

Investigation of a proposed subdivision, Craythorne Road, Rosevears

by P. C. Stevenson

A proposed subdivision between Craythorne Road and the West Tamar Highway at Rosevears was examined at the request of the Town and Country Planning Commissioner.

It is the Department's opinion that a risk of landslip exists in this area.

Tertiary silty clays and weathered basalt clays may be seen in the spoil extracted from a silage pit near the centre of the area. Slips in road banks can be seen on the upper side of the West Tamar Highway to the south of the area and nearby to the west. These slips have taken place on slopes steeper than any existing now in the area but the construction of roads and houses will inevitably involve the cutting of steep banks. A spring in the lower part of the area shows that groundwater is active and could increase the risk.

The magnitude of the risk will depend, too, on the nature of the subdivision, the size of individual blocks, whether septic tanks and soakways will be allowed, the situation of roads, and the landscaping of the surface.

As the Department's study of the landslip problem of the Tamar proceeds, the estimation of such risk improves but can only remain an estimate. It is suggested that if the subdivider is prepared to delay work for a year it may be possible to give a decision in what is geologically a very obscure situation. If the subdivider is not prepared to face such a delay then the Department would consider the report of a consulting engineer based on soil mechanics tests and a stability analysis.

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