



# Tabba Tabba Lithium Mine

## Environmental Noise Assessment

### Wildcat Resources Limited

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## Basis of Report

This report has been prepared by SLR Consulting Australia (SLR) with all reasonable skill, care and diligence, and taking account of the timescale and resources allocated to it by agreement with Wildcat Resources Limited (the Client). Information reported herein is based on the interpretation of data collected, which has been accepted in good faith as being accurate and valid.

SLR disclaims any responsibility to the Client and others in respect of any matters outside the agreed scope of the work.



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## Acronyms and Abbreviations

EPNR	Environmental Protection (Noise) Regulations 1997
L <sub>Aeq</sub>	The equivalent continuous sound level averaged over a defined time period (e.g. 24-hours) , measured in decibels (dB) relative to 20 microPascals. It is a measure of the average sound energy over this time frame, accounting for variations in noise levels. The "A-weighted" aspect means the measurement accounts for the varying sensitivity of the human ear to different frequencies, emphasizing frequencies that are more audible to humans.
L <sub>Amax</sub>	the maximum A-weighted sound pressure level measured over the monitoring period using a defined time weighting (typically Fast or Slow). It represents the highest noise level recorded at an instant in time.
L <sub>A1</sub>	The noise level exceeded for 1% of the 15 minutes interval.
L <sub>A10</sub>	The noise level exceeded for 10% of the 15 minutes interval. This is commonly referred to as the average maximum noise level.
L <sub>wA</sub>	A-weighted sound power level relative to 1 pW, the rate at which a source emits acoustic energy.
L <sub>ZPeak</sub>	The maximum instantaneous sound pressure level measured using an unweighted frequency response.
L <sub>APeak</sub>	The maximum instantaneous sound pressure level measured using A-weighted.
L <sub>AFast</sub>	The sound pressure level measured using A-frequency weighting with a 125 ms detector response time.
L <sub>ASlow</sub>	The sound pressure level measured using A-frequency weighting with a 1 second detector response time.



## 1.0 Introduction

SLR Consulting Australia has been engaged by Wildcat Resources Limited to undertake an environmental noise impact assessment for a lithium and tantalum mine, located approximately 50 km southeast of Port Hedland in the Pilbara region of Western Australia.

The report details the noise levels at the receptors under worst case operational scenarios and an assessment of compliance against the noise limits applicable under state noise regulations.

### 1.1 Project description

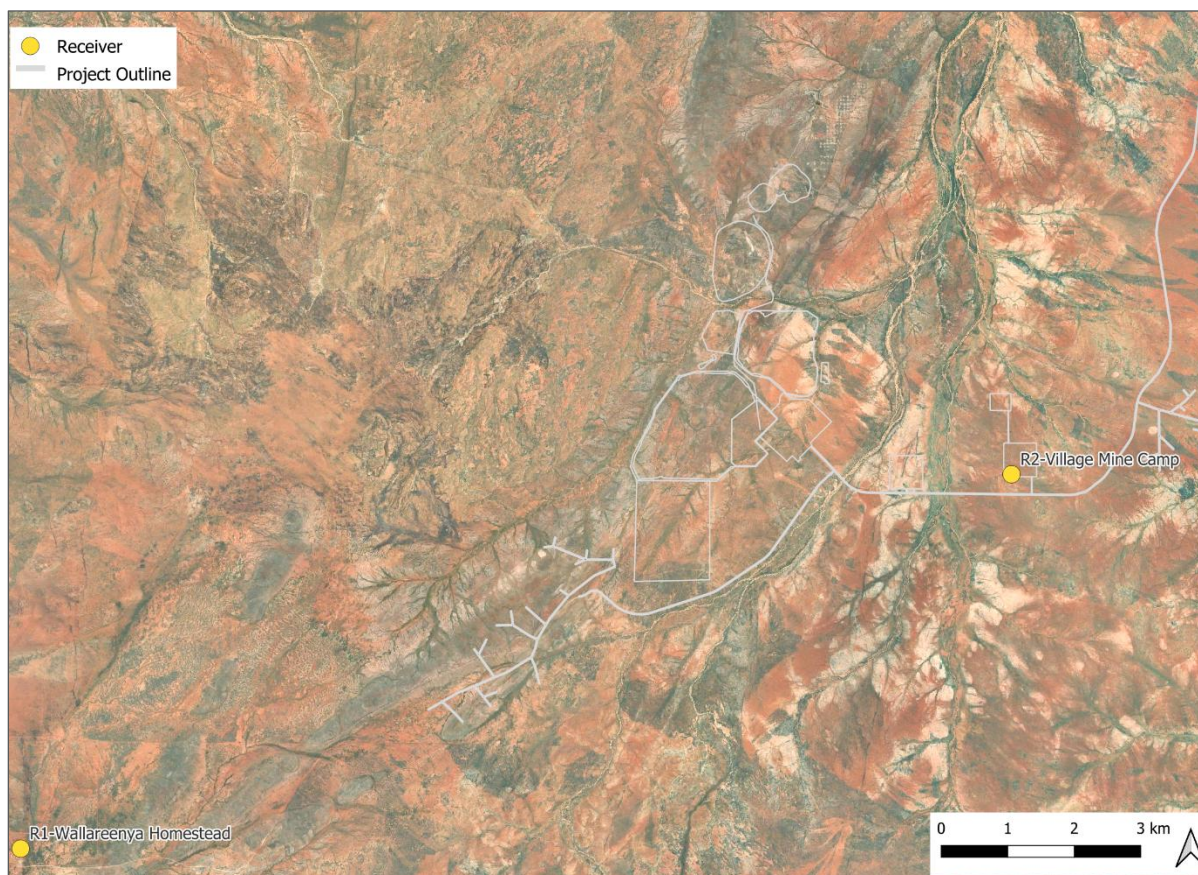
The proposal is for a drill and blast operation, with crushing and processing plant and trucking of product to Port Hedland.

The site is in a rural area with the nearest residential receptors being the Wallareenya Homestead station homestead some 18 km southwest from the proposed mine, and the proposed mine camp near the site access road and Wallareenya Road South.

### 1.2 Key receptors

Representative residential receptors have been determined for the proposed Tabba Tabba Lithium Mine operations. These receptors are shown in **Figure A**.

**Figure A: Residential receptor locations surrounding the proposed mine**



The key noise sensitive residential receptors are described in **Table A**.



**Table A: Key residential receptors**

Sensitive receivers	Comments
R1-Wallareenya Homestead	Rural residence
R2-Village Mine Camp	Mine accommodation ('Assigned Levels' are not applicable as part of the Tabba Tabba mining operation)

## 2.0 Criteria

Noise emissions from premises are regulated in Western Australia under the Environmental Protection (Noise) Regulations 1997 ('the Regulations').

### 2.1 Mining operations other than blasting

The site noise emissions are required to achieve compliance with the Regulations. Under the regulations, noise levels at nearby residential areas from development operations are not to exceed defined limits (Assigned Levels). The 'Assigned Levels' vary with time of day and standard workdays vs holiday periods.

The most critical receptors are termed 'noise sensitive premises' in the Regulations. For this project, these are residential receptors, for which the 'Assigned Levels' are determined from a 'base level' with adjustments for proximity to industrial and commercial land uses, and roads with high traffic flows.

The relevant parameter for assessment of mining noise is the LA10 statistical noise level, the noise level exceeded from greater than 10% of the representative time period. For these receptors, the 'Assigned Levels' are:

**Table B: EPNR Table 1 'Assigned Levels'**

Type of premises receiving noise	Time of day	Assigned level (dB)		
		LA10	LA1	LAmx
Noise sensitive premises: highly sensitive area	0700 to 1900 hours Monday to Saturday	45 + influencing factor	55 + influencing factor	65 + influencing factor
	0900 to 1900 hours Sunday and public holidays	40 + influencing factor	50 + influencing factor	65 + influencing factor
	1900 to 2200 hours all days	40 + influencing factor	50 + influencing factor	55 + influencing factor
	2200 hours on any day to 0700 hours Monday to Saturday and 0900 hours Sunday and public holidays	35 + influencing factor	45 + influencing factor	55 + influencing factor
Noise sensitive premises: any area other than highly sensitive area	All hours	60	75	80
Commercial premises	All hours	60	75	80
Industrial and utility premises in the Kwinana Industrial Area	All hours	75	85	90



## 2.1.1 Adjustment for intrusive or dominant noise characteristics

Table C summarises applicable adjustments for intrusive or annoying characteristics.

**Table C: Adjustment for intrusive or dominant noise characteristics**

Adjustment where noise emission is not music.			Adjustment where noise emission is music	
Where tonality is present	Where modulation is present	Where impulsiveness is present	Where impulsiveness is not present	Where impulsiveness is present
+5 dB	+5 dB	+10 dB	+10 dB	+15 dB

These adjustments are cumulative to a maximum of 15 dB.

Under the Regulations, if noise emitted from any premises when received at any other premises cannot reasonably be free of intrusive characteristics of tonality, modulation and impulsiveness, a series of adjustments are added to the emitted levels (measured or calculated) and the adjusted level must comply with the Assigned Level. The adjustments are detailed in **Table D** and are further defined in Regulation 9(1) of the Regulations.

**Table D: Definition of noise characteristics**

Noise characteristic	Definition	Adjustment if present (Note1)
Tones	Where the difference between the A weighted sound pressure level in any one third octave band and the arithmetic average of the A weighted sound pressure levels in the two adjacent one third octave bands is greater than 3 dB in terms of $L_{Aeq,T}$ where the time period T is greater than 10% of the representative assessment period, or greater than 8 dB at any time when the sound pressure levels are determined as $L_{ASlow}$ levels.	+5 dB
Modulation	A variation in the emission of noise that – <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Is more than 3 dB <math>L_{AFast}</math> or is more than 3 dB <math>L_{AFast}</math> in any one third octave band;</li> <li>• Is present for at least 10% of the representative assessment period; and,</li> <li>• Is regular, cyclic and audible.</li> </ul>	+5 dB
Impulsiveness	Present where the difference between the $L_{APeak}$ and $L_{Amax}$ is more than 15 dB when determined for single representative event.	+10 dB

Note 1 where noise emission is not music, these adjustments are cumulative to a maximum of 15 dB.



## 2.1.2 Receptor assigned levels

The Assigned Noise Levels determined for sensitive receivers adjacent to the site are detailed in **Table E**. The Assigned Levels include the influencing factor (IF) derived from the proximity of the receivers to the proposed mining area. Due to the distances involved in the rural setting, the influencing factor for all receptors is zero.

**Table E: Assigned Levels – key receptors, dB**

Sensitive receivers	Influencing Factor	Assigned Levels, $L_{A10}$		
		Day	Evening	Night
R1-Wallareenya Homestead	0	45	40	35
R2-Village Mine Camp	Not applicable	-	-	-

Receptor R2-Village Mine Camp is the mine accommodation camp. Technically the requirements of the regulations in relation to **Table B** ('Assigned Levels') do not apply, as it does not provide accommodation for residents other than those associated with the mine.

However, there are duty of care and broader requirements of the Act that require received noise levels at the camp to be reasonable. This is commonly interpreted as meeting the recommendations of AS/NZS 2107<sup>1</sup> with respect to internal background noise within accommodation areas, and generally no greater than  $L_{Aeq}$  50 dB externally in relaxation areas of the camp. An external level of  $L_{Aeq}$  50 dB would result in internal noise levels compliant with this standard.

## 2.2 Blasting

Blasting is covered by Regulation 11 (Airblast levels due to blasting), which in part states that:

*(4) Subject to subregulation (5), no airblast level resulting from blasting on any premises or public place, when received at any other premises between 0700 hours and 1800 hours on any day, may exceed —*

*(a) for an airblast level received at noise sensitive premises —*

*(i) when received at a sensitive site — 120 dB LZ peak; or*

*(ii) when received at a location other than a sensitive site — 125 dB LZ peak; or*

*(b) for an airblast level received at any other premises — 125 dB LZ peak.*

*(5) The levels specified in subregulation (4) do not apply in respect of an airblast level when received at premises, or a part of premises, on which the blaster believes on reasonable grounds no person is present at the time of the blast.*

*(6) Despite subregulation (4), airblast levels for 9 in any 10 consecutive blasts (regardless of the interval between each blast), when received at any other single premises between 0700 hours and 1800 hours on any day, must not exceed —*

*(a) for airblast levels received at noise sensitive premises —*

*(i) when received at a sensitive site — 115 dB LZ peak; or*

*(ii) when received at a location other than a sensitive site — 120 dB LZ peak; or*

*(b) for airblast levels received at any other premises — 120 dB LZ peak.*

<sup>1</sup> Australian / New Zealand Standard 2107:2016, Acoustics – Recommended design sound levels and reverberation times for building interiors



[..]

*(8) Subject to subregulation (9), no airblast level resulting from blasting on any premises or public place, when received at other premises outside the periods between 0700 hours and 1800 hours on any day, may exceed 90 dB LZ peak except where that blasting is carried out in accordance with the Mines Safety and Inspection Regulations 1995 regulation 8.28(4).*

*(9) The level specified in subregulation (8) does not apply in respect of an airblast level when received at premises, or a part of premises, on which the blaster believes on reasonable grounds no person is present at the time of the blast.*

*(10) Where blasting is carried out in accordance with the Mines Safety and Inspection Regulations 1995 regulation 8.28(4) outside the periods between 0700 hours and 1800 hours on any day —*

*(a) the blasting is taken to be carried out between 0700 hours and 1800 hours; and*

*(b) subregulations (4), (5), (6) and (7) apply accordingly.*

On this basis, predictions are based on a “9 out of 10” target of  $L_{Zpeak}$  115 dB, noting that some individual blast events can be as high as  $L_{Zpeak}$  120 dB at sensitive locations under certain conditions.

## **3.0 Methodology**

### **3.1 Scenarios**

#### **3.1.1 Blasting Scenario**

Blasting noise emissions were predicted for the initial pit development, with blasting at the initial pit surface level, modelled as Scenario 1. As the pit develops, increased attenuation of blast noise can be expected.

The prediction of airblast overpressure is for ‘worst case’ winds towards each receptor, providing a conservative estimate of airblast noise emissions. If winds are not towards the receptor then airblast noise emissions will be reduced from the levels provided in this assessment.

Airblast overpressure is based on a Maximum Instantaneous Charge (MIC) of 1,100 kg per delay, being typical for this scale of lithium mining.

#### **3.1.2 Mining Scenarios**

This assessment modelled two operational scenarios for the Tabba Tabba mine pit. Scenario 2 represents early development of the pit, with mining within a Stage 1 pit, and equipment operating on the surface during commencement of the Stage 2 pit, with early development of the Waste Dump No.1. Scenario 3 represents later development, with a deeper pit (stage 3), increased equipment at the surface of the final Stage commencing, and elevated Waste Dump.

Three delivery trucks on the mine access road have been modelled simultaneously.

To identify the risk of acoustic disturbance at the Tabba Tabba mine camp, the maximum noise emission contour during a truck pass by has been modelled for a single quad road train.

A summary of the modelled scenario is provided in **Table F**. The scenario was modelled with equipment being either:

- Fixed plant and haul roads external to the pit; and



- Within the pit.

The equipment modelled for the ‘Night’ scenarios is shown in **Table F**, with the in-pit noise sources combined to calculate ‘maximum’ noise emission contours/levels from pit operations. For worst-case assessment purposes, this equipment was assumed to be operating concurrently at 100% duty cycle. Where there are multiple items of equipment, it is expected that some items will be at a low noise emission state, such as haul trucks being loaded with engine at idle.

As the pit develops, there is generally increased attenuation of noise emissions (regarding external noise sensitive areas) as equipment is located further down within the pit. Conversely, as the waste dump develops there are noise sources including dump trucks and track dozers that emit noise from an elevated location.

**Table F: Tabba Tabba operational scenario**

Modelled equipment	Scenario 2 Number of Units	Scenario 3 Number of Units
<b>Mining Noise Sources</b>		
CAT 793 Haul Truck	29	25
Excavator 3600	4	4
CAT D10T2 Track Dozer	3	4
D65 Blast Drill	6	8
CAT 777 Water Cart	1	1
CAT 16M Grader	1	1
CAT 992G Loader	2	2
<b>Plant Noise Sources</b>		
Primary Crusher	1	1
Secondary Crusher	2	2
Conveyor	2	2
Lump Screen	2	2
Fine Products Screen	4	4
Mill	2	2
Pumps	4	4
<b>Delivery Trucks</b>		
Quad road train, 60 – 80 km/hour (simultaneous on road from highway to plant)	3	3

### 3.1.3 Site haul road scenario

Scenario 4 was modelled to assess the maximum pass-by noise emissions associated solely with quad truck haulage activities. The scenario assumed the maximum noise emission generated by a delivery truck (quad road trains) travelling between the highway and the processing plant. The vehicle was modelled for noise emissions from a quad truck at a travel speed in the range 60 to 80 km/h. No fixed plant or other mining equipment was included in this scenario, allowing the contribution of delivery truck movement to be assessed independently.



## 3.2 Modelling

### 3.2.1 Overview

Modelling of noise from fixed plant and vehicles was undertaken as follows:

- The location of the site was reviewed to identify the nearest noise sensitive receivers from aerial imagery and land-use information. The adopted noise sensitive receivers are detailed in the location maps detailed in **Section 1.2** of this report.
- The sources of operational noise were provided by the client, with noise data from SLR file data.
- An additional prediction was undertaken for quad trucks passing the proposed mine camp, to predict the maximum pass-by noise level for evaluation of sleep disturbance risk.
- Environmental noise levels for the proposed operations were predicted at the identified sensitive receivers.
- A review of the noise data and predicted emissions determined that noise level adjustments for potential tonal, modulation or impulsive noise characteristics at the sensitive receivers are not required. For the equipment and distances involved, such characteristics are considered extremely unlikely to be perceptible in the context of the existing environment.
- The predicted noise levels were assessed against the noise assessment criteria detailed in **Section 1.2**.

### 3.2.2 Noise sources

The sound power levels used in the acoustic modelling are provided in .

**Table G: Modelled sound power levels for key equipment,**

Item or Operation	Sound Power Level ( $L_{wA}$ ), dB
<b>Mining Noise Sources</b>	
CAT 789 Haul Truck	119
Excavator 3600	121
CAT D10T Track Dozer	112
D65 Blast Drill	120
CAT 777 Water Cart	114
CAT 24M Grader	109
CAT 992G Loader	110
<b>Plant Noise Sources</b>	
Primary Crusher	120
Secondary Crusher	114
Conveyor	85
Lump Screen	110
Fine Products Screen	107
Mill	112



Item or Operation	Sound Power Level ( $L_{wA}$ ), dB
Pumps (one of four modelled)	108
<b>Delivery Trucks</b>	
Quad road train, 60 – 80 km/hour (simultaneous on road from highway to plant), one of three	110

### 3.2.3 Environmental propagation

- Noise prediction models for each site were developed utilising the SoundPLAN noise prediction software (version 9.1). The noise models applied geospatial datasets for existing terrain, buildings and structures and design layouts for the proposed mine.
- Meteorological conditions in line with DWER guidelines were modelled for downwind noise propagation under worst-case conditions, with wind direction assumed from the source towards the receiver. CONCAWE methods for calculating other noise attenuation effects were applied.
- Given the local vegetation and soil types, and to align with local measurements / calibrations noting that foliage is not explicitly modelled, ground was modelled as 60% hard reflective.

### 3.3 Uncertainty of prediction

The expected level of system prediction uncertainty according to the ISO Guide to Measurement Uncertainty for the conditions are modelled is outlined in **Table H**.

**Table H Estimated prediction uncertainty**

Car park	System	$U_{95}$ (Note 1)	Student's t-factor
Airborne noise $L_{Aeq}$ , $L_{A10}$ , $L_{A1}$	CONCAWE	3.0 dB	2.00

Note 1 The  $U_{95}$  is the expanded uncertainty of measurement for a 95% confidence interval. It represents the estimated range in which the true value lies for 95 out of 100 repeated events.



## 4.0 Baseline Noise

The purpose of baseline monitoring is to characterise the current acoustic environment, particularly for the residences located in the vicinity of the proposed mine. Understanding the existing background noise environment provides a reference for any proposed change in use.

Baseline noise monitoring is typically carried out over a 7 – 14 day period, to capture at least three days (and nights) when wind and rain activity is not dominating the background noise.

Background noise levels in remote rural areas vary with season, and at times can be as low as  $L_{Aeq}$  20 dB during low wind conditions. Background noise at the key receptor locations will be dominated by self-generated noise, both for the Wallareenya Station homestead and the proposed mining village. Background noise has not been measured at these locations as to do so will not provide significantly more information relevant to this assessment and there are no other significant noise emissions identified.

Wallareenya homestead is located on the riverbank, with multiple residential dwellings and the associated workshops, and assumed power generator. Background noise is likely to be above the general background noise in surrounding vegetated areas because of the homestead associated noise sources. Background noise within the undeveloped bush areas is expected to be as low as  $L_{Aeq}$  20 dB during periods of calm wind during seasons where insect generated noise is present (crickets etc).

The mine access road will support heavy vehicle traffic which will generate intermittent noise at the camp site. The mining village will have air-conditioned accommodation, shared services such as kitchen/dining and recreation spaces. Background noise levels within the village will vary but are typically above  $L_{Aeq}$  35 dB outside accommodation units due to air conditioning equipment and plant on site. Appendix B shows the predicted maximum pass-by noise from mine trucks hauling to Port Hedland.

## 5.0 Impact Assessment

### 5.1 Mining noise emissions

The cumulative noise emission at each receptor, being the addition of the maximum noise emission from the whole of the pit operations in combination with the noise emission from the fixed plant is shown in **Table I**.

**Table I: Predicted mining noise emissions at key receptors, dB**

Sensitive receivers	Night-time Design Criteria $L_{A10}$	Predicted night-time noise emission		
		Scenario 2 Mining, $L_{A10}$	Scenario 3 Mining, $L_{A10}$	Scenario 4 Site haul road, $L_{Amax}$
R1-Wallareenya Homestead	35	20	20	<20
R2-Village Mine Camp*	50	45	45	50

Note \* Tabba Tabba mine camp noise emission is not assessable under the regulations, however a practical internal noise limit is recommended in line with State Planning Policy 5.4, associated with the nearby haul route.

It is noted that the ‘worst case’ mining noise emissions comply with the night-time  $L_{A10}$  ‘Assigned Levels at all receptors with a significant margin.

Noise emissions are unlikely to be audible at Wallareenya homestead due to expected local background sound. As there are multiple dwellings at the homestead, some background sound from domestic activities and mechanical equipment can be expected in this area.



Noise associated with mine ‘quad trailer’ trucks passing the mine camp as well as light vehicles using the mine access road or entering/leaving camp is expected to be audible external to some buildings. The Village layout was not determined at the time of this assessment.

Camp generated noise including from refrigeration and air conditioning systems may partially mask the mine access traffic noise.

Noise contour plots for each scenario are provided in **Appendix A** and **Appendix B**, including:

- Figure B – Scenario 2 Mining Cumulative Predicted Noise Contours;
- Figure C – Scenario 3 Mining Cumulative Predicted Noise Contours;
- Figure D – Scenario 4 Internal Road Predicted Pass-by Noise Contours; and
- Figure E – Scenario 4 Internal Road Predicted Pass-by Noise Contours (zoomed view of the Village Mine Camp area).

## 5.2 Airblast noise emissions

Predicted airblast overpressure noise emissions for a blast with an MIC of 1,100 kg are shown in **Appendix B** for blasting at existing ground surface level, and noise levels at key receptors tabulated in **Table J**.

**Table J: Predicted airblast overpressure noise levels at key receptors, dB**

Sensitive receivers	Airblast Design Target $L_{Z_{peak}}$	Predicted Airblast Noise Level (worst case), $L_{Z_{peak}}$
R1-Wallareenya Homestead	115	97
R2-Village Mine Camp	115	109

Predicted airblast overpressure noise levels at receptors under ‘worst case’ downwind conditions are well below the “9 out of 10” target of 115  $L_{Z_{peak}}$  dB discussed in **Section 2.2**. Noise emissions from blasting are therefore predicted to comply with the ENPR.

It is noted that:

- On some occasions, airblast noise may be audible at the identified receptors, when the wind is towards the receptor;



## 6.0 Conclusion

Noise emissions from proposed Tabba Tabba mining operations are predicted to comply with applicable limits under state noise regulations. Predicted mine access road noise levels are also shown to comply with the recommended background noise levels within and around buildings defined in Australian / New Zealand Standard 2107.

While noise associated with mine access road traffic may be audible external to some camp buildings, a typical village layout incorporating parking, administration and service areas located closer to the access road, with accommodation units positioned further away and partially shielded by service buildings, is expected to assist in reducing mine haul road noise impacts at the village accommodation units. In addition, implementation of speed management measures where practicable, maintaining haul road surfaces in good condition, and consideration of landscaping/vegetation treatments surrounding the village accommodation buildings may further assist in reducing access road noise impacts.



# Appendix A

# Mining Noise Contours

## **Tabba Tabba Lithium Mine**

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Figure B: Scenario 2 - Mining cumulative predicted noise contours, LA10, dB

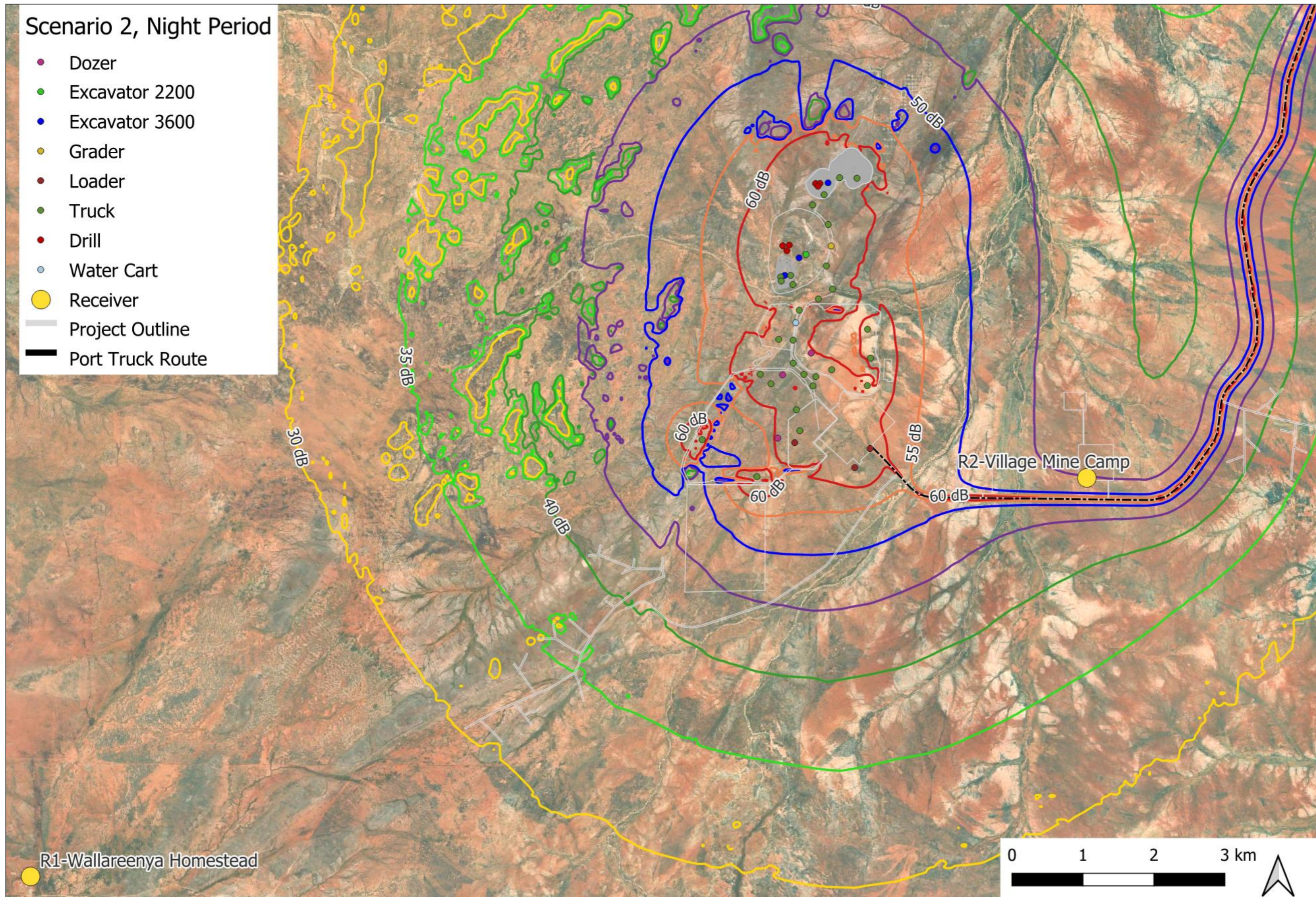


Figure C Scenario 3 - Mining cumulative predicted noise contours, LA10, dB

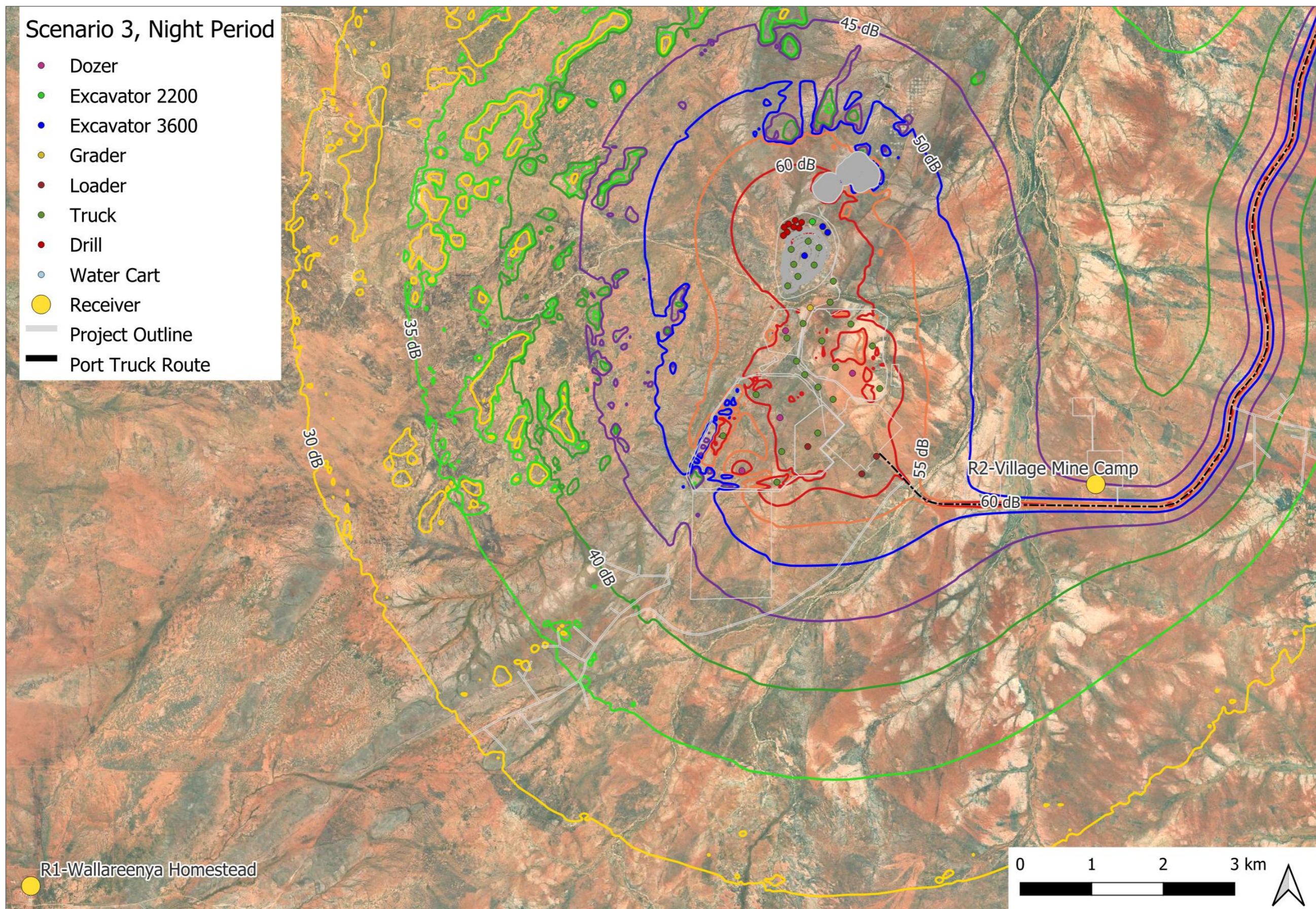


Figure D: Scenario 4 - Internal road predicted pass-by noise contours,  $L_{Amax}$ , dB

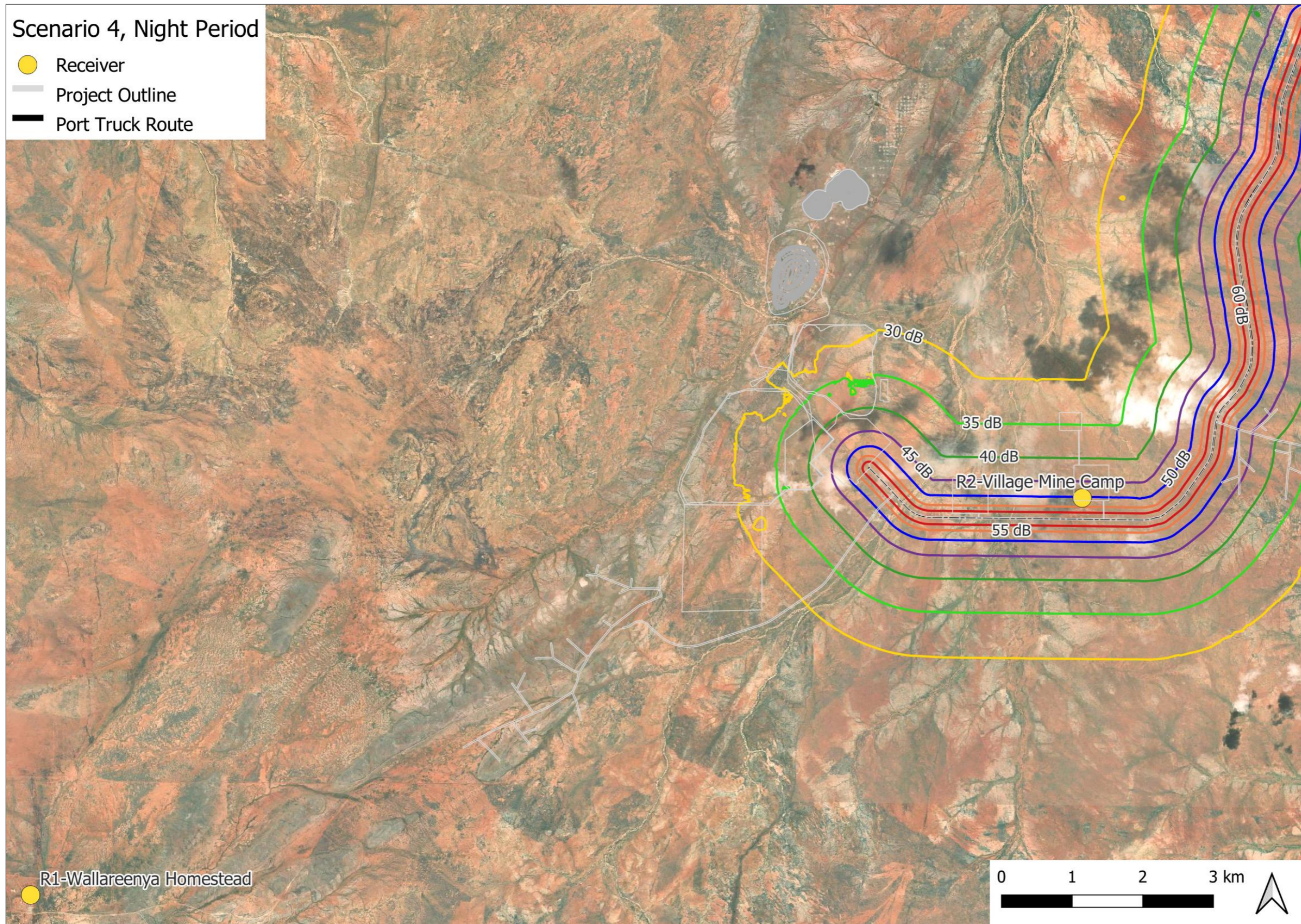
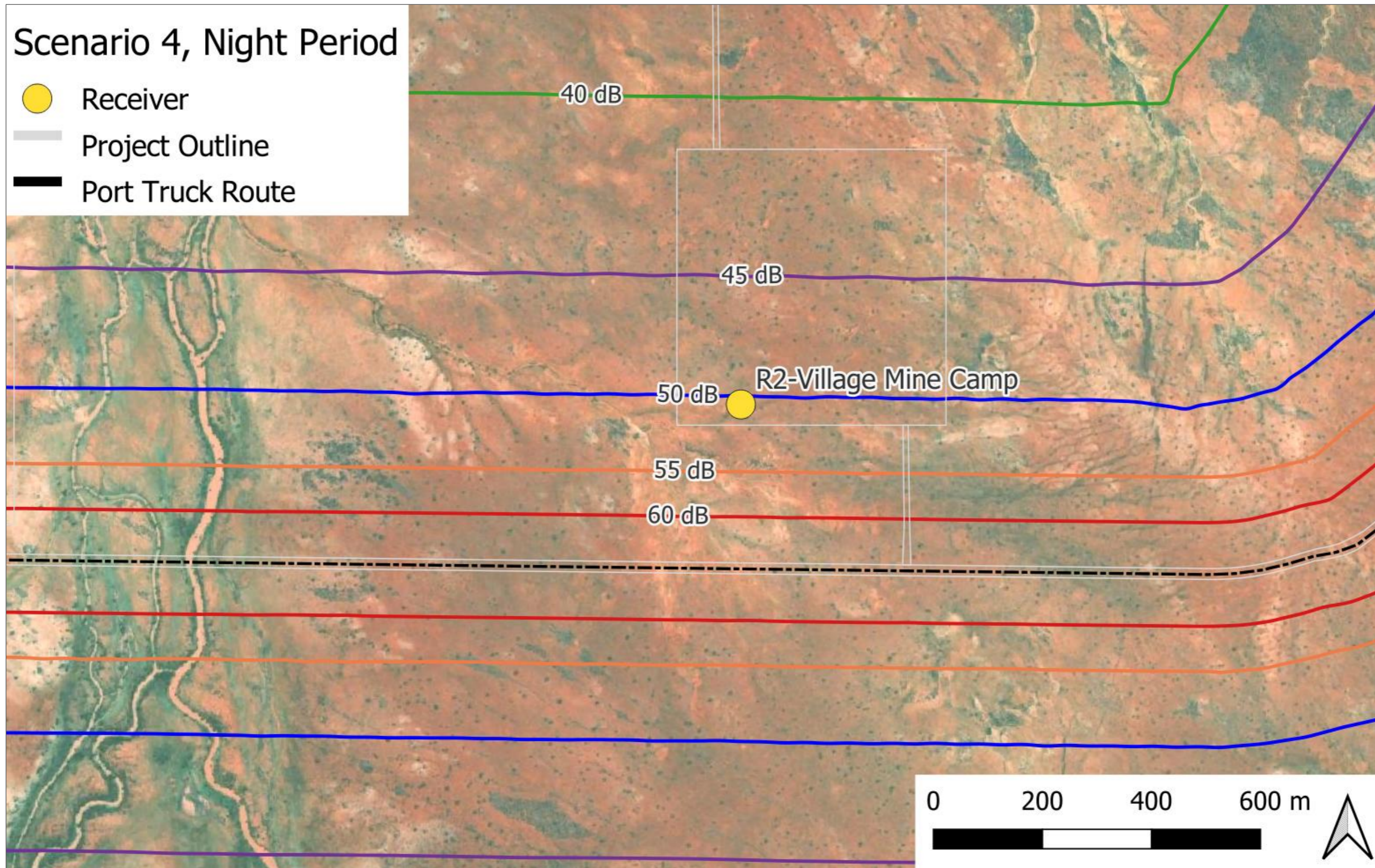


Figure E Scenario 4 - Internal road predicted pass-by noise contours,  $L_{Amax}$ , dB



# Appendix B

# Airblast Contours

# Noise

## Tabba Tabba Lithium Mine

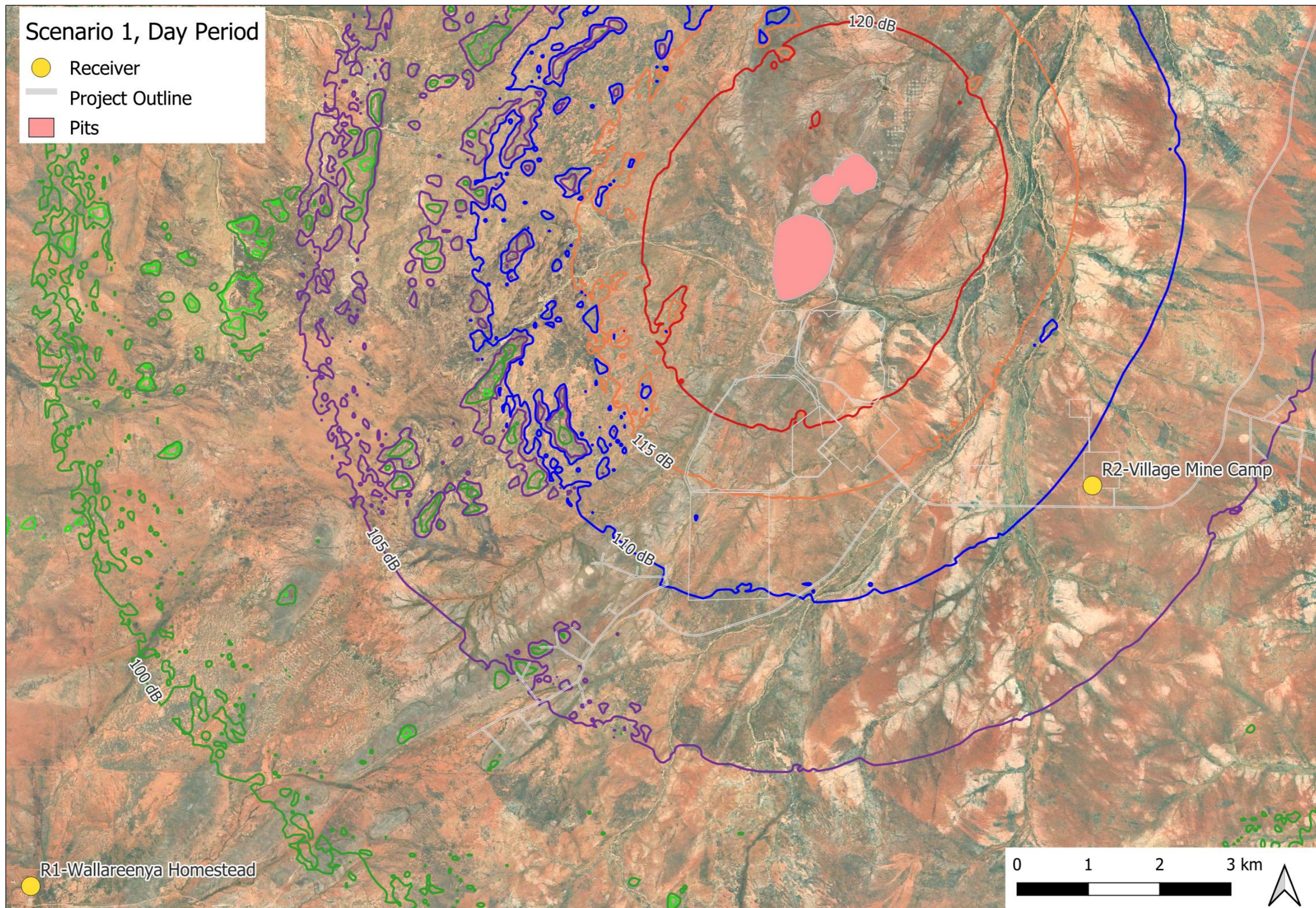
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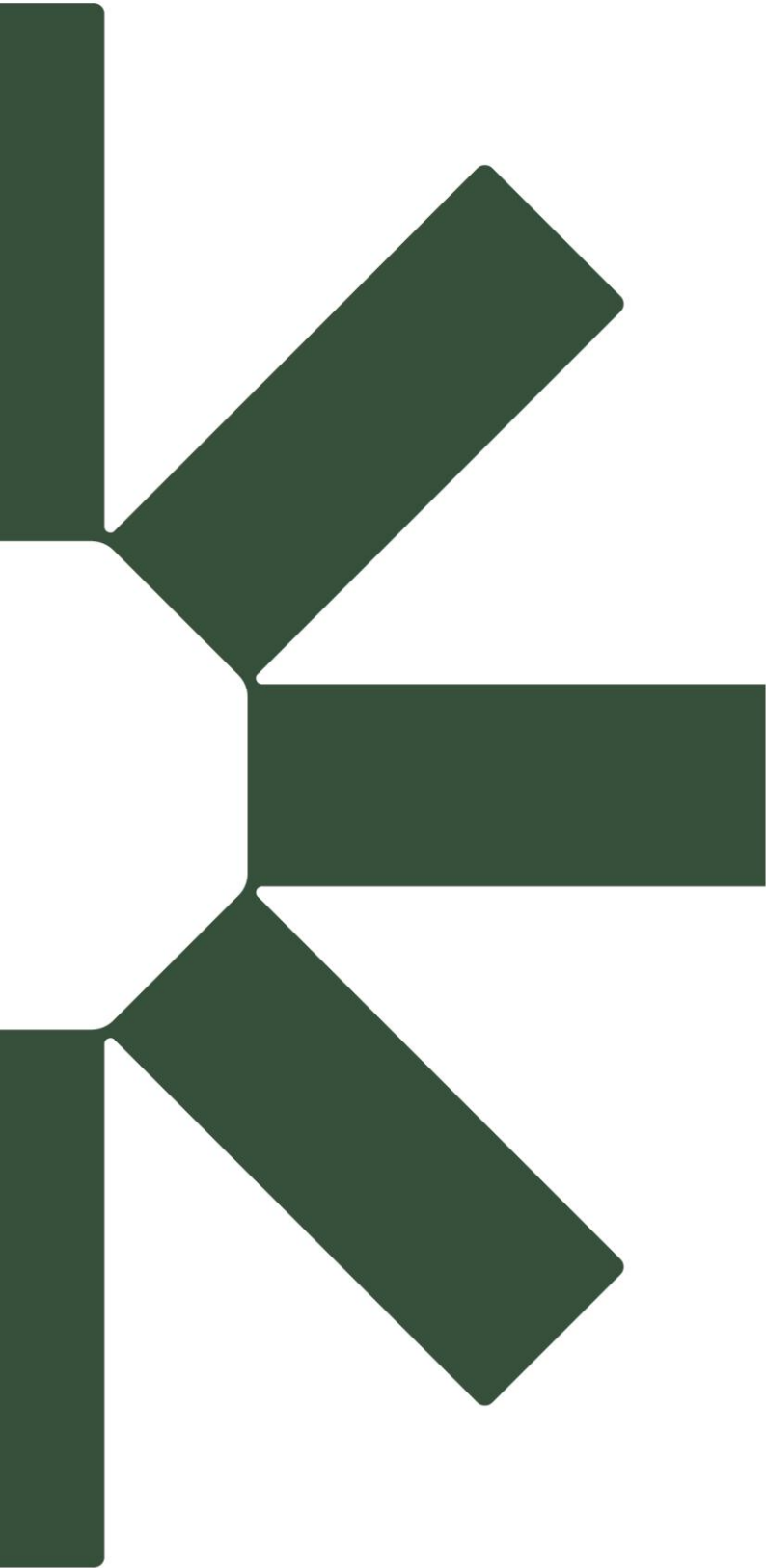
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Figure F: Scenario 1 Day – Tabba Tabba predicted airblast noise contours, LZpeak, dB





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