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| DEPT. OF MINES | | | |
| REF. No. | | | |



22-9-81

ABIGNANO LIMITED

Proposal Report

on

ACCESS TRACK CONSTRUCTION TO

INTERVIEW RIVER PROSPECT

EL. 13/81

SEPTEMBER 1981

UNRECORDED

OPEN FILE

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1. INTRODUCTION

Abignano Limited are the current holders of four mining leases in an area of the West Coast of Tasmania approximately centred on the Interview River some 10 km. north of the Pieman Head. The Company also holds exploration licence application 13/81 for a Prospect area containing the four leases 28 M/76 and 3, 19, & 35 M/78.

Within the licence area (8 km x 6 km approximately) an exploration programme is in progress but is currently suspended because of unreliable winter access to the site. All work to date has been undertaken using supplies and equipment moved in from the North via Marrawah, Sandy Cape and along the beach to the Interview River. This Northern access route has proved most time consuming and has taken a severe toll of equipment. Most importantly, the river fords, particularly the Lagoon River crossing have proved dangerous and unreliable. Two persons were recently placed in extreme danger at the Lagoon River ford whilst attempting a winter withdrawal from the exploration area. They were faced with either negotiating the thixotropic river sands or driving through the surf.

For reasons of safety and to facilitate the exploration work, Abignano Ltd has proposed to the relevant authorities (Ref. 3) that it be permitted to construct a simple access track into the exploration area from an existing but overgrown landing point on the North bank of the Pieman River 1.5 kms in from the Heads.

The track envisaged would be constructed with a minimum of earthworks and disturbance to a sufficient width and standard to allow reliable weekly passage of a four wheel drive supply vehicle during the summer months primarily. Creek and river crossings would be constructed to allow passage during inclement weather, but would not need to provide for extreme flood conditions. The main design and routing criteria would be to provide a sufficiently reliable alignment and formation such that the need for unplanned deviations from the designated route would be obviated.

Possible routings for the proposed track have been considered at length by the Company (Ref. 3). The most likely route was explored in detail by personnel from the Company and the Consultants on September 8th, 9th and 10th, 1981. Details of the Pieman River landing area were examined on September 8th in conjunction with Mr. Jack Hansen of the Lands Department and proposals contained in this report for the works required on the shores of the Pieman are believed to have Mr. Hansen's support.

This report contains precise details of the proposed routing of the track, together with a description of the earthworks and structures which will be required. The impact of the work on the environment is considered, particularly in the 402 metre wide Pieman Riverside Reserve even though the proposal in this zone is essentially only to re-open the existing benched vehicle track from the plains down to the landing point.

2. POSSIBLE TRACK ROUTINGS

As discussed in the preceding section, the Northern access route to the exploration area has proved unworkable and hazardous and it is required to develop a reliable route using the Pieman River and a partly formed track from the Pieman to the site.

The area between the Pieman and Interview Rivers consists of a relatively clear coastal margin of one to two kilometers width. The foreshore is rocky from the Heads to about Rocky Creek where it opens out onto a wide beach extending some 10 km up to Lagoon River. Behind the foreshore is an open undulating margin of dunes and rock outcrops rising some 60 to 80 metres to a semi-plateau into which the Interview River and the larger creeks have cut substantial ravines. Some 2 km from the coast the open country gives way to a large area of substantial Eucalypt forest measuring some 8 km North/South and 3 km East/West. Behind the forest area the vegetation reverts to open button grass interspersed with low scrub. High ground exists adjacent to the forest margin and generally falls away Eastward into the swampy catchments of Rocky Creek and Ford Creek.

Three possible routes for the access track were considered:

- o The Coast Route - immediately behind the foreshore and along the beach.
- o The Mid Route - seaward of the forest area, generally some 1.5 km from the coast.
- o The East Route - adjacent to the Eastern extremity of the forest margin.

These routes are discussed as follows:

2.1 The Coast Route

To follow the beach and then to open up a simple track immediately behind the foreshore from Rocky Creek to the Pieman Heads would be simple, economical and would provide reliable all weather access. The track would, however, be visually obtrusive from the sea and would be utilised to a most undesirable extent by off road vehicles from Pieman Head. Use by such vehicles could not be prevented and the track would be likely to become a permanent and unfortunate feature of the landscape. For these reasons the Coastal route cannot be recommended.

2.2 The Mid Route

In about 1953 a similar track to that now proposed was constructed from the Pieman Ferry to the exploration site and is still marked on Map Sheet 7814 Edition 2, 1979. With the exception of the benching down to the Pieman Landing, little evidence of this track can now be located. Consideration was given to following a similar alignment for the new track, but the density of undergrowth was such as to preclude an economical survey of the route and the creek crossings were considered to pose engineering problems. Rocky Creek for example is cut some 50 metres into the plateau at the old crossing point.

2.3 The East Route

From enlarged aerial photographs a new route was selected through essentially open country following up the ridge to the North of the Pieman and along the higher ground adjacent to the Eastern extremity of the forest. Swampy ground can be substantially avoided and the creek crossings are relatively simple. The adjacent forest

provides timber for log bridges, culverts and cording without significant excursion from the designated alignment. A steep sidling over a distance of about 400 metres to the North of the Interview River is the only apparent disadvantage of this route.

The East Route is strongly recommended on the grounds of cost and simplicity. Because the route is remote from the coast, illicit use by off road vehicles is less likely and will be controlled by a locked gate at one of the major creeks or on the Interview River bridge. When the track is no longer required, removal of the bridges and culverts will allow further vehicular access to be prevented as deviations through the forest or swampy areas will not be possible.

This recommended route is discussed in detail in the following sections.

3. THE SELECTED ROUTE

The selected route is some 14.5 kms in length from the Pieman Landing to the centre of the exploration area. The route is marked on reproducible aerial photograph, figure 1 attached, to an accuracy of about ± 50 metres. This figure, together with the report photographs provide a substantial appreciation of the topography and vegetation of the area to be traversed by the new track.

The route will require construction of simple log bridges over the Interview River and over three main creeks (Fig. 3). Log culverts will be required at two minor creeks (Fig. 4). At three other locations creek embankment slopes will be eased to provide a vehicle ford. Associated with some bridges and culverts, adjacent swampy ground may require timber cording to be placed to provide a competent base for four wheel drive vehicles. This procedure is proposed rather than replacement with granular fill material to minimise earthworks and disturbance. Winning of competent fill material should be required to only a very minor extent.

The chosen route largely follows ridges and high ground where it is anticipated that reasonable all weather access will be possible without a road formation being prepared. A small bulldozer (D4 or equivalent) will be used to clear the scrub and the larger button grass clumps and thus to define the route, but it is proposed to basically leave the top soil undisturbed to act as a binder and to facilitate eventual re-vegetation. Adjacent to creek crossings some sidling cuts will be required and some earthworks will be required to provide drainage from low spots in the track alignment.

In the Pieman Reserve it is proposed to clear and to a limited extent widen the existing sidling. At the river bank a landing area will be prepared as shown on Figure 2. The river bank area is very restricted and the grade from the landing is such that a loaded vehicle would have difficulty negotiating the incline from a standing start. For this reason it is proposed

to clear an area on the top of the embankment and hoist supplies up to this area for loading onto the supply vehicle. The lower ramp would be essentially for off loading mobile plant and vehicles. These arrangements are recommended as they are considered to be the most visually unobtrusive method of establishing the required landing.

Whilst some disturbance of the Pieman foreshore is unavoidable, the above proposals have been discussed on site with Mr. Hansen of the Lands Department and are believed to have his agreement. The enclosed photographs of the location, in which the present track is barely discernable bears witness to the ability of the riverside vegetation to re-establish itself once the track is no longer used.

From the Pieman landing, the track will be routed along the crest of the ridge which runs North East and away from the river. It has been established that this ridge is not able to be seen from the river and because no earthworks are required, it is expected that the track will be barely discernable from the sea.

The crossing of the Interview River has been investigated sufficiently to establish that a single span bridge built from timber cut from the adjacent forest is feasible. The river bed is 5 to 6 metres wide and the South bank is steep and quite suitable for the bridge abutment. On the North bank there is a varying width of low lying ground and a final survey is required to locate the point where the width of this low ground is a minimum. If necessary an intermediate pier on the North bank could be constructed by building up a spread footing in the form of a log grillage. Filling over the flood plain is to be avoided as such fill will be eroded under flood conditions. A sidling will be required to route the track up through the forest on the North bank of the river. In this area the track will need to climb approx. 30 metres in a distance of some 400 metres.

On leaving the riverside forest the track follows the open button grass plains to the exploration area and will cross two creeks by means of simple fords.

4. TRACK CONSTRUCTION AND REHABILITATION

The proposed route has been marked with some accuracy on the report drawings to facilitate the construction work. It is proposed that a final alignment will be selected and marked by qualified personnel in advance of construction and such that route finding excursions using the construction plant are avoided. During this final survey the exact site of the Interview River crossing will be selected.

Construction plant will comprise a small bulldozer (D4 or equivalent) equipped with a winch, a four wheel drive supply vehicle, and probably a small caravan and a trailer. Until the Pieman landing is constructed it will be difficult to off load plant from the river so it is proposed to drive the bulldozer in along the beach from the North and to first open up the existing sidling down to the Pieman and to form the landing area. Construction will then proceed Northward.

The work will mainly comprise side cutting into and out of the creeks and cutting and placing the timber bridges, culverts and cording. For the majority of the route the track will follow reasonably level high ground and so far as possible the crest of the ridges. In such areas no earthworks are proposed and erosion and drainage problems should be minimal.

At the Pieman landing the track will be closed off by means of a chain and padlock, and a sign prohibiting public access will be erected.

The track will be required until such time as the prospect is shown to be viable and access from the Corinna Road is provided or else until the lease is surrendered. In either eventually the track will be made unusable by removing critical bridge structures.

Provided the proposed construction methods and details are adhered to little other rehabilitation work should be required. Since all side cuts are in or immediately adjacent to the forest, re-vegetation should be rapid and effective.

5. TIMING

Since exploration work is curtailed whilst an adequate access route is established, the implementation of the recommendation of this report are a matter of high priority for the Company.

It is proposed to commence track construction immediately approval is received and such that exploration work can recommence some 6 to 8 weeks later.

The track will probably be required until the autumn of 1983, but the duration of its usage will depend on the exploration findings.

6. REFERENCES

The following documents have been referred to during preparation of this report:

1. Guidelines for Mineral Exploration
Activities within the Southwest Conservation Area - 1981.
2. Report on Proposed Interview River Track - 1953.
3. Letters Abignano/Lands Department dated 1st July and
2nd July, 1981.



VIEW OF OLD FERRY
LANDING SITE FROM
MID-STREAM
(TRACK INDICATED)



EXISTING TRACK
FORMATION 300 m
FROM PIEMAN LANDING



LOOKING NORTH EAST
@ CH. 2.50 KM

014 MAUNSELL

883015



LOOKING NORTH AT
CH. 6.7 KM SHOWING
TYPICAL HIGH GROUND
ADJACENT TO FOREST

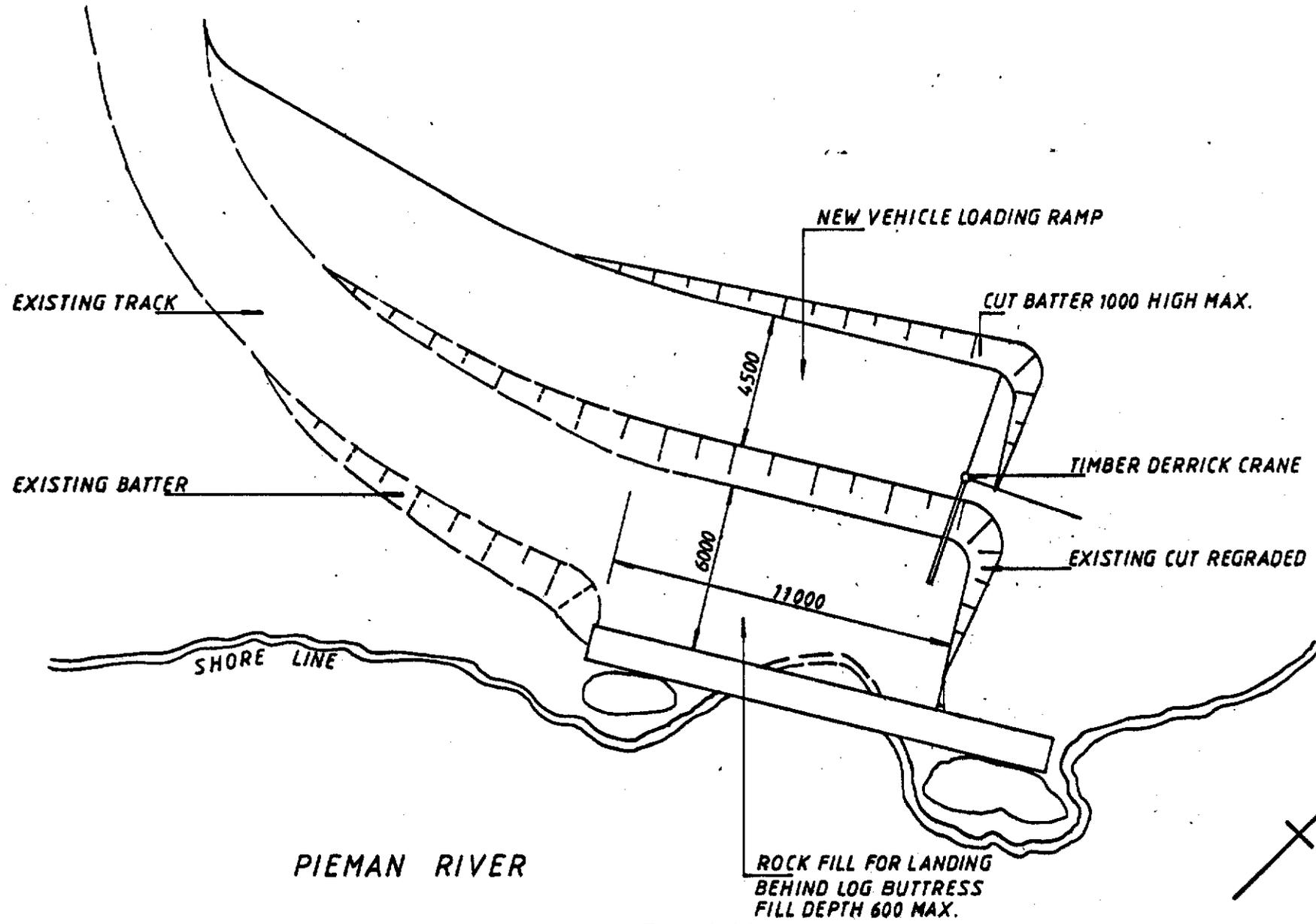


LOOKING SOUTH EAST
AT CH. 14.0 KM
INTERVIEW RIVER
CROSSING EXIT MIDDLE
OF HORIZON



Figure 1

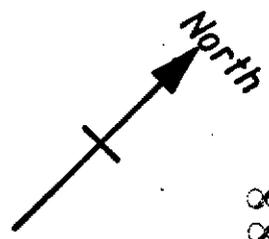
016



PLAN

PROPOSED UPGRADING OF
EXISTING FERRY CROSSING SITE

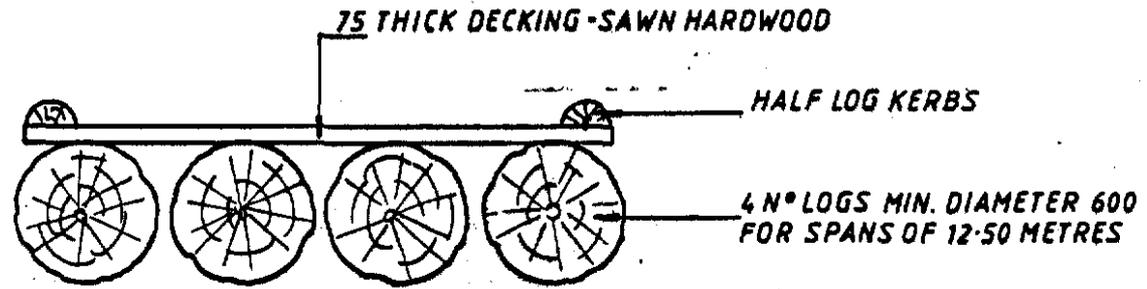
5 cm



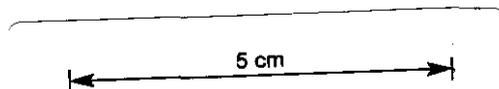
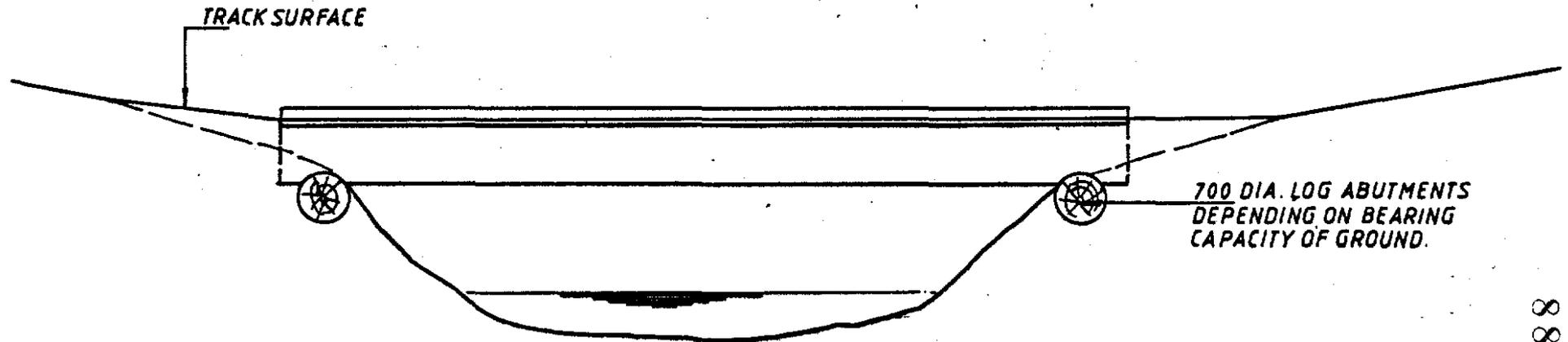
883017

Figure 2

017



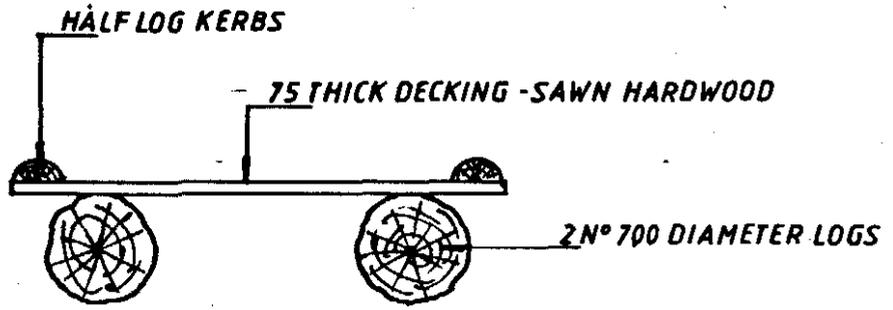
CROSS SECTION
1:50



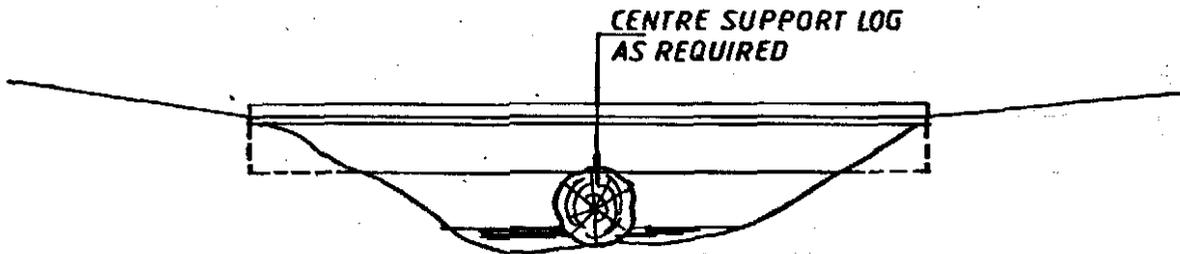
ELEVATION
TYPICAL LOG BRIDGE
1:100

Figure 3

883018



CROSS SECTION
1:50



ELEVATION
TYPICAL LOG CULVERT
1:100

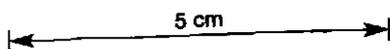


Figure 4