

URI973-70

Stability of a block of land at Riverside North, Launceston.

C.J. Knights

The land, Block 4 West Tamar Highway, lies to the south-west of a clay pit and rises steeply from the road at angles of up to 20-25°. The proposed house site is situated on a bench at an altitude of about 35 m [49/980020].

Clays and sandy clays are exposed in the adjacent clay pit; there are no major seepages. It is unusual for such a steep hillside to exist in these sediments and this may be partially accounted for by the lack of subsurface seepages, which weakens them in other areas.

Slump-like features on steeper parts of the block indicate that there have been minor slips in the historical past. There is also active shallow slipping further along the hillside, within 200 m of the block.

Where the hillside has been over-steepened, as for the highway, slumping has occurred and it is likely that slips in the walls of the clay pit will eat back into the block until a stable slope angle of 15-20° is reached.

At present the land does not seem to be in danger of major slips. Minor slips are likely to occur and this situation would be greatly aggravated by building and the consequent necessity for sewerage outlets, drainage and cuttings. This block cannot therefore be recommended for building.

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