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### **Gulgong Quarry Proposal**

Forming part of the supporting documents in the EIS for the Gulgong Quarry project, please find relevant commentary supporting the physical nature of the site relevant to its capacity to support agricultural production.

Our agronomy consultancy business has supported the Drury's in their effort to push the limits of agricultural production across their farms. Combining soil management, winter forage crop and new pasture planting to promote higher production and revenue per Ha has been a strong focus. The efforts are represented by growing more within your own boundaries before considering to purchase the neighbours. The quarry site and its associated shallow soil does not fit into a category that can long term support high levels of agricultural production.

The site selected for quarry development represents a class of land (Rural Land Capability classification system) of only being appropriate for grazing and supporting tree cover. Classified more specifically as classes 5-7, this area is not supportive of the high output agricultural production that is conducted elsewhere on the Drury's properties in my opinion.

Situated on a stoney knoll with shallow depth of topsoil, the area hosts scattered native grasses and small woody shrubs. In order to develop the area for increased productivity, the economics of doing so would be best invested elsewhere on the farm that is more responsive to fertiliser and seed applications. In my experience as an agronomist, these shallow rocky / gravelly soils correspond with low agricultural value and respond poorly to applied fertiliser and seed investment. Similar soils and topography are not efficient in storing soil moisture or nutrients for extended periods of time.

In order to push the boundaries of commercial returns in agriculture, farmers are continuously striving for new and creative ways to increase revenue streams whilst insulating their businesses for tougher periods. The quarry development supports

- Business diversification and intensification
- Appropriate use of land class – fit for purpose
- Does not consider the use of fertiliser and seed which would be a poor return on investment in my opinion
- Alternative income stream that does not rely on weather.

Images of typical soil profile on the quarry site



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