

Mining Subsidence

Introduction

This Fact Sheet is one of a series which deals with planning scheme related information. This Fact Sheet deals with the issues associated with mining subsidence in Ipswich.

Historical Context

Ipswich has a long and proud history associated with mining. The City's first European settlement was originally established to mine limestone in an area that is now within the Ipswich City Centre. Early discovery of coal led to the establishment of a vibrant, coal mining industry, which contributed greatly to the City's economic prosperity. The first coal mine in Queensland commenced on the banks of the Brisbane River at Redbank in 1843.

The early coal mines used underground mining techniques and subsequently evolved into highly mechanised, open cut operations. The last underground coal mining operation within the Ipswich Local Government Area ceased at Oakleigh (Rosewood) in 1997. Today there is only one coal mine still operating with the Local Government Area, an open cut operation near Rosewood.

Extent of Mining Operations

Despite the significance of coal mining to the City's history and economic prosperity, only 9% of the Local Government Area is affected by former mining activities and less than 1% (in fact 0.53%) contains urban residential uses (ie suburban housing) which is affected by underground mining.

Most of the land affected by former mining activities is zoned for Rural/Non Urban, Open Space or Business and Industry Investigation and not for residential use. Most of the underground mining areas zoned for residential use comprise established historic areas.

Subsidence Events

Mining subsidence events in the Ipswich Local Government Area are relatively rare. Most of the City's underground mining areas have no history of mining subsidence. Significant subsidence events have occurred at Blackstone, Bundamba, Dinmore and Collingwood Park.

In the case of Collingwood Park, two mining subsidence events have occurred in an area extending from Laurie Drive to Duncan Street and Collingwood Park Drive in 1989 and more recently in April 2008. Most of the existing houses at Collingwood Park are not affected by mining activities.

Information on Areas Affected by Mining

Information on areas affected by mining activities may be obtained electronically by accessing PD Online (normally available 24 hours, 7 days a week). Alternatively, information may be obtained by attending the Ipswich City Council Development Counter during normal business hours (First Floor, Ipswich City Council Administration Building, 45 Roderick Street) or by contacting the Development Counter on telephone number (07) 3810 6888.

To access Council's PD Online information, please follow the instructions below:-

1. From Council's Home Page <http://www.ipswich.qld.gov.au/> click the 'PD Online' link under Online Services on the right hand side of the page.
2. Read the Terms and Conditions and click 'I agree'.
3. Select the 'Property Enquiry' link.
4. Enter your property address details and click 'Search'.
5. Click the 'Details' button to the right of your property address.
6. Click the '+' beside the heading 'Map' to display your property on the map.
7. Under the map layers drop down list select 'OV03-Mining Influence Areas' to display the mining details.
8. To display the legend click the last icon on the right hand side above the map.

The Ipswich City Council mining information shows:-

- areas affected by underground mining;
- surface disturbance areas (including open cut operations and areas used for overburden/stockpiles);
- approximate locations for tunnels and shafts; and
- an overall 'mining influence constrained area' which indicates the outer most limit of potential mining effects (including the 'angle of draw' from known underground workings).

Building and Development Permits

Development within 'mining influence constrained areas' is regulated by Part 11, Division 4 (Development Constraints Overlays) of the Ipswich Planning Scheme. Information relating to these provisions may also be accessed through PD Online.

Essentially all forms of significant development, ranging from building a new house to the subdivision of land within 'mining influence constrained areas' require Council planning approval.

Minor building works such as car ports, pools and minor building extensions normally do not require a planning permit and may be approved by Council or Private Building Certifiers.

Applications for planning approval within 'mining influence constrained areas' need to have a geotechnical assessment report prepared by a suitably qualified and experienced person. The geotechnical report is to be submitted by the applicant in support of the application and is subsequently reviewed by Councils' Development Engineers and may be subject to further review by another independent geotechnical expert.

All applications for planning approval within 'mining influence constrained areas' are also now being referred to the Department of Mines and Energy for comment and advice.

The geotechnical assessment and associated development approval process is used to determine:-

- whether the land is capable of accommodating the proposed development and at what density or intensity of use;
- what areas of the site should (or should not) be developed and where buildings should (or should not) be located; and
- whether any special design or construction techniques should be applied, such as the use of adjustable post supported structures (eg stumps) rather than 'slab on ground' construction and the use of flexible joints for 'in ground' services.

In most cases, where a subdivision estate has been supported for development by a thorough geotechnical assessment, further geotechnical reports are not normally required for each of the subsequent dwellings on the estate.

For further information relating to Development and Building matters, please contact the Ipswich City Council Development Counter during normal business hours (First Floor, Ipswich City Council Administration Building, 45 Roderick Street) on telephone number (07) 3810 6888.

