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Agricultural Lands Assessment

**58 Taylors Road,
BLACK HILL NSW 2322**

Prepared for Perception Planning

on behalf of

The Landholder

Author:

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June 2021

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1. Purpose of Report

The Landholder of Lot: 686 DP: 619758 58 Taylors Road, Black Hill, NSW proposes to construct a dwelling on the said Lot. This requires that Cessnock City Council amend the LEP "Dwelling Entitlement Map" to permit a dwelling on the land. To aid its consideration of amendment to the LEP "Dwelling Entitlement Map", Cessnock City Council has requested, amongst other assessments and reports, an Agricultural Lands Assessment.

Explicitly the Council requested the Planning Priority 8 - Productivity, "Our rural land is protected from incompatible development" Principle 2.: "Effective buffers are maintained to protect rural lands from further encroachment of non-agricultural development" stating:

"The agricultural use and potential use of the adjoining sites (particularly Lot 201 DP:1195993) is unknown and introducing a sensitive receiver in that location may affect the agriculture potential of that site".

This Agricultural Lands Assessment addresses this Planning Priority as well as Planning Priority 6 - Liveable; "Rural residential, large lot residential development and environmental living are considered in limited and appropriate locations" Principle 6.: "High quality agricultural land is protected and effective buffers are provided".

2. Background

Perception Planning, on behalf of the landholder have requested Scott Barnett & Associates, Agricultural Consultants to provide the Agricultural Lands Assessment relating to Lot: 686 DP: 619758 58 Taylors Road, Black Hill, NSW and surrounding lands.

Scott Barnett & Associates (SBA), established in 1996, is an agricultural consultancy with experience in agricultural land and capability assessment. The Principal of SBA and author of this assessment, Scott Barnett, is an experienced agricultural scientist and consultant and a Certified Practising Agriculturalist (CPAg) as determined by the Australian Institute of Agriculture (AIA). His resume is attached (**Appendix 1**).

The land in question is approximately 8.4ha in area, below the prescribed 40 ha minimum lot size applicable to land zoned RU2 under the Cessnock LEP 2011. It lies to the east of Taylors Road. The land slopes steeply from south to north giving it a northerly aspect. Approximately 75% of land area is cleared with the non-cleared area occupying the majority of the highest and southern most third of the Lot.

At the northeast corner of the Lot is a dam with a surface area of approximately 0.5 ha.

3. Methodology

A site visit by SBA was conducted on the 14 April 2021. During this visit the author had full and free access to the property. Surrounding properties and land use was observed from public roads and the property in question.

The site visit was supported by a desk top study and the author's knowledge and experience of the Lower Hunter gained from his combined 25 years working in the Hunter Valley as a professional agricultural advisor with the NSW government and as a private consultant.

4. Climate

Bureau of Meteorology data¹ for Paterson (Tocal AWS 061250) records were accessed on 7 June 2021. The weather station is approximately 12 kilometres north of the property in question.

Rainfall patterns show a summer autumn dominance with 63% of annual rainfall occurring in the six months November to April, and only 13% experienced in the period of July to September.

¹ http://www.bom.gov.au/climate/averages/tables/cw_061250_All.shtml Viewed 7 June 2021

Mean average rainfall is high at 940.3 mm. The reliability is also high with the median average annual rainfall being 949.5 mm, with the 10% and 90% deciles being 772.7 mm and 1184.7 mm respectively.

The summers are hot with relatively warm winters. The mean monthly temperature range is 23.8°C in January and 11.8°C in July. The average maximum temperature in January is 29.9°C in January with the average minimum temperature in July being 6.2°C.

Despite the higher rainfall in summer it is expected that there would be an evapotranspiration – rainfall deficit during summer with mean daily evaporation (Class Plan A) exceeding 5.0mm from October to February.

5. Topography

The land in question is steep sloping (Figure 1) falling from the top of the ridge line at a height of greater than 150m on its southern boundary to 58m on its northeast boundary over distance of approximately 450m, representing an average gradient of 20° with the gradient decreasing as you transverse down the slope from south to north (Figure 2). Below the northern boundary to slope continues to decrease towards Black Hill Rd which is at a height of 45m.

There are two gullies running from the southwest corner to the northeast of the Lot 686 feeding the dam in the northeast corner of the block. This drainage line continues in the general southwest to northeast direction feeding two further dams, the smaller in Lot 686 DP 619758, the larger in Lot 201 DP1195993. Drainage lines show symptoms of erosion in past times having resulted from over clearing of steep slopes. Naturalised permanent pastures seem have stabilised this issue.

This general topography is representative of the general area either side of Taylors running from the top of the ridge down to Black Hill Rd.

6. Vegetation

The cleared portion of the land in question and surrounding blocks is pastured by naturalised species. Pasture species evident include:

- Kikuyu (*Pennisetum clandestinum*);
- Paspalum (*Paspalum dilatatum*);
- Couch grass (*Cynodon dactylon*);
- Red grass (*Brothriochola ambigua*);
- Three-awned spear grass (*Aristida spp.*);
- Barbed wire grass (*Cymbopogon refractus*);
- Paddock love (*Eragrostis leptostachya*);
- Long-hair plume (*Dichelachne crinitia*); and
- Short-hair plume (*D. sciurea*).

The higher slopes towards the southern boundary have been partially cleared and/or has extensive regrowth (Figure XX). Native trees represented include:

- Spotted gum (*Eucalyptus maculate*);
- Grey gum (*E. punctata*);
- Bastard mahogany (*E. umbra*);
- Black wattle (*Acacia mearnsii*); and
- Hickory (*A. implexa*).

Surrounding land exhibited similar vegetation, with greater large tree coverage.

7. Soils

The land in question represents two Soil Landscapes as described in the Soil Landscapes of Newcastle (2012 NSW OHE)² being:

- Cedar Hill Soil Landscape associated with the higher slopes of the land; and
- Beresfield Soil Landscape associated with the moderate sloping land in the northern portion of the land.

Lot 686, DP 619758 is entirely within the Cedar Hill Soil Landscape. The surrounding land consists of both the Cedar Hill Soil Landscape and the Beresfield Soil Landscape.

The Cedar Hill Soil Landscape consists of well to imperfectly drained Brown Podzolic Soils and Yellow Podzolic Soils. The soils are limited by their acidity (pH 4.5- 6.5), potential aluminium toxicity and hard setting, low permeability. Soils exhibit moderate fertility with high phosphorus sorption capacity. Soils can exhibit localised seasonal waterlogging. The landscape is suited only for grazing being totally unsuitable for cultivation. Grazing management should ensure ground cover is maintained at all times to prevent soil erosion and land slippage.

The Beresfield Soil Landscape consists of moderately well to imperfectly drained Yellow and Brown Podzolic Soils. The soils are limited by their acidity (pH 5.0 -7.0), low to moderate soil fertility, potential for aluminium toxicity and seasonal water logging. The landscape is primarily suited to grazing with minimum cultivation restricted to lower gradient slopes and appropriate soil moisture (window between too wet and too dry). Soil works to slow water run off maybe required to mitigate soil erosion risk if cultivation is carried out.

Gross mapping by the NSW OHE³ has identified the total area of the two Soil Landscapes in the Black Hill Rd/Taylors Road area as having moderate Estimated Inherent Soil Fertility.

The soils have not been assessed for Acid Sulphate Soil Risk.

8. Land and Soil Capability and Agricultural land classification

8.1 Land and Soil Capability

NSW Office of Environment & Heritage's *The land and soil capability assessment scheme* (2012)⁴ uses the biophysical features of the land and soil including land from position, slope gradient, drainage, climate, soil type and soil characteristics to derive detailed rating tables for a range of soil and land hazards. The Land and Soil Capability (LSC) places land in eight classes, LSC class 1 through to LSC class 8. As the class number becomes higher the number of limitations restricting land uses increases and management practices to mitigate these limitations decreases. As a general guide, *The land and soil capability assessment scheme, Table 2 Land and soil capability – general discussion* provides the following comparison:

- LSC class 1, 2, 3: Land capable of a wide variety of land uses (Cropping, grazing, horticulture, forestry, nature conservation);
- LSC class 4, 5: Land capable of a variety of land uses (cropping with restricted cultivation, pasture cropping, grazing, some horticulture, forestry, nature conservation)
- LSC class 6; Land capable for a limited set of land uses (grazing, forestry and nature conservation, some horticulture)
- LSC class 7, 8: Land generally incapable of agricultural land use (selective forestry and nature conservation)

² <http://data.environment.nsw.gov.au/dataset/soil-landscapes-of-the-newcastle-1-100000-sheet3a574> (Viewed 10 June 2021)

³ https://geo.seed.nsw.gov.au/Public_Viewier/index.html?viewer=Public_Viewier&locale=en-AU&runWorkflow=AppendLayerCatalog&CatalogLayer=SEED_Catalog.112 (viewed 10 June 2021)

⁴ *The land and soil capability assessment scheme* (2012 Office of Environment and Heritage, Sydney)

All land subject to this report and the corresponding land surrounding this land is LSC class 6. The limitations differ according to the Soil Landscape.

As stated above, LSC class 6 has very severe limitations for a wide range of land uses and few management practices are available to overcome these limitations. The Land generally is suited only for grazing with limitations and is not suitable for cultivation.

The limitations of the Cedar Hill Soil Landscape are:

- Slope that can erode severely even without cultivation;
- Seasonal waterlogging;
- Naturally acid soils of moderate fertility; and
- Potential aluminium toxicity.

The limitations of the Beresfield Soil Landscape are:

- Slope;
- Seasonal waterlogging;
- Major flow lines with high flows;
- Naturally acidic soils of low fertility; and
- High erodibility as evident by high stream bank erosion.

The Land immediately to the south is LSC Class 7 and has no agricultural value.

8.2 Agricultural land classification

The NSW Department of Primary Industry (Agriculture) (formerly NSW Agriculture) uses a five class system which classifies land in terms of its suitability for general agricultural use⁵.

Whereas LSC is based on biophysical parameters to determine the lands limitations for general agricultural pursuits, Agricultural land classification evaluates biophysical, social and economic factors that may constrain the use of the land.

Based on the criteria used the land subject to this report is Class 4.

Class 4 land is suitable for grazing but not for cultivation and have a generally moderate to high levels of social or physical limitations, restricting the agricultural productivity. It is noted that severe to extreme level of one particular characteristic may result in an area being classified as Class 4 even when other limitations are absent. Limiting factors which result in the land being classified as Class 4 include:

- The land is unsuitable for cultivation, but minimum tillage techniques can be used to establish perennial pastures on less severe slopes;
- Parts of the land is poorly drained and subject water logging;
- Productivity levels for local adapted pasture are low to moderate;
- Slopes steeply inclined;
- Soil profile is poorly drained;
- Erosion hazard is high to very high; and
- Soil physical and chemical properties limit crop and pasture growth, and low productivity levels limit the ability to economically manage this constraint.

Based on the above, the land subject to this report (Lot 686, DP: 619758 and surrounding agricultural land) agriculturally is best suit to extensive grazing. The prevalence of naturalised kikuyu pasture across the area points to grazing by cattle and horses.

⁵ Humle T. and Grosskopf T. (2002) *Agricultural Land Classification*, Agfact AC.25 NSW Agriculture, Sydney NSW.

The grazing habit of sheep and alpacas are less suited to kikuyu grazing but can be grazed on kikuyu pastures if it is kept relatively short. The steep sloping nature of the higher reaches of land in the Taylors Road area make kikuyu management difficult due to tractor access and safety concerns.

The Land immediately to the south is Class 5 and has no agricultural value.

9. Land use

Land use was observed by the author during his site visit of 14 April 2021.

The current land uses observed were:

- Large block residential;
- Rural residential; and
- Low input extensive grazing beef cattle and horses.

Lot: 201 DP: 1195993 was observed from its northern boundary adjacent to Black Hill Rd, south and from 58 Taylors Rd (Lot: 686 DP 619758) looking east. The land use observed corresponded with the local grazing land use of cattle. Fencing along the northern boundary fronting Black Hill Rd included "white tape" which is used for equine fencing in extensively grazed paddocks (Figure 3).

Lot: 201 DP: 1195993 is 46.9 ha in size and currently has eight (8) boundary neighbours with residences.

Pastures (Figure 4) show low quality naturalised pasture species as well as some native pasture species. These are representative of the species listed in above in Section 6.

The land immediately to the south is used for extractive industries.

It is the author's opinion that neither Lot: 686 DP: 619758 or Lot: 201 DP:1195993, under current management practices is capable of been an economic unit as defined by the NSW DPI⁶.

"The most relevant base level indicator of whether the productive use of Hunter region grazing lands can be sustained is whether it can support a functional cattle unit i.e. a breeding herd of 40 cows. A functional cattle unit was upheld in the Archibald vs. Scone Council Land & Environment Court [NSW LEC proceedings No. 10180, 1987] as a reasonable and typical unit for efficient, sustainable beef cattle enterprises. Key concepts are the ability to maintain the natural resource base and at least cover direct operating costs of that enterprise."

10. Potential Land use conflicts and limitations

The land is not closely impacted by surrounding residences and or agricultural industries or activities. The low intensity (passive) grazing activity of the surrounding land does not appear to create or potentially create any land use conflicts within the local community.

Similarly, the absence of significant agricultural activity in the surrounding area does not create a potential land use conflict between agricultural activity and this land if a housing dwelling is erected in line with dwellings in the surrounding area.

11. Conclusion

The Cessnock Local Environment Plan (2011)⁷ defines the objectives of RU 2 land as:

⁶ https://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0014/70610/Beef-stocking-rates-and-farm-size---Hunter-region.pdf; Page

6. Viewed 17 February 2020.

⁷ <https://legislation.nsw.gov.au/view/html/inforce/current/epi-2011-0702#pt.1>; Viewed 21 June 2021

- To encourage sustainable primary industry production by maintaining and enhancing the natural resource base.
- To maintain the rural landscape character of the land.
- To provide for a range of compatible land uses, including extensive agriculture.
- To enable other forms of development that are associated with rural activity and require an isolated location or support tourism and recreation.
- To ensure that the type and intensity of development is appropriate in relation to the rural capability and suitability of the land, the preservation of the agricultural, mineral and extractive production potential of the land, the rural environment (including scenic resources) and the costs of providing services and amenities.
- To maintain and enhance the scenic character of the land.
- To ensure that development does not create unreasonable or uneconomic demands for the provision or extension of services.
- To minimise the visual impact of vegetation clearing in order to be consistent with the rural character of the locality.
- To minimise disturbance to the landscape from development through clearing, earthworks, access roads and construction of buildings.
- To ensure development does not intrude into the skyline when viewed from a road or other public place.

The Landowner client of Perception Planning propose to build a dwelling at 58 Talyors Rd, Black Hill. The current agricultural land use of this land and surrounding land is low input extensive grazing. Other land uses in the surrounding area are extractive industries and residential on large lots and rural residential.

The land is very limited agricultural quality due to the land and soil capability limitations including:

- Slope;
- Erodibility;
- Physical and chemical soil characteristics; and
- Water drainage;

It is deemed that it has limited agricultural suitability save extensive grazing, forestry and nature conservation.

Granting a dwelling entitlement for this parcel of land will not adversely impact the Objectives of the LEP for land zoned RU2 for this area.

Explicitly the author is of the opinion that such a dwelling entitlement will not introduce a sensitive receiver that will further diminish the agricultural potential of Lot: 201 DP: 1195993.

It is the author's considered opinion that there are no agricultural reasons for not allowing the dwelling entitlement.

12. Figures

Figure 1



Looking to the southern boundary of 58 Taylors Rd showing steep slope, timbered area, drainage line and land slippage from past agricultural practices

Figure 2



Looking across from proposed dwelling site towards Lot: 201 DP: 1195933

Figure 3



White tape fencing material often associated with part time equine activities

Figure 4



Naturalised pasture present on Lot: 201: DP: 1195933

Appendix 1

Resume Scott Barnett

RESUME

Name: Scott Anthony Barnett
Address: 5 Eva St
Malvern VIC 2144
Mobile: +(61) 428 461 566
Email: scott.sba@bigpond.com

Key Skills

- Relationship building and networking
- Able to determine key issues and needs
- Strategic and tactical management processes
- Understanding of Australian agricultural industry across the value chain from production systems to international markets
- Understanding of and managing agricultural production systems and land portfolios
- Business management/financial skills
- Biological and financial modelling
- Understanding of and managing the complexity of the mining/agriculture interface including third party relationships
- Understanding of the global economic and political environment of agriculture
- Experienced corporate dairy manager of large and multi site operations
- Sourcing funds for research, corporate investments and community projects

Qualifications

- Bachelor of Science in Agriculture, University of Sydney
- Master of Applied Science (Agriculture and Rural Development), University of Western Sydney, Hawkesbury
- Diploma Company Directors Course, University of Sydney Graduate School of Business
- Certified Practicing Agriculturalist (CPAg) – Australian Institute of Agriculture

Professional Associations

- Member Australian Institute of Agricultural
- Fellow of Australian Institute of Company Directors
- Member Australian Association of Ruminant Nutrition

Professional History

1996 – current Managing Director - Scott Barnett and Associates Pty Limited

Provide independent business, land management and agricultural production advice to agricultural businesses and industries including:

- Strategic planning
- Farm business management
- Assessing dairy industry investments (farm and processing) including farm assets, milk supply patterns and off take agreements, processing requirements and potential sources of milk
- EIS and property management plans for land development including coal mining, farm development and farm subdivision
- Group and management board facilitation
- Delivery of training programs on behalf of government, Industry Research and Development Corporations and rural clients to agribusinesses
- (See below for projects and achievements)

Oct 2016 – Oct -2017 Business Development Advisor – Agribusiness – World Vision Australia

Enhance World Vision Australia's agribusiness and value chain portfolio to engage commercial agribusiness partners for an economic return, improve the economic resilience of the communities with whom WVA works and generate operational income for WVA – Identified economic opportunities in and engaged with private sector investors for projects in Sri Lanka, PNG, Australia Program. Engaged with relevant National Offices, thematic and program management staff to commence developing project concepts and analysis of opportunities.

July 2014 – Oct 2015 General Manager – Coomboona Holsteins and Coomboona Sires

- Full strategic and profit and loss control of dairy development to produce 75 million litres per annum and develop world class elite dairy genetics (male and female) business.
- Leverage of production scale and industry profile to develop commercial activities based on IP held in business.
- Participated in capital raising, Responsible for all approvals and first stage capital developments.

2004 - 2010 Managing Director - JV Agriculture Pty Limited

Investment trust that operated an 850 cow irrigated dairy, plus irrigated cropping on 700ha (460ha irrigated, 2,270 ML) – 8 employees. The land, irrigation licenses and infrastructure were operated under a license from Bengalla Mining Company. Operation sold February 2010.

Achievements:

- Develop tender proposal
- Develop full business plan
- Negotiated licence agreement
- Organised equity finance
- Organised debt finance
- Managed irrigation system upgrade with capital budget exceeding \$500,000
- Recruitment of operational team
- Negotiated milk supply contract and grain sale contracts
- Negotiated supply arrangements with suppliers
- Negotiated labour contracts
- Develop OH&S and environmental management plans and procedures
- Develop standard operating procedures
- Negotiated sale of business and transfer of Licence to Occupy Land

1985 – 1996

District Livestock Officer - NSW Agriculture

Worked with individual farmers and industry (including Government) at a State and National level to develop and implement local, state and national extension and training programs for dairy producers and industry.

Scott Barnett & Associates (Projects & Achievements)

- Working with local investors investigating and funding of a vertically integrated dairy value chain outside the major commodity processors in Australia to provide more stable dairy pricing for the milk producer and the consumer facing end user. Negotiated milk supply agreement with major Australian dairy processor for export fresh milk.
- Dairy Australia: Analysis of capital requirements, cost of production, key profit drivers, and risk profile of System 5 (Total Mixed Ration) dairying in the Australian dairy industry.
- Working with a community in Timor – Leste to improve the effectiveness of their dairy and pig enterprises to provide produce and income for the community. The outcome will include a skill upgrading of the village school to provide effective animal husbandry training.
- Investigating the development of a large scale vertically integrated dairy business in Lhasa, Tibet from soils to processed dairy products. Will also see forage and organic fertiliser made available to local producers for cash cropping and livestock production.
- Engaged by high net worth individual to assist crystallise his asset value in dairying and agriculture allowing for development of large scale TMR dairy system and dairy genetics business. Resulted in \$34M being invested by top 200ASX company as minority shareholder in fully approved 7,200 cow confined dairy investment as well as separate elite genetics operation (cow and bull farm). At time this was the largest on farm co-investment dairy deal completed in Australia –appointed GM to project July 2014 to October 2015.
- Undertaken Agricultural Production Assessments, Agricultural Impact Statements and Gateway process relating to potential coal mine developments and or expansions (14 completed, 1 current) – considered subject matter expert.
- Engaged as expert witness and briefed by Hunter Environmental Lobby and Environmental Defenders Office in Land & Environment Court action of impact of Ashton Coal Open Cut Project on local landholder agricultural business.
- Advised number of individuals and corporations on NSW Government Strategic Agricultural Land Use Policy including drafting individual responses to policy as a whole and to specific Critical Industry Cluster criteria and mapping.
- NSW Department of Primary Industries - write SEPP and guide development application process for new Automatic Milking Facility at the Elizabeth Macarthur Agricultural Institute.
- Engaged by Victorian Department of Business & Innovation to develop an investment document examining the entire value chain of the Victorian dairy industry to encourage additional investment by Chinese investors leading to the expansion of the dairy industry
- Advised US based humanitarian group on dairy, dry fruits and other crops project based in Australia to produce emergency food aid packs based on biodynamic farming principals including production hubs, potential farm assets and alliance producers, production patterns, supply issues, processing facilities. Project “put on ice” due to GFC.
- Advising on farm conversion of two properties held by high value individual and potential purchase and conversion of two other properties to high production high component milk system with secure off take arrangements, including feed system (graze and PMP), bio secure calf rearing system, breeding program, HR, OH&S and EMS, initial investment including land purchase \$A16.5M. Project eventually to be sold as agribusiness investment
- Advising on Lucerne based replacement heifer pellet/nut for domestic and export markets
- Provide strategic advice on milk supply for specialised infant formula for export
- Engaged by Ergo Consulting USA to advise on industry status and potential scenarios for lamb, beef and wheat industries in Australia leading to investment by a Middle East sovereign fund in Australian grain and lamb production assets
- Advised Macquarie Bank (Macquarie Diversified Investment Funds) on dairy investments, strategy, discovery work and assessment of potential assets across Australia, financial modelling, oversaw due diligence consultants of initial asset purchased in south west Victoria
- Advised a consortium (including ASX Top 200 company) on production and business plan as part of tender to operate the Tamworth Regional Council's Westdale Effluent Reuse Farm.
- Contributed to 2030 Blueprint for Horticulture on the North Adelaide Plain

- Edge Management Group: Engaged as Business Improvement facilitator/adviser to leading edge agribusinesses looking to improve their total business performance. Group consists of 25 agribusinesses operating in five management boards.
- Consultant to Bengalla Mining Company and Bengalla Agricultural Company. 2001 appointed contract manager of Bengalla Agricultural Company (part time). 3,500ha operation including three irrigated dairies, thoroughbred horse stud and spelling operation, irrigated cropping and dryland grazing. Responsible for development of strategy, business plans, monthly reporting, HR functions, development of OH&S and Environmental management systems to mining industry expectations. Increased turnover from \$670,000 to \$2.5M and improved profit margin by 32%.
- Advised Anvil Hill Project (Centennial Coal Limited) on comparative cost of farm enterprise proposed to be bought by project taking into account productivity, amenity, location to major population centres and other criteria. Developed model to allow for weighting the importance of various factors to be considered.
- Advised Coal & Allied on commercial arrangements for establishment (lease), management and leasing of Lucerne hay production on Hunter River Alluvial country rehabilitation after mining.
- Supervising consultant on Scone Community Owned Organic Recycling Enterprise. Project looked at feasibility of developing a community owned recycling enterprise to utilise organic wastes produced in the Scone Shire (industrial, commercial and domestic) to produce saleable compost.
- Lead consultant on the Dungog Shire Agribusiness Diversification project. The project objective is to enhance the economic activity and employment outcomes for Dungog Shire by enhancing the shire's agribusiness sector, identifying potential practical new value adding enterprises and attracting investors and fostering the development of these new enterprises.
- Dairy Research & Development Corporation/NSW Dairy Industry Development Company: "Sustaining Our Natural Resources – Dairying for Tomorrow – Regional Action Plan." Develop in consultation with industry stakeholders a regional Action Plan for the dairy industry in the DIDCO region (Kempsey to Victorian boarder and Central West and Wagga/Tumut areas) to establish a sustainable development strategy for the dairy industry and its stakeholders, linking in with the National strategy.
- Dairy Research & Development Corporation/NSW Dairy Industry Development Company: "Sustaining Our Natural Resources – Dairying for Tomorrow – DIDCO Regional Profile." Develop for the DIDCO Region a profile of the dairy industry in terms of industry development including value of production on and off farm, economic contribution to the economy including exports, potential for increase production, natural resource requirements and efficiency, infrastructure limitations to production, processing and marketing, threats and opportunities of current resource use, current resource condition and best management practice for resource management.
- NSW Farmers/Agriculture Forestry and Fisheries Australia: Engaged as facilitator and trainer for the Rural GST Start Up Program in NSW: was the only non-accountant to be engaged.
- Australian contributor to Global Dairy Talk, a monthly international electronic newsletter circulated by Dairy Strategies LLC, an US based international dairy consultancy business.
- Engaged by potential new milk processing entity on milk supply arrangements, contracts and pricing and to secure milk in readiness for market milk deregulation in 2000
- Dairy Business Focus: a DRDC funded project consisting of a series of four one day workshops designed to help the dairy farmers of NSW to examine their dairy business in view of the impending deregulation of the NSW dairy industry.
- NSW DFA/NSW Farmers: Commissioned to write a paper on the effect of Market Milk deregulation on milk production in NSW.
- NSW Agriculture: Redesign the Farming For the Future general property planning program into a NSW dairy industry specific course.
- Regular editorial contributor to Australian Dairy Farmer, bi monthly magazine published by Rural Press
- Researched and authored the Agricultural Production and Agricultural Land Management sections of various mining Environmental Impact Statements.

- Advised Dartbrook Coal, Bengalla Mine, Coal & Allied Operations on land use strategies, commercial arrangement, leasing and OHS issues relating to non-mining land assets including residential residences.
- Co Authored "Realistic Rations" a dairy nutritional manual.

Current and Past Directorships

- Scott Barnett & Associates Pty Limited – Managing Director
- JV Agriculture Pty Limited – Managing Director
- Scone Golf Club Limited - Vice President (Greens)
- Dairy Strategies Australia Pty Limited – Managing Director
- Scone Rugby Union Football Club Limited – (1991 - 1997)
- Scone Chamber of Commerce Limited – (1998)
- Treasurer Scone Junior Golf – (2009-10)
- President Upper Hunter Rowing (1994-2009)

Professional Development Courses (recent)

- Carbon Accounting (Energy Corporate)
 - Cert IV Occupational Health and Safety (NSW TAFE)
 - Cert IV Workplace Training & Assessment (NSW TAFE)
 - Commercial Negotiation (Australian Institute of Company Directors)
 - Strategic Financial Skills (Australian Institute of Company Directors)
 - Business Improvement Process (MindShop International)
 - Personal Improvement Process (MindShop International)
- Introduction to Project Management (Australian Institute of