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**Tassal Group Limited**  
Tassal Huonville Expansion  
Development Application  
Supporting Report

March 2009

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# 1 Introduction

## 1.1 Purpose of the Report

The purpose of this report is to assess the planning aspects of Tassal's proposed extensions to the existing factory at 20 Glen Road, Huonville.

Advice from the EPA and Council indicate that an increase from 2000tpa to 2300tpa can be considered as a Level 1 development application under EMPCA. This application is therefore for the physical extensions to the building and also to increase the production levels of the factory to 2300tpa. The EPA and Council have indicated that more significant production increases would require further consideration.

## 1.2 The Subject Site

The subject site is located at 20 Glen Road Huonville, and falls within the Intensive Rural Zone of the Huon Planning Scheme 1979.



**Figure 1 The Subject Site (Source: The List)**

## 1.3 Title Information

The proposal relates to the Titles CT129264/2, CT113587/3, CT113587/2 and CT113587/7. These titles are included as Appendix A.

## 1.4 Statutory Approvals

As outlined in Section 3.1 below, the proposed Use is defined as “Rural Industry” which is a Discretionary Use within the Intensive Rural Zone, provided that there is no direct access onto the Huon Highway. Accordingly, this application is made pursuant to Section 57 of the *Land Use Planning and Approvals Act 1993*.

## **1.5 Report Structure**

This report has been structured to address the requirements of the Huon Planning Scheme 1979, as well as provide an overview of the proposed development:

- » Section 2 of this report details the proposal;
- » Section 3 outlines the relevant Planning Scheme provisions and assesses the proposed development against the relevant provisions of the Planning Scheme;
- » Section 4 assesses the proposal against the objectives of the Resource Management and Planning System of Tasmania, and relevant State Policies; and
- » Section 5 provides a summary of the issues.

## 2 The Proposal

Section 2 provides details of the considerations and issues relevant to the proposal. It provides a description of the proposal, details relating to machinery to be installed on site, noise, odour, air and other emissions, water supply demand, information on waste disposal procedures and car parking.

Three copies of the extension plans accompany this report.

### 2.1 Details of Existing Operations

The Huonville Factory operates under Environmental Permit – ELMS no. 6072, file reference 060327, which was approved 10 November 1997, and provides for a maximum of 2,000tn per annum of fish products.

The factory is designed to produce value-added salmon products from whole salmon that have been harvested, bled and gutted. Smoked salmon is the predominant value added product.

The factory is forecast to produce 1,600tn of fish products for the 2008/09 financial year. For the 2009/10 financial year, the forecast demand for products that could be made at the factory is 2,300tn.

Below is a description of current production process, which will reflect the same production process to be adopted in the expanded facility, only at higher volumes.

- » The predominate method for fish receipt is chilled HOG (head on gutted) packed in ice slurry, and graded to size.
- » Bins are offloaded from transport trucks via forklift and transported to the bin receipt storage chiller. Bins are held up to 3 days prior to processing to enable fish to pass through rigour.
- » HOG bins are selected from bin storage by size grade and date, and tipped directly into to the secondary process filleting room. Water/ice slurry from the bin is drained through the tipping platform. Once the bin has been tipped the empty bin is removed and washed for reuse.
- » HOG is passed through the de-heading machine. Heads are collected and held in the waste chiller. De-headed fish are conveyed to the automatic filleting machine, where fillets are separated from the frame. The frames are conveyed into an insulated waste bin and held in the waste chiller.
- » Fillets continue via conveyor onto the trimming line, where excess fat and fins are removed. Trimmed fillets are conveyed to the automatic pin-boning machine. Once pin boned, fillets are conveyed to the salt brining line.
- » Brined fillets are placed on trolley racks and placed in the curing chiller. Curing takes between 6-8 hours.
- » After curing, trolleys are placed in one of three smoke ovens. The smoking cycle takes 7-9 hours.
- » Upon removal from the smokers, the trolleys are stored in chillers to lower the core temperature of the fillets. Once the desired temperature is achieved, trolleys are taken to

the skin/trim line, where the skin is removed and any remaining excess fat. Skin and other waste is collected and held in the waste chiller.

- » Smoked fillets are then graded to determine their destination for slicing and packing. Fillets are then placed in pre-slicing chillers on racks.
- » Smoked fillets destined for “sides” (500g+ products) are sliced in silk cut slicers, placed onto gold boards and vacuum-sealed in plastic pouches.
- » Smoked fillets destined for “retail packs” (less than 500g products) are taken to a complete automatic slicing system where they are sliced to fixed weight batches directly onto gold boards. Boards are then vacuum-sealed between a top and bottom web.
- » Finished product is then sent to despatch either via conveyor as chilled, or via the spiral freezer if frozen. All product passes through a metal detector.
- » Once trolleys are emptied of smoked product, they are taken to the trolley wash station for cleaning and sanitising, ready for re-use.
- » In the despatch area product is placed in boxes, sealed, scanned and palletised. Pallets are then transferred to despatch freezer store or chiller store, to await truck transportation.

## **2.2 Proposed Use**

As indicated in Section 1, the proposal involves an increased production to 2300tpa as well as a physical increase to the building. The expanded floor space will accommodate the same activities currently occurring on the site as follows:

- » Curing, post smoking, pre-slicing, waste chillers;
- » Smoking;
- » Product slicing;
- » Packing and despatch;
- » Dry goods storage; and
- » Finished product hold chillers and freezers.

There will also be provision for increased staff amenities, including toilets, change rooms and dining rooms.

The proposed expansion will not introduce any operations that are not currently undertaken at the factory.

## **2.3 Hours of Operation**

The proposed hours of operation do not differ from current hours of operation. The factory currently operates 2 – 3 shifts per day, Monday to Friday, depending on demand:

- » Day shift (0615:1500);
- » Afternoon shift (1445:2330); and
- » Night shift (2300:0730).

The night shift is a smaller operating crew with only 20% of the day shift equivalent operators. The night shift only performs functions relating to slicing and packing of finished product.

It is proposed that the factory will operate on weekends and public holidays from time to time. Tassal may assess the need for more regular weekend operations in the future.

## 2.4 Number of Employees

There are currently 174 FTEs operating at the factory, spread over 3 shifts. The majority of FTEs (117) operate during the day shift. The proposed increase to 2300tpa production would involve an additional 32 FTEs.

**Table 1 Number of Employees**

Processing FTE's	Day Shift	Afternoon Shift	Night Shift	Total
Current	117	32	25	174
2300tpa estimate	117	48	41	206

## 2.5 Machinery to be installed on site

There will be no new forms/types of machinery installed that will differ in functionality to existing machinery (manufacturer and model may vary). A number of key machines have sufficient surplus operating capacity to facilitate increases in production volumes, including de-heading and filleting, pin-boning & spiral freezing. The following is additional machinery that will be required to add capacity to an existing processing function:

- » smoking: additional smoke ovens;
- » slicing: additional automatic slicers and silk cut slicers; and
- » packing: additional thermoform/vacuum sealing units.

## 2.6 Noise, odour, air and other emissions

The existing factory is located centrally on a 15.5 ha title. The site has frontage to the Huon Highway, Glen Road and North Glen Road. Access to the site is from Glen Road. Housing in the vicinity of this site is a mixture of rural residential blocks and houses associated with small businesses. Along Glen Road there is a bus depot, auto-electrician. A sawmill is located on the west side of North Glen Road and there is a large cool store immediately adjoining to the north.

### 2.6.1 Noise

The factory was designed to assist with noise minimisation by locating the production building towards the middle of the 15.5 ha title (at least 145m from the nearest resident in Glen Road). The proposed expansion is towards the Huon Highway, and does not decrease the distance of any equipment in relation to Glen Road.

The current processing facility is constructed from expanded polystyrene (EPS) panels which provide for excellent noise reduction. The proposed expansion will use Polyisocyanurate (PIR) panels which have the added aid of fire retardation.

There will be no material change to equipment that is located externally to the factory, which is predominately refrigeration equipment. New production related equipment will be installed inside the expanded processing building.

Maximum expected traffic noise is at the change of day shift to afternoon shift, which occurs between 14:30 and 15:30. There is no anticipated change expected to shift timing.

Trucks for the delivery HOG, dry goods and to despatch finished product & remove waste operate between 07:00 and 16:30. There is no anticipated change expected to the timing of deliveries and despatch.

In the 11 year history of the Huonville factory, there has only been one complaint to the Environment Division and this was in relation to early morning operation of construction equipment to build the factory (1997).

## **2.6.2 Odour**

There are 5 areas that can contribute to odour emissions:

- » Raw material;
- » Processing Floor Area;
- » Product Waste;
- » Smoke; and
- » Effluent.

### **Raw Material**

The predominate raw material is chilled HOG. HOG is delivered in sealed, insulated plastic bins within an enclosed truck. The chilled HOG is in salt water ice slurry and has a temperature of between -1.0 and 2.0 degrees. The bins are unloaded and placed in the chilled bin storage room, awaiting processing. They may be stored up to 3 days whilst the HOG passes through rigor.

For certain times of the year, frozen HOG will be used as raw material. This HOG is delivered in sealed frozen plastic bins. The frozen HOG is then transferred to an insulated plastic bin which is filled with fresh water. Once thawed (generally 24 hours), the HOG is processed.

There is no anticipated change expected to delivery and storage of raw material.

### **Processing Floor Area**

The Huonville factory is compliant with key processing and quality audit standards including HACCP, SQF, AQIS and Woolworths Quality Assurance Standards. There is a rigorous daily hygiene program for processing floor areas which includes wash down and cleaning agents, sanitary footbaths, and other processes to ensure there is no build of organic material on the processing floor.

The expanded factory will be designed and operated to ensure continued compliance with processing and quality audit standards.

## **Product Waste**

Product waste consists of heads, frames, skins and trimmings. This waste is collected and stored in waste chillers in sealed insulated bins. Waste is collected by a 3<sup>rd</sup> party operator and taken to Triabunna for further value adding.

There is no anticipated change expected to storage and removal of product waste.

## **Smoke**

Refer to Section 2.6.3 for further information regarding smoke emissions.

## **Effluent**

Refer to Section 2.7 for further information regarding effluent.

### **2.6.3 Air**

There are currently 3 smoke ovens located in the Huonville Factory. It is anticipated that a further 3 smoke ovens will be required to deliver forecast future production volumes. Tassal is commissioning services to advise on best practise technology to address smoke emissions from the Huonville factory. Based on this advice, Tassal will work with the Environmental Protection Authority to determine the best course of action.

Having regard to the above considerations, the proposed expansions will not cause an unacceptable impact on the amenity of the area by way of noise, odour, air or other emissions.

## **2.7 Disposal of Wastewater**

The applicant has received advice from the Council in a letter dated 23 February 2009 (attached as Appendix B), to confirm Council's ability to take receipt of increased effluent as a result of increased production of the Tassal Fish Processing Plant at Huonville.

As per Council request, Tassal will install an aerated attenuation tank to limit flow variances to +/-10% during the day, with a +/- 30% hourly discharge homogeneity in flow and quality parameters. This attenuation tank will also be aerated to prevent odours building up and to reduce BOD loadings discharged to the Council WWTP at Ranelagh. The size of the aerated attenuation tank will be around 175kl.

The existing wastewater infrastructure is sufficiently sized to pump, screen and direct the flows into this attenuation tank. An additional pump set will be installed to meter flows into the existing gravity sewer which then discharges direct to the Council Ranelagh WWTP.

It is therefore considered that wastewater can be adequately addressed.

## **2.8 Car Parking**

The Planning Scheme does not provide a specific numerical formula for parking. Council's consideration of the proposal requires demonstration that the practical parking demand for employees, visitors and loading associated with the factory will be met.

There is currently a surplus of car parking spaces. There are 124 car parking spaces, of which approximately 80 are occupied during the day shift (with approximately 117 day shift operators). This equates to a parking demand of approximately 0.68 per day shift worker.

An additional 32 FTEs would be associated with the proposed production increase to 2300tpa, however this staffing increase would not result in an increased demand for parking, as there would not be an increase in the number of employees on the peak day shift. Subsequently, the existing car parking would be adequate to service the extended facility.

## 3 Planning Scheme Assessment

### 3.1 Use

The proposed use is defined in Schedule 2 of the Huon Planning Scheme as “*Rural Industry*” which is defined as “*any industry handling, treating, processing, or packing primary products grown, reared or produced in the locality of that industry and a workshop servicing plant or equipment used for rural purposes in that locality*”.

This proposal seeks an extension to the existing use. Notably, a physical extension to the use is proposed, and an increase to the approved production level of 2000tpa to 2300tpa.

### 3.2 Zoning

The subject site is located within the Intensive Rural Zone within the Huon Planning Area. Rural Industry is a Discretionary Use within the Intensive Rural Zone provided there is no direct access onto the Huon Highway. In the case of this application, access is from the side road. The Use associated with the proposed extension is therefore discretionary.

### 3.3 Planning Scheme Standards

Setback requirements have been established by the Planning Scheme for the Intensive Agriculture Zone. The siting of buildings on allotments must conform to the following standards:

**Table 2 Development Standards within the Intensive Agriculture Zone**

	<b>Setback Requirement</b>
Side Boundary	10m
Front Boundary	15m
Rear Boundary	10m
Huon Highway boundary	100m

The proposed building extensions to the eastern side of the existing building comply with these standards. The extended building will continue to be centrally located and well setback from all boundaries on the relatively large site.

### 3.4 Car Parking Requirements

Schedule 8 of the Planning Scheme sets out the standards for car parking, and the car parking requirements within the Intensive Rural Zone are to be determined by Council.

As detailed in Section 2.4, there would not be an increase in the number of day shift FTE's and therefore no increase in parking demand associated with the proposal. It is noted that the existing capacity of the car park is for 124 cars, and as demonstrated in Section 2.8 of this report, this represents a surplus of car parking spaces during the peak use day shift.

### **3.5 Signage**

This application does not involve additional signage.

## 4 Land Use Planning and Approvals Act 1993 and State Policies

The Planning Scheme does not contain specific performance measures to consider the Discretion. In the absence of these specifics, it is appropriate to rely on the general objectives of the Planning Scheme and of the *Land Use Planning And Approvals Act 1993* and evaluate the use in terms of impact on surrounding agricultural land, residential amenity, noise, odour and other emissions.

### 4.1 Objectives of the RMPS

The objectives of the resource management and planning system of Tasmania are set out in Schedule 1 of the *Land Use Planning and Approvals Act 1993* as follows:

*(a) to promote the sustainable development of natural and physical resources and the maintenance of ecological processes and genetic diversity;*

Comment

The proposal has been designed to minimise emission and impacts beyond the site and is considered consistent with this Objective

*(b) to provide for the fair, orderly and sustainable use and development of air, land and water;*

Comment

The proposal upgrades an existing significant factory infrastructure investment by Tassal that is well known and valued by the Huon community. The proposed extension to the existing facility, on a large site and maintaining a significant setback to neighbouring properties is considered consistent with the Objective for fair, orderly and sustainable development.

*(c) to encourage public involvement in resource management and planning;*

Comment

The proposal will involve statutory notification as part of Council's planning assessment. Tassal would be pleased to discuss any issues that may arise during the notification period.

It is considered that this Objective will be met as part of Council's assessment.

*(d) to facilitate economic development in accordance with the objectives set out in paragraphs (a), (b), and (c);*

Comment

The proposal represents the sustainable expansion of existing factory infrastructure and is consistent with this Objective.

*(e) to promote the sharing of responsibility for resource management and planning between the different spheres of Government, the community and industry in the State.*

Comment

Tassal has consulted with both Council and the EPA prior to lodgement of this application consistent with this Objective.

## 4.2 Objectives of the Planning Process

The objectives of the planning process established by LUPAA are:

- (a) *to require sound strategic planning and coordinated action by state and local government;*

Comment

Tassal's existing factory is of strategic importance to the Huon community for its role as a significant employer. The proposal has been assessed against the relevant planning scheme provisions and has been designed to minimise impacts beyond the site. The proposal is considered consistent with this Objective.

- (b) *to establish a system of planning instruments to be the principal way of setting objectives, policies and controls for the use, development and protection of the land;*

Comment

The proposal does not conflict with this Objective

- (c) *to ensure that the effects on the environment are considered and provide or the explicit consideration of social and economic effects when decisions are made about the use and development of land;*

Comment

As discussed above the proposal has been designed to minimise emissions and impacts on nearby properties. The proposal offers significant social and economic benefits for the Huon Community and is considered entirely consistent with this Objective.

- (d) *to require land use and development planning and policy to be easily integrate with environmental, social economic, conservation and resource management policies at State, local and municipal levels;*

Comment

The proposal does not conflict with this Objective

- (e) *to provide for the consolidation of approvals for land use of development and related matters, and to coordinate planning approvals with related approvals;*

Comment

Tassal has consulted with both Council and the EPA prior to lodgement of this application consistent with this Objective.

- (f) *to secure a pleasant, efficient and safe working, living and recreational environment for all Tasmania and visitors to Tasmania;*

Comment

As discussed above the proposal minimises impacts beyond the site and does not conflict with this Objective.

(g) *to conserve those buildings, areas or other places which are of scientific, aesthetic, architectural or historical interest, or otherwise of special cultural value;*

Comment

The proposal does not conflict with this Objective.

(h) *to protect public infrastructure and other assets and enable the orderly provision and coordination of public utilities and other facilities for the benefit of the community; and*

Comment

Council has confirmed that its reticulated infrastructure is capable of accepting the proposed effluent discharge from the site. The proposal is not considered to raise any other public infrastructure issues and is considered consistent with this objective.

(i) *to provide a planning framework which fully onsidres land capability.*

Comment

The proposed extension to an existing factory does not conflict with this Objective.

The proposal has been designed having regard to social, economic and environmental impacts as discussed throughout this report. The proposal is considered to further the objectives of the Act.

## **4.3 State Policies**

### **4.3.1 State Policy on the Protection of Agricultural Land**

The proposed development has negligible potential to fetter adjoining agricultural land. It is consistent with the relevant zoning and involves a physical extension to the existing use without subdivision of agricultural land. As a result, the proposal will not affect the productive capacity of the agricultural land resource within the planning area and is not considered to conflict with the PAL Policy.

### **4.3.2 State Policy on Water Quality Management**

As indicated above, Council confirms that effluent from the site can be accommodated by Council's reticulated infrastructure. The proposal is not considered to conflict with the objectives of this Policy.

## 5 Conclusion

The proposal involves extensions to the factory at 20 Glen Road, Huonville. The proposal involves the exercise of discretion in relation to Use under the Huon Planning Scheme 1979.

The proposal is considered consistent with the intent of the Zone and the overall tenor of the Planning Scheme which aims to “*establish policies for the guidance and control of development within the Municipality as well as preserving the economic viability and rural character of the Municipality*”.

As demonstrated in this report, there would not be a detrimental impact on amenity in terms of noise, odour, and emissions, nor would there be a detrimental impact on surrounding agricultural land. Given these considerations, the proposal is considered consistent with the intent of the Intensive Rural Zone, the objectives of the *Land Use Planning and Approvals Act 1993* and is recommended for approval.

## Title Information

# Letter from Council

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