities and helping navigate the various agencies, prepare for drought and manage their mental health, community connectedness and be resilient.
- Additionally, Council has coordinated monthly meetings of all departments to ensure that work being done on drought and water management is being coordinated across the whole organisation.
- SDRC urges the Federal Government to apply a similar approach in other Local governments experiencing droughts through the funding and appointment of a Drought Liaison/Communities Officer for each Council.
- The Drought Liaison/Community Officer would be responsible in providing a link between individual services with other drought support agencies to assist. An example of the benefits within this role are as follows:
 - Since January 2019, SDRC's Community Development Officer has assisted in submitting over 500 applications for more than \$1,220,000 in assistance on behalf of eligible residents in the region. The funding sources are from Public Rural Crisis Fund, Lend a Hand Programme, QCWA Drought Assistance, Salvations Army Rural Aid/Buy a Bale, St Vincent De Paul, Drought Angels and Need for feed;
 - The Salvation Army alone has distributed approximately \$659,850.00 in funding which is the highest amount amongst eligible Local Governments within Queensland that are Drought Declared. Approximately \$423,000.00 was with the assistance of SDRC's Community Development Officer;
 - SDRC's Community Development Officer has organised 5 '10 minutes with a Master' sessions to allow for primary producers to have 10 minutes sessions with different specialists such as Rural Financial Assistance, Farm House Hold Assistance, Legal Aid, QCWA, Rural Aid, Salvation Army, St Vincent De Paul, Water Infrastructure Rebate and PHN funded Health Providers, with positive feedback received (Customer Evaluation Attached);

- SDRC's Community Development Officer organised sessions with the Rural Financial Councillor Services for Small Businesses where 9 businesses participated, with positive feedback received; and
 - SDRC's Community Development Officer has provided appropriate information to approximately 42 people to seek personal Counselling.
- Social events within the community are creating a positive outlook and funding should continue to be made available for such events.
- The water saving devices Grant as part of the Drought Communities Programme (DCP000087) for sporting and community organisations has assisted the clubs for long term benefits for community resilience however many rely on recycled water which is limited in availability in the short term.
- Both State and Federal Governments need to play an active role in the issuing of appropriate water licences, compliance with water licences and ensure there is sufficient water available for the approved water allocations.

Q2. What needs to be done in the short, medium and longer term to help drought affected communities during the response and recovery phase?

- In the immediate term, the drought being experienced in SDRC is so severe and long lasting that Council is of the view that the drought needs to be declared as a natural disaster on a Federal and State Government level. SDRC has a population of approximately 36,000 with over half of this being solely dependent on the reticulated water system and water supplied by Council. Additionally the rural sector and those reliant on tank water have not had sufficient access to rainfall and in many cases have had to purchase water or rely on Council standpipes for their supply. Council is endeavouring to meet all of its resident's needs, but with dam levels as low as 5% and water sources expected to run out in the coming months without significant rain fall, water carting is the only viable option. Carting to an urban and rural population of this size will be costly and extensive exercise. Declaring a natural disaster will enable SDRC to work in partnership with State and Federal Governments to coordinate efforts and access much needed funds that the community can little afford to pay for on its own to cope with a situation of this scale and severity.
- In the short term additional training and education programs are also needed and could cover such areas as:
 - 1) Training/courses made available to farmers about different farming methods/diversification and how to be resilient in the face of severe drought; and
 - 2) How collaboration between media and local government can assist in managing drought impacts and effects.
- Providing commercial operators with incentives to reduce their water usage/provide water saving devices.
- Assist Hospitals, state agencies and schools with installing water tanks, and water saving devices.
- Coordination between Local, State and Federal Government for future planning of Infrastructure e.g. greater use of recycled water and providing facility to allow recycled water to be of a drinkable standard.
- In the longer term all levels of government could assist with funding made available for restocking of farms once sufficient rain has occurred within the region.
- Overland flow restriction to allow for water to reach appropriate catchment areas i.e. rivers, creeks and streams etc.

- An employment program to retain agricultural workers and their families in drought affected communities, as the drought forces employers to lay off permanent workers;
 - Vegetable and fruit growers employ large volumes of seasonal workers, but they should also have a permanent workforce;
 - With no water to plant on, the permanent workers are not required to prepare ground for planting, install irrigation, oversee seasonal work etc.; and
 - The program would engage these permanent workers in alternative employment, to prevent them and their families leaving the region, which would have far reaching economic and social impacts.
- Incentives for tree planting and pest control (cluster fencing, weed removal, wild dogs).
- SDRC's Invasive Pests Control Scheme (IPCS) has seen voluntary compliance by landholders with their invasive pest control obligations increase. The drought has forced landholders' priorities to change to watering and feeding stock; treating invasive pests has taken a back seat in some cases. As a broad concept there is a long term opportunity for the Federal Government to consider creating an employment program for redundant workers to undertake conservation and land management.
- The lack of water on the Granite Belt means vegetable plantings and the subsequent demand for seedlings for the coming season will be dramatically reduced. Spring Creek Seedlings, a local business that supplies local farms is facing a significant downturn. Withcott Seedlings, a Lockyer Valley business that also supplies the Granite Belt is reportedly facing a 90% reduction in orders;
 - The Stanthorpe Wildflower Consortium has identified a pressing need to propagate rare and threatened plants found on the Granite Belt to shore up their survival; the black grevillea and newly described Dalveen blue gum (there may be as few as 100 specimens of the latter);
 - Redundant workers could be deployed to source field specimens and undertake propagation of these species, earning horticulture / conservation qualifications and making use of the capacity in seedling supply facilities;
 - There is a legislative process to be followed to enable the mass propagation of these species, and, DES has offered the policy support to realise this; and
 - In the long term, sustainable water sources to drought proof the region need to be secured. This may include regional solutions for neighbouring Council's or collaborative agreements between all levels of governments to create and maintain a network of water assets for e.g. water pipelines.

Q3. What are the emerging problems we need Commonwealth assistance with?

- Stanthorpe Wild Dog Spur Fence requires replacement and maintenance. Fixing fencing during periods of drought is helpful for the farmers in planning for more resilient agricultural practices and also provides welcome financial incentive for asset replacement.
- When allocating Federal Government funding to support the drought work, it would be extremely helpful to ensure that less time constraints which could cater for long term projects. For example, but not limited to the following:
 - Council received \$1M through the Commonwealth's Communities Combating Pests and Weeds Impacts During Drought Program for exclusion fencing subsidies for private landholders. This program has very tight timeframes, with funds needing to be spent within 12 months (end 2019/2020). The worsening drought is seeing landholders reassess their current financial ability to commit to

support the program. If the timeframe for this program could be extended by 12 months to the end of 2020/2021 it would relieve pressure on sheep and wool producers and afford some time to see if the season will break.

- Federal Government assistance in coordinating and leading the creation of a water grid or network of water infrastructure to support the long term viability of both the community and producers. This would greatly assist regional and rural areas such as Southern Downs to ensure existing and future generations have sufficient water resources to support growth, and lifestyle.
- Federal government assistance with the allocation of money dedicated to upgrade or install new water infrastructure i.e. Greater usage of recyclable water, treatment of recycled water to a drinkable standard.
- Federal Government assistance with carting water from outside the region for road construction projects and to meet community needs.

Q4. Are you under pressure to give rate relief and how are you responding to this?

- Rate increases have been acutely felt by the regions ratepayers this year. Despite the lowest rate rise (2%) in the last ten (10) years, given the drought and pressures associated with the downturn in economy community reaction to the rate rise was not positive.
- SDRC took steps to support rate payers by resolving to extend the discounted period to pay rates by an additional 30 days.
- SDRC also incorporated into the revenue statement a water levy to cater for the carting of water to the region if required in emergency circumstances. This potential additional levy has not been positively received.
- SDRC has also ensured that the water tank rebate scheme has been extended and has also recently written to the State Government seeking approval to have new developments require water tanks.


Q5. What is your feedback on the Drought Communities Program? What is going to happen when the \$1m is spent?

- SDRC has received very positive feedback on the program from the community and businesses.
- Resulted in the implementation of Water Saving Urban Design outcomes at Community and Sporting Organisations.
- The funding generated the following local jobs on a short term basis:
 - Community Halls (DCP000082) = approximately 58 local jobs;
 - Water Saving Devices (DCP000087) = approximately 52 local jobs;
 - Carting water (DCP000101) = 5 local water carting companies and approximately 3 local jobs;
 - Leyburn Upgrade (DCP000142) = 8 contractors; and
 - Water Dispensing Units (DCP000066) = 8 contractors.
- Overall the projects have increased some long term benefits to the community. However, the following comments are made in relating to each project:
 - Community Halls (DCP000082) = Received 22 applications however only 12 applicants received funding. This oversubscription denotes the need for programs such as this to continue;

- Water Saving Devices (DCP000087) = Received 20 application however only 16 applicants received funding. This oversubscription denotes the need for programs such as this to continue;
 - Carting water (DCP000101) = Approximately 469 households received water ranging in loads of 13,000 litres to 25,000 litres (total numbers still need to be finalised). The pace at which this money was awarded surprised both SDRC and the administrators and clearly indicates the strong need for this kind of funding program to continue;
 - Leyburn Upgrade (DCP000142) = Approximate population of 476 people in the region (2016 census) with 120 households connected to the water supply; and
 - Water Dispensing Units (DCP000066) = 4 dispensing units form part of the grant but due to water restrictions and managing water usage, 2 out of the 4 units will not be operational until significant rain occurs. However, these units will provide long term benefits to the community in the future.
- The Federal Government is to be commended for the Drought funding program and as evidenced above there is ongoing need for this kind of funding stream to help support the community and economy during times of hardship. Request for additional funding while drought continues to affect our region. Particularly for the purpose of carting water from outside of the region to rural residents.

4.2 Environmental Authority Application - Cherrabah Granite Mine

Document Information

 Southern Downs REGIONAL COUNCIL	Report To: Special Council Meeting	
	Reporting Officer:	Meeting Date: 15 July 2019
	Planning and Compliance Coordinator	ECM Function No/s: 136225

Recommendation

THAT Council makes a submission to the Department of Environment and Science regarding the application to make a major amendment to an Environmental Authority (EPSX04093716) in relation to the proposed Cherrabah Granite Mine.

Report

In June 2016 the Department of Environment and Science (DES) issued an Environmental Authority (EPSX04093716) to the owners of Cherrabah (Joyful View Garden Real Estate Development Resort Co. Pty Ltd) for drilling and exploration activities associated with a proposed granite mine.

An application has now been made to DES for a major amendment to the Environmental Authority to add a mining activity being Environmentally Relevant Activity (ERA) 20(a) – *clay pit mining, dimension stone mining or mining gemstones (including the material from which gemstones are extracted)—if the activity involves mining a quantity of material of at least 5,000t but not more than 100,000t in a year.*

The Environmental Authority cannot take effect until a mining lease is granted over the site.

An application was made to the Department of Natural Resources, Mines and Energy for a mining lease (ML 100128). In July 2017 Council made an objection to the mining lease application due to the land being a habitat for endangered species and the impact of truck movements on Council's roads. The application for the mining lease is still to be decided.

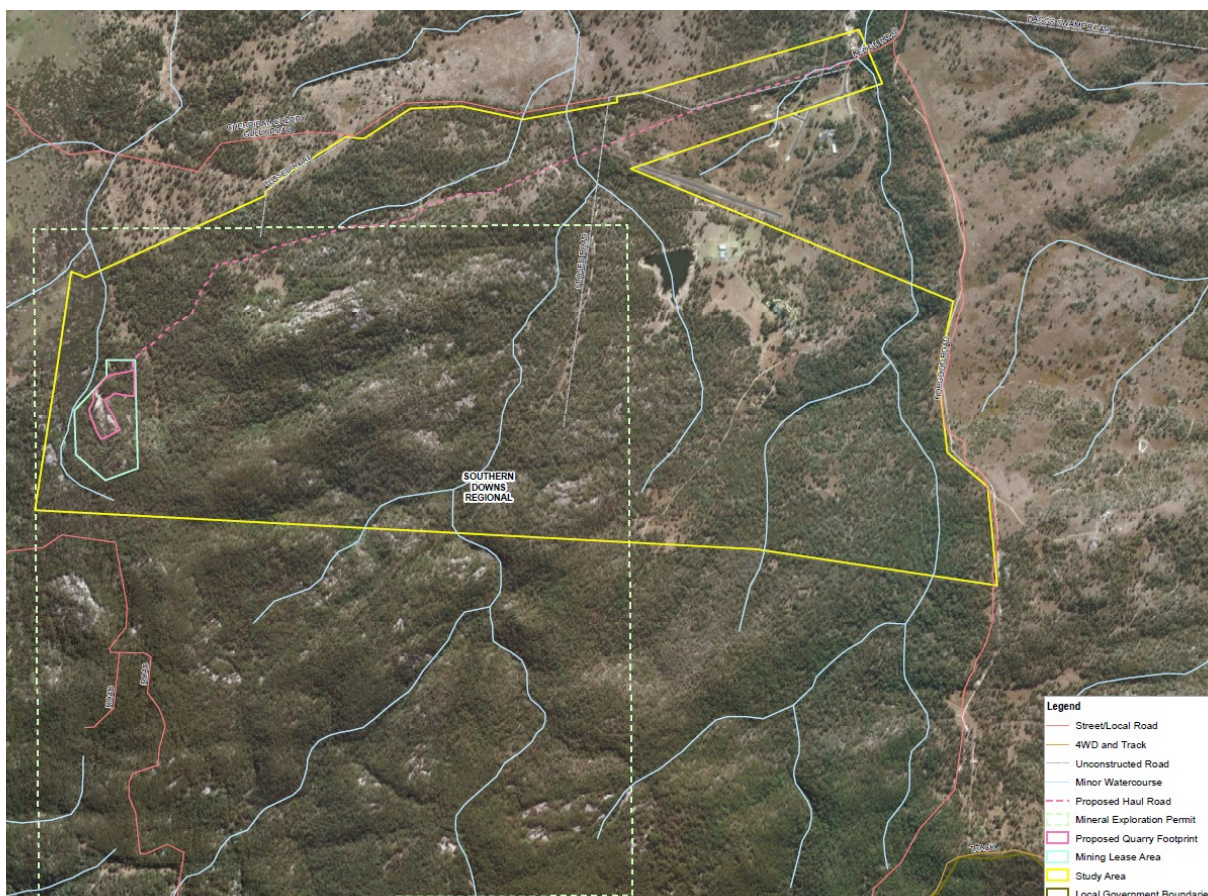
The proposed mining activity includes the following:

- The proposed granite mine will be located approximately 3.5 kilometres to the west of the Cherrabah Homestead.
- It will have a disturbance area of 7.4 hectare, which will include an extraction area, site amenities, two sediment basins and area for stockpile of material.
- The mine is expected to produce 8,000 tonnes per annum.
- Site establishment will take approximately three months, and the operational life of the granite mine is expected to be up to 30 years.
- The mine will employ up to four full time positions during operation.
- As the mine progresses, the area will be excavated in a benched fashion, using wire saws to extract the granite. No blasting will occur on site.
- The excavated granite will be transported from site once per day via internal access roads to Keoghs Road.
- There will be very little processing of granite on site, however some crushing and screening of stockpiled material may occur approximately twice per year depending on the volume of material processed.

- The work hours have been designed to minimise operational impact on the local area and comply with relevant noise criteria. The planned hours are:
 - Extraction of granite – Monday to Friday 7:00am to 6:00pm, Saturday 7:00am to 1:00pm
 - General mine operations, including loader operations and truck haulage – Monday to Saturday, 7:00am to 6:00pm
 - Maintenance activities – Monday to Saturday, 6:30am to 10:00pm.

A number of studies have been undertaken including vegetation assessments, ecosystem mapping, protected plant and habitat surveys, fauna surveys, noise assessment, air quality assessment, and visual amenity assessment.

Public consultation is being undertaken from 20 June to 18 July 2019 in relation to the proposed major amendment to the Environmental Authority. On Monday, 8 July 2019, consultants for the project, GHD, met with Councillors to discuss the project. GHD has advised that they have also provided information to eight local landholders, and extended an invitation to them to meet and discuss the project and their concerns.



During discussions on Monday, Councillors raised the following matters for consideration regarding the proposed activities:

1. Potential impacts on nearby residents, including noise, dust, silica dust, and use of the haulage route;
2. Impacts of the activity on the Cherrabah resort;
3. Impacts on future residents of Lots 1-22 SP268215, located at the entrance to the Cherrabah property;
4. Impacts on flora and fauna; and
5. Whether aspects of the activity require planning approval from Council. For example, if the intended use of the granite, or secondary material, will be for purposes inconsistent with a mineral under section 6 of the *Mineral Resources Act 1989*, this use is not prohibited from

being assessable development under a local categorising instrument under section 43 of the *Planning Act 2016*, and section 16 and Schedule 6 of the *Planning Regulation 2017*.

GHD has advised that the access/haul route is not assessment as part of either the Environmental Authority of the Mining Lease Application. There will be a separate approval process for the haul route in which Council and the Department of Transport and Main Roads will be involved. The internal access road may involve waterway barriers works which may require a development application to be made to the State Assessment and Referral Agency (SARA).

It is recommended that Council make a submission to the Department of Environment and Science asking for its points of consideration to be taken into account in determining the application for Environmental Authority.

Budget Implications

Nil

Policy Consideration

Nil

Community Engagement

The public submission phase commenced on 20 June 2019 and closes 18 July 2019 in accordance with the *Environmental Protection Act 1994*. Public submissions are to be made directly to the Department of Environment and Science.

Legislation/Local Law

Environmental Protection Act 1994

Options

Council:

1. Makes a submission to the Department of Environment and Science in relation to the proposed Cherrabah Granite Mine.
2. Does not make a submission in relation to the proposed Cherrabah Granite Mine.

Attachments

Nil

5. CONSIDERATION OF CONFIDENTIAL BUSINESS ITEMS

In accordance with the provisions of Section 275(1) of the *Local Government Regulation 2012*, a local government may resolve to close a meeting to the public and move 'into Committee' to discuss confidential items, such that its Councillors or members consider it necessary to close the meeting.

Recommendation

THAT the meeting be closed to the public and move into committee to discuss the following items, which are considered confidential in accordance with Section 275(1) of the *Local Government Regulation 2012*, which permits the meeting to be closed to the public for business relating to the following, as indicated:

5.1 Concerns Notice (Cease and Desist)

Reason for Confidentiality

This item is considered confidential in accordance with section 275(1)(f) of the *Local Government Regulation 2012*, as it contains information relating to starting or defending legal proceedings involving Southern Downs Regional Council.