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## Key terms and abbreviations

Key term or abbreviation	Meaning	Source
<b>Characteristics</b>	Elements, or combinations of elements, which make a contribution to distinctive landscape character	GLVIA3
<b>Council</b>	Wingecarribee Council	N/a
<b>DA</b>	Development application	EP&A Act
<b>DCP</b>	Development control plan	EP&A Act
<b>Designated landscape</b>	Areas of landscape identified as being of importance at international, national or local levels, either defined by statute or identified in development plans or other documents	GLVIA3
<b>Elements</b>	Individual parts which make up the landscape, such as, for example, trees, hedges and buildings	GLVIA3
<b>Feature</b>	Particularly prominent or eye-catching elements in the landscape, such as tree clumps, church towers or wooded skylines OR a particular aspect of the project proposal	GLVIA3
<b>Filtered glimpse</b>	A glimpse that is partially obscured by vegetation, often the leaves of trees, between the viewer and the target of the view. See also - glimpse	Ethos Urban
<b>Glimpse</b>	A highly constrained, partial view of an element or feature or a view of an element or feature that is either in the long range or not prominent relative to other elements in the view. See also – filtered glimpse	Ethos Urban
<b>Key characteristics</b>	Those combinations of elements which are particularly important to the current character of the landscape and help to give an area its particularly distinctive sense of place	GLVIA3
<b>Landform</b>	The shape and form of the land surface which has resulted from combinations of geology, geomorphology, slope, elevation and physical processes	GLVIA3
<b>Landscape</b>	An area, as perceived by people, the character of which is the result of the action and interaction of natural and/or human factors	GLVIA3
<b>Landscape character</b>	A distinct, recognisable and consistent pattern of elements in the landscape that makes one landscape different from another, rather than better or worse	GLVIA3
<b>Landscape character areas</b>	These are single unique areas which are the discrete geographical areas of a particular landscape type	GLVIA3
<b>Landscape character types</b>	These are distinct types of landscape that are relatively homogeneous in character. They are generic in nature in that they may occur in different areas in different parts of the country, but wherever they occur they share broadly similar combinations of geology, topography, drainage patterns, vegetation and historical land use and settlement pattern, and perceptual and aesthetic attributes.	GLVIA3

Key term or abbreviation	Meaning	Source
<b>Landscape value</b>	The relative value that is attached to different landscapes by society. A landscape may be valued by different stakeholders for a whole variety of reasons	GLVIA3
<b>LEP</b>	Local environmental plan	EP&A Act
<b>Magnitude</b>	A term that combines judgements about the size and scale of the effect, the extent of the area over which it occurs, whether it is reversible or irreversible and whether it is short or long term in duration	GLVIA3
<b>Narrow view</b>	View of a narrow area in the horizontal field of view created by the combination of negative space at the ground level (often a road or path) adjoined by elements (often closely spaced) in the vertical plane such as building or trees that constrain the natural field of view and direct the eye to a single point in the distance. The view may take in a large area in the vertical field of view, such as in a highly urban setting. Synonym – focal view	Ethos Urban
<b>Perception</b>	Combines the sensory (that we receive through our senses) with the cognitive (our knowledge and understanding gained from many sources and experiences)	GLVIA3
<b>Sensitivity</b>	A term applied to specific receptors, combining judgements of the susceptibility of the receptor to the specific type of change or development proposed and the value related to that receptor	GLVIA3
<b>Significance</b>	A measure of the importance or gravity of the environmental effect, defined by significance criteria specific to the environmental topic	GLVIA3
<b>Vista</b>	A view that is considered to have high visual amenity	Ethos Urban
<b>Visual amenity</b>	The overall pleasantness of the views people enjoy of their surroundings, which provides an attractive visual setting or backdrop for the enjoyment of activities of the people living, working, recreating, visiting or travelling through an area	GLVIA3
<b>Visual impacts</b>	Effects on specific views and on the general visual amenity experienced by people	GLVIA3
<b>Visual receptor</b>	Individuals and/or defined groups of people who have the potential to be affected by a proposal	GLVIA3
<b>Wide view</b>	View of a wide area, often long range, in the horizontal field of view enabled by an absence of obstructing elements in the foreground or midground and elements in the vertical plane that constrain the natural field of view. The view may also take in a large area in the vertical field of view. Synonyms – panorama, prospect	Ethos Urban

## Executive summary

As part of the Chelsea Gardens Master Planned Community, Aoyuan has submitted a concept development application (DA) to Wingecarribee Shire Council (Council) seeking approval for the subdivision of land known as the Hill Road Knoll and the Eastern Ridge into large lots (2,000sqm or greater).

Council has requested that a Visual Impact Assessment (VIA) be prepared to accompany the DA.

In response to this, Ethos Urban in collaboration with Arterra has prepared this VIA. This VIA has adopted the methodology set down by the international standard 'Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact assessment' (GLVIA3) published by the Landscape Institute and Institute of Environmental and Assessment in 2013. The VIA focusses on considering the factors of sensitivity, magnitude, significance and consistency with relevant plans in assessing the acceptability of visual impact.

Based on the results from this VIA, the following points provide a summary of the key findings:

- the site largely has a medium sensitivity to the nature of change proposed. Factors of note in contributing to this rating include a relatively small number of locations in the public domain from which the site is readily visible, most people exposed to the view being travellers, the duration of exposure being short, the peri-urban nature of the landscape with a presence of built elements such as houses and electricity pylons / wires, the landscape being common within the South Highlands region and the scale of the landscape which results in it being able to accommodate a level of change. It is further noted that as the intent is to develop this part of the site following that located further to the south and west, sensitivity will be further reduced
- the magnitude of visual impact experienced from the public domain is likely to range from imperceptible to noticeable. Factors of note in this assessment include the presence and retention of contiguous vegetation on the summit of Hill Road Knoll beneath which the proposal will be located, the memorable nature of Park Leigh Hill, the relatively small scale of the Eastern Ridge compared to Hill Road Knoll and Park Leigh Hill, the dominance of the foreground in certain views, most views being obtained from a longer range and the presence of occluding elements such as landform and trees
- based on sensitivity and magnitude, the significance of visual impact is assessed as ranging from low to medium. Such a rating is considered indicative of a generally compatible form of development within an area.

The proposal is consistent with the relevant provisions of both the LEP and DCP. The making of a separate and detailed DA will provide council with further assurance of acceptable development outcomes through implementation of the DCPs comprehensive and detailed provisions that include a fine grain level of detail such as proportion of tree coverage in the public domain and the colour of external elevations of houses.

On the balance of the above, it is considered that the proposal and future development pathways provide for an acceptable level of visual impact. Mitigation measures in addition to those already incorporated into the design are not considered necessary to achieve an acceptable level of visual impact. On this basis, it is considered that the proposal, which seeks concept approval for subdivision, can be supported on visual impact grounds.



## 1.0 Introduction

This document is a Visual Impact Assessment (VIA). Its purposes is to identify, describe, analyse and assess the acceptability of the likely visual impact of a concept development application (DA) made to Wingecarribee Shire Council (Council) seeking approval for the subdivision of land known as the Hill Road Knoll and the Eastern Ridge into large lots (2,000sqm or greater). It has been prepared by Ethos Urban in collaboration with Arterra on behalf of Aoyuan.

The VIA is structured as follows:

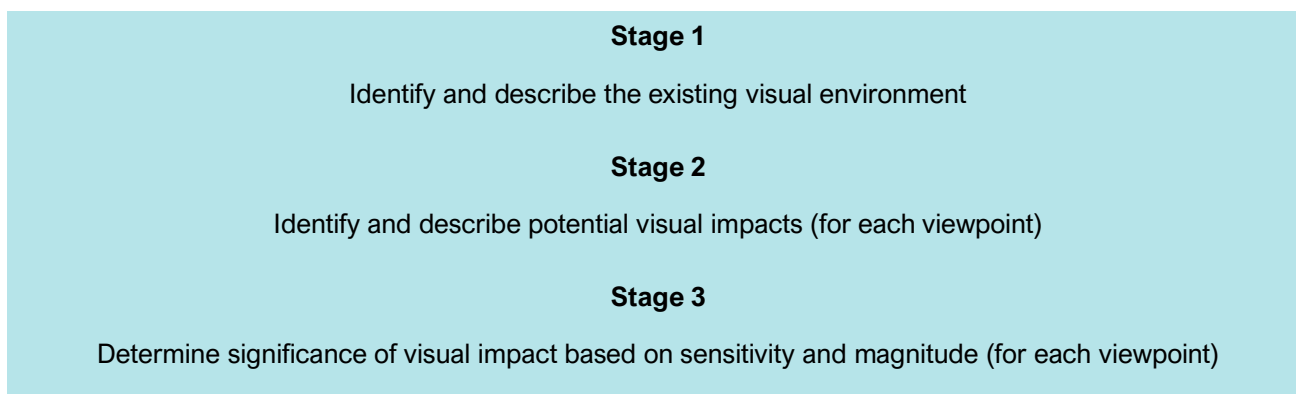
- **Part 1: Introduction** – identifies the nature of this document
- **Part 2: The Site and its Context** – identifies and describes the site and its context
- **Part 3: The Proposal** – describes the proposal
- **Part 4: Applicable Planning Instruments** – identifies the planning instruments that apply to the site
- **Part 5: Existing Visual Character** – identifies and describes the existing visual character, including viewshed, visual receptors and viewpoints
- **Part 6: Visual Impact** – identifies and describes the potential visual impact of the proposal on views obtained from the viewpoints, and assesses the significance of these impacts against the factors of sensitivity and magnitude
- **Part 7: Assessment Against Relevant Planning Instruments** – assesses the potential visual impacts against the relevant parts of applicable planning instruments
- **Part 8: Discussion of Key Issues** – considers the key issues raised by the VIA and assessment against the planning framework
- **Part 9: Mitigation Measures** – identifies any mitigation measures to address any adverse visual impacts
- **Part 10: Conclusion** – identifies whether the proposal in its current form can be supported on visual impact grounds, and summarises the basis for this determination.

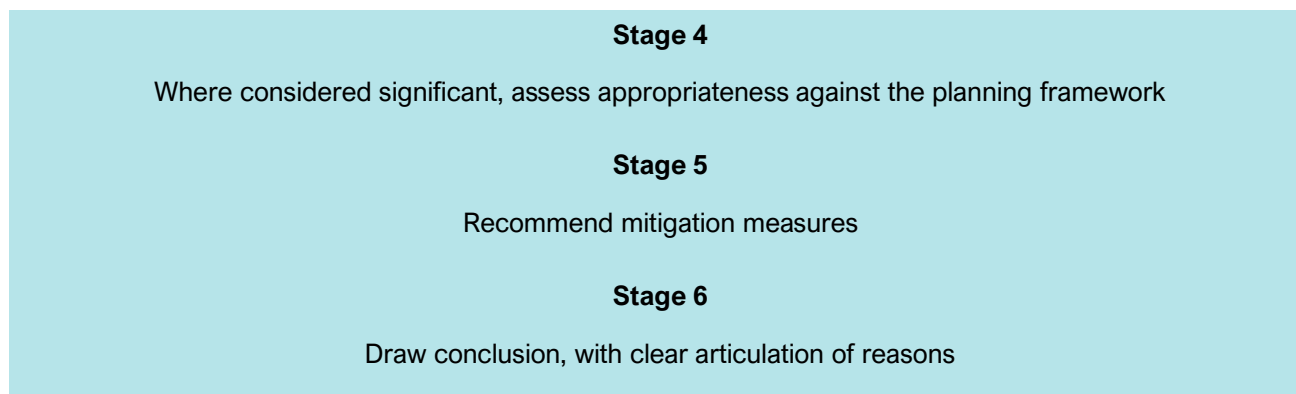
### 1.1 Methodology

The methodology undertaken by this VIA is generally in accordance with that set down in the ‘Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment’ (GLVIA3) published by the Landscape Institute and Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment in 2013 adjusted to better reflect the local NSW context by including consideration of:

- the requirements of the NSW planning system under the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979
- NSW Land and Environment Court planning principles.

The GLVIA methodology is broadly outlined in **Figure 1**. Further detail is provided in **Appendix 1**.





**Figure 1: Methodology**

The following documents have been reviewed in preparing this report:

- Wingecarribee Local Environmental Plan 2010 (the WLEP2010)
- Moss Vale Township Development Control Plan Section 22: Chelsea Gardens Coomungie Precinct (the DCP)
- Wingecarribee, Our Home: A Geographical Interpretation of the Southern Highlands of New South Wales (Bowie, 2006)
- visual material prepared by Arterra, dated July 2020.

The following information sources were consulted:

- NSW Planning Portal (NSW Government)
- SIX maps (NSW Government).

## **1.2 Assumptions and limitations**

The following assumptions apply to this VIA:

- development will occur generally in accordance with the DCP
- development will deliver up to 1,200 lots ranging in area from between 450 to 2,000sqm
- development will commence in the western part of the site.

The following limitations apply to this VIA:

- consideration is focussed on the Hill Road Knoll and the Eastern Ridge;
- consideration of specific viewpoints in the private domain impacts is excluded. Setting this aside, a general understanding of impact on the private domain may be obtained for this assessment;
- photomontages consistent with Land and Environment Court policy, which require surveying and specialist photography, have not been prepared. Rather, computer generated simulations have been used as the basis for part of this VIA. This is considered acceptable given the nature of the proposal;
- night-time impacts, including lighting, are excluded; and
- Aboriginal heritage visual values, or impact on Aboriginal cultural associations with landscape. This is only appropriately undertaken by a member or representative of the Aboriginal community.

## 2.0 The Site and its Context

This part of the report identifies and describes the site and its context.

### 2.1 The site

The site comprises that part of 32 Lovelle Street (Lot 12 DP866036), Moss Vale known as the Hill Road Knoll and the Eastern Ridge (refer **Figure 2**).

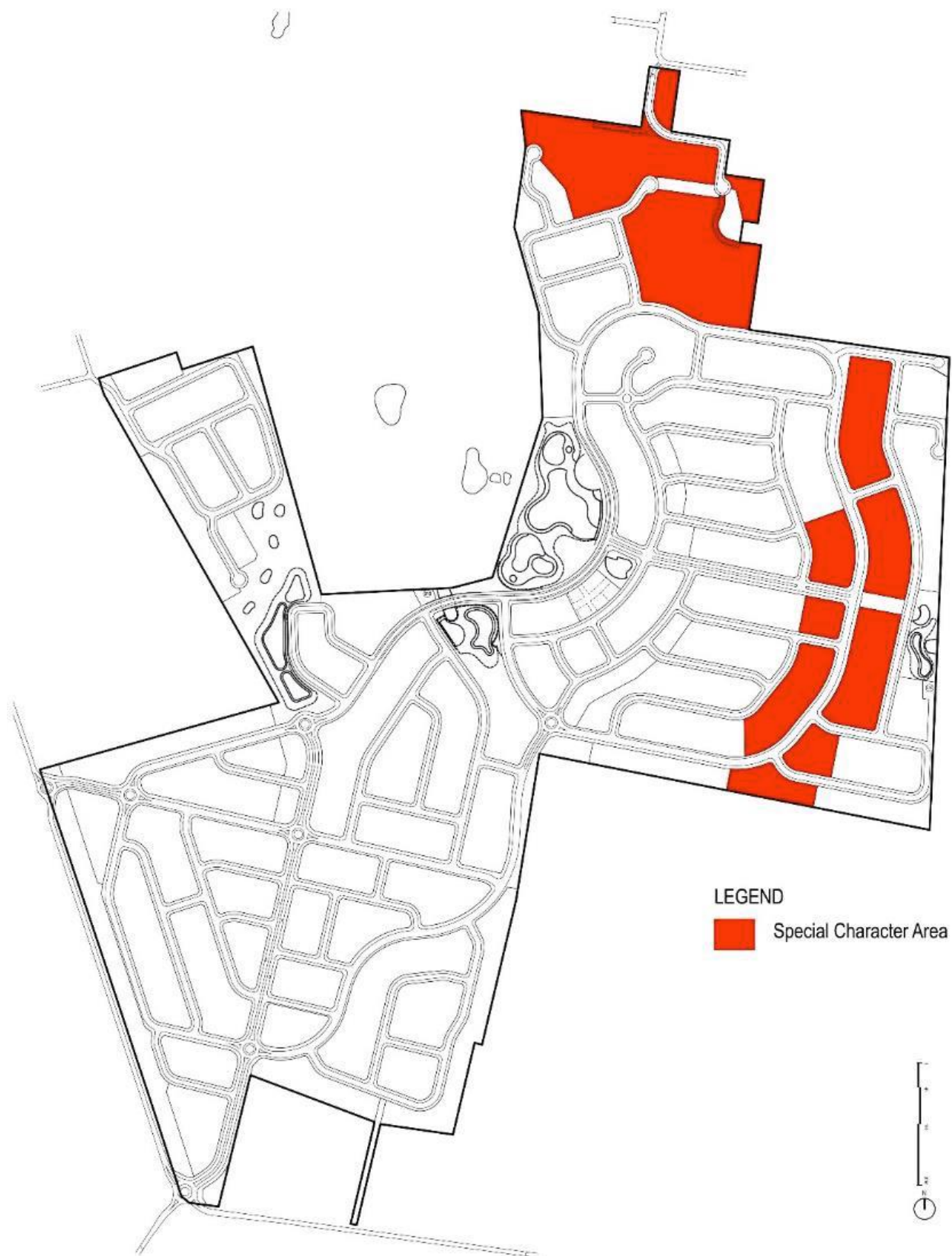
The site is largely grassed pastureland. It does not support any substantial buildings or structures. Parts of the site supports small, largely linear stands of vegetation. There are a number of ephemeral watercourses and small dams within the site.

The site forms part of a larger precinct comprising all of 32 Lovelle Street (Lot 12 DP866036) together with 141 Yarrawa Road (Lot 3 DP706194), Moss Vale. This larger precinct is commonly known as the 'Chelsea Gardens and Coomungie Lands'. **Figure 3** shows how this precinct is intended to be developed under the relevant planning provisions.

The precinct is largely located on the north and west facing sides of the upper reaches of a small valley formed by Whites Creek generally at an elevation of between 680 – 710m.

**Figure 4** to **Figure 6** show the site and precinct.

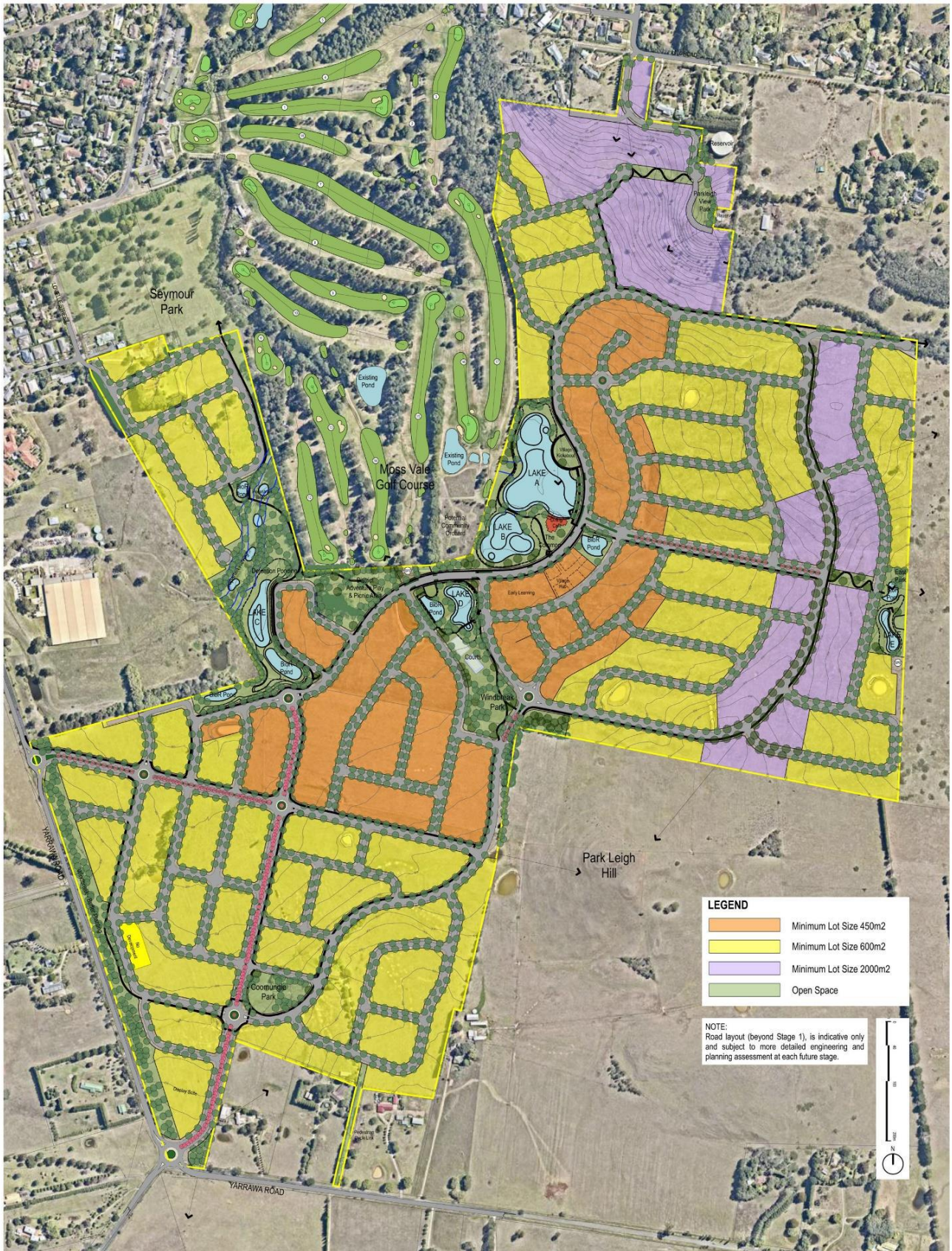
The visual characteristics of the site and precinct are outlined in **Section 5** of this VIA.



**Figure 2: The site (shown as 'Special Character Area')**

Source: Wingecarribee Shire Council





**Figure 3: The precinct**

Source: Wingecarribee Shire Council





**Figure 4: View of the site and precinct from the vicinity of Hill Road, looking generally south**

Source: Arterra



**Figure 5: View of the site and precinct from the vicinity of Yarrowa Road, looking generally south-east**

Source: Arterra



**Figure 6: Dam located within the precinct**

Source: Arterra

## 2.2 The context

The site and precinct are located within a rural setting adjoining the existing southern boundary of the Moss Vale township. Surrounding land is as follows:

- **North:** southern edge of the existing Moss Vale township, notably including the Moss Vale golf course (refer **Figure 7**), Seymour Park, the established and elevated residential area around Hill Road and Villiers Road, the emerging residential area around Daylesford Drive and Lansdown Place and other peri-urban uses such as aged care facility (Harbison), warehouse and distribution centre (Harper Entertainment Distribution Services) and utility infrastructure (Hill Road water facility)
- **South:** largely grassed pastureland with some large lot residential adjoining Yarrowa Road
- **East:** largely grassed pastureland

- **West:** largely grassed pastureland with some large lot residential adjoining Yarrowa Road.



**Figure 7: The adjoining Moss Vale golf course**

Source: Arterra

### 3.0 The Proposal

This part of the report describes the proposal.

The site is part of the precinct's overall development for a master-planned residential community. Specifically, the site is proposed to be developed as follows:

- northern part:
  - a number of large (2,000sqm) residential lots which in the future, subject to approval, would support a single dwelling house, ancillary structures such as sheds and fences and private open space;
  - a small number of access roads, including one from Hill Road; and
  - Parkleigh View Park.
- southern part:
  - a number of large (2,000sqm) residential lots which in the future, subject to approval, would support a single dwelling house, ancillary structures such as sheds and fences and private open space; and
  - a small number of roads, in particular a collector road following the main ridgeline.

A development application (DA) seeking development consent for the proposal has been made by Aoyuan to Wingecarribee Shire Council (council) as the consent authority. It comprises two parts as follows:

- **Part A:** proposed 'Stage 1 Subdivision' including 182 residential lots, 2 open space / drainage lots & 4 residual lots.
- **Part B:** proposed 'Concept Subdivision' including approximately 1,200 residential lots.

Council has advised that it has concerns with the current approach to visual impact with respect to Part B of the development application as follows:

- 'higher portions of the site are considered too visually prominent...for a subdivision to be considered as part of a concept development application with the generalist description minimum lot size 2,000sqm'.

On this basis, council has requested a revised approach that involves removing this land from Part B and the making of a separate, detailed DA in future for this and an adjoining area. This is to be supported 'detailed, careful and informed assessment of the visual impact'. Council has indicated it wishes to see a Visual Impact Assessment report.

## 4.0 Applicable planning instruments

This part of the report identifies the planning instruments that are applicable to the site.

The following planning instruments are applicable to the site:

1. Wingecarribee Local Environmental Plan 2010 (the WLEP2010)
2. Moss Vale Township Development Control Plan Section 22: Chelsea Gardens Coomungie Precinct (the DCP).

### 4.1 Wingecarribee Local Environmental Plan 2010

Under the WLEP2010, the strategic intent for the future of the site and precinct is for urban development. More specifically, most of the precinct is intended for low density residential development, while the site is mainly intended for large lot residential development. Together, the site and precinct represent a major southern urban extension of the Moss Vale township. This complements the general eastward extension of the town boundary since the late 1970s. This pattern has seen development occur on most of the Hill Road Knoll (including the Dengate Crescent precinct) and areas further to the east mostly notably the area around Farnborough Drive.

Reflecting this intent, the site is subject to the following planning controls under the WLEP2010:

- **Zone:** R5 - Large lot residential
- **Minimum lot size:** 2,000sqm
- **Overlays:** flood planning area; riparian land; urban release area.

The site is not subject to height of building or floor space ratio controls.

The precinct is mainly included in the R2 Low density residential, and mainly has minimum lot sizes ranging from 400sqm to 650sqm.

This strategic intent and supporting planning controls are important for the consideration of visual impact as they enable development that will set a new desired future character that is different to the present condition.

### 4.2 Moss Vale Township Development Control Plan Section 22: Chelsea Gardens Coomungie Precinct

The DCP provides for comprehensive and detailed guidance for the future development of the site and precinct. The following provisions of the DCP considered to be of most relevance to the assessment of visual impact:

- Section 1.1: Purpose of this section
- Section 1.6: Overall site vision
- Section 1.7: Desired landscape character
- Section 1.8: Desired residential character



- Section 4.4: Special character area controls.

## 5.0 Existing visual character

This part of the report identifies and describes the existing and desired future visual character, including viewshed, visual receptors, viewpoints and overall visual character

### 5.1 Viewshed

The viewshed is the area within which the proposal can be seen, either in totality or in part. Under the GLVIA3 method, there are two approaches to identifying the viewshed:

1. digital approaches
2. manual approaches.

Given that digital approaches rely only on the elevation of the proposal relative to topography and do not factor in items that may obscure views such as vegetation, in rural contexts it can often provide a misleading indication of the viewshed. On this basis, a manual approach based on desktop analysis and site inspection has been undertaken.

Desktop analysis of overall landform and distance suggests that the theoretical viewshed is local and is generally bound by:

- **north:** private residential land to the south of Hill Road
- **east:** Nowra Road
- **south:** Yarrawa Road and part of Mt Broughton Road
- **west:** Yarrawa Road.

Site inspection showed that there is number of elements within this viewshed that combine to either block or occlude the visibility of the site. This includes:

- alignment of roads (the only notable element of public domain)
- local variation to this overall landform associated with creeks, valley, hills and ridges
- vegetation (natural and planted) and buildings.

Consequently, the actual viewshed is more nuanced than the theoretical viewshed.

#### North

A glimpse of the site as a background element can be obtained from that part of Villiers Road generally to the north of Dengate Crescent. Despite being located on the top of a north facing ridge, the site is not visible from Dengate Crescent due to the blocking effect of urban residential development. From the intersection of Villiers Road and Hill Road, the site becomes more visually noticeable. The site is not visible from locations in the public domain further to the east on Hill Road due to the upwards sloping landform and the blocking effect of urban residential development.

Views of the site cannot be obtained from the Illawarra Highway.

### **East**

Views of the site as a background element can be obtained to the west across cleared grazing land from the southern part of Nowra Road. Glimpses can be obtained from the remainder of the road where there are gaps in roadside vegetation. As this land is zoned for rural purposes, it is unlikely to be intensively developed over the life of the WLEP2010.

### **South**

Similar to Nowra Road, views of the site as a background element can be obtained to the north across cleared grazing land from the eastern part of Yarrawa Road. From locations generally to the west of Meryla Road the site is obscured by Park Leigh Hill.

The first glimpse of the site as a background element can be obtained from Mt Broughton Road in the run up to where it crests a ridge running east from Mt Broughton in the general vicinity of 104 Mt Broughton Road, Werai. The glimpse has a focal nature, with the road leading the eye to a gap in vegetation in the centre of the field of view.

After cresting this ridge, a wide view of the site and surrounding rural landscape opens up. The nature of this view is across the valley to the ridge in the background. This view continues until reach intersection with other road, where expansive view across valley. With development of the precinct, much of the midground of this view will be occupied by urban residential development.

### **West**

Views to the site as a background element can be obtained generally from that part of Yarrawa Road between its intersection with Mt Broughton Road and the vicinity of 37 Yarrawa Road (Harper Entertainment Distribution Services). North of 37 Yarrawa Road the site is not visible due to the blocking effect of urban residential development.

Glimpses of the upper parts of the site can also be obtained from the east-west aligned Spencer Street and Lansdown Place in the southern periphery of the Moss Vale township. Views are not able to be obtained from Seymour Park, primarily due to the blocking effect of vegetation.

With the development of the precinct for urban purposes, a 30m deep landscape buffer will border most of Yarrawa Road except for entrance points. This will either block or occlude most views from the road.

## **5.2 Visual characteristics**

The visual characteristics of an area are created by the interrelationship of a number of factors. These include:

- landform
- vegetation
- land use.

In general, these factors can be placed in two main categories according to geographic extent:

1. broad scale (eg, LGA, regional) factors
2. local scale factors.

### 5.2.1 Broad scale factors

Broad scale factors include:

- natural landform
- vegetation
- land use.

#### Landform

Under the Interim Biogeographic Regionalisation for Australia (IBRA), Version 7, the site and surrounds are included in the Moss Vale subregion of the Sydney Basin bioregion. The characteristic landform of this subregion (NSW Government, 2020) is 'shale and basalt plateau with rolling hills and shallow valleys'.

This 'generally subdued relief' (Bowie, 2006) is evidenced by the mapped slope of the site, which the Hill Road Knoll having a gradient of 'undulating' (3 – 8 degrees) and the Eastern Ridge of 'mostly flat' (under 3 degrees) (Bowie, 2006).

#### Vegetation

Consistent with Bowie's (2006) note that 'much natural vegetation has been cleared' within the LGA, the site is largely grassland with isolated single or small rows of planted, non-native trees.

#### Land use

The current land use of the site is mapped as 'improved and naturalised pasture' (Bowie, 2006). More broadly, the Wingecarribee Local Planning Strategy 2015-2031 identifies the entire LGA, and therefore by association the site, as peri-urban land 'neither urban nor rural in the conventional sense' and 'currently undergoing dramatic change'.

### 5.2.2 Local scale factors

#### Landform

The site is located on the south facing slope of the Hill Road Knoll and the Eastern Ridge that runs north-south connecting the knoll with the nearby Park Leigh Hill. While most of this land is generally sloping, the upper south facing slopes of Hill Road Knoll are moderately steep.

This landform separates a lower lying valley small valley associated with Whites Creek to the west from another broader small valley associated with an unnamed waterway that flows north-south from the vicinity of Mt Prospect to the join with Kelly's Creek to the east.

Due to its elevation (758m), the Hill Road Knoll is a locally prominent landform. Park Leigh Hill (approximately 730m) is also a locally prominent landform. In some regards due to its distinct almost conical shape, dual summits and an absence of vegetation that enables the full appreciation of this shape, Park Leigh Hill is more notable and memorable.

At generally around 700m, the Eastern Ridge is considerably lower in elevation than both Hill Road Knoll and Park Leigh Hill. In addition, review of topographic maps shows that it also has a gentle slope. Given this and seen in the context of two more dominant landform elements, the Eastern Ridge cannot be considered a visually prominent landform. However, it is significant due to its role in forming a boundary between areas to the west that are to be intensively developed for urban residential uses and land to the east that is to be retained for rural uses. This has formed the basis of selection of a viewpoint to the east (Nowra Road) to gauge its general visibility from location to the east.

The site supports a number of small dams, including their hillocks and scarps, as well as a number of ephemeral watercourses.

## Vegetation

The site contains a small number of individual trees as well as a single row of large trees. These trees are largely planted and non-native. Given the site is largely cleared, these trees are locally visually prominent in certain views. Assessment also suggests that they are in a mostly healthy condition. It is considered that the single row of trees is characteristic of the typical Southern Highlands and Moss Vale visual landscape, and provide a tangible connection to previous uses and history of the site. While external to the site, there is a substantial amount of very tall, large and dense trees, often planted in rows, associated with the Moss Vale Golf Course. These both serve to likely contain views of the site from many locations within the golf course, and are a locally notable visual feature of the Whites Creek valley.

## Land use

Consistent with its mapping as 'improved and naturalised pasture', the site is currently open, grassed grazing land. Post and wire boundary fencing is associated with this use.

### 5.2.3 Aesthetic and perceptual attributes

Analysis of aesthetic and perceptual attributes can help inform visual assessment as it enables further consideration of the level of variance from existing visual character likely to occur due to a proposal. The following is a high level, general consideration of aesthetic and perceptual attributes:

- **line:** from most distances, largely horizontally emphasised lines dominate. Verticality will be experienced where close to or on the Hill Road Knoll, Park Leigh Hill or tall trees
- **shape and form:** mainly organic, rounded, or curved shapes and forms
- **colour:** a dominance of greens, including lighter greens associated with grass and darker green associated with vegetation. It is likely that the light greens turn a straw colour during periods of low rainfall. The sky, which is a prominent feature associated with the landscape, is of variable colour. Due to its peri-urban location and use as grazing land, there is an occasional presence of greys and whites associated with buildings and structures
- **texture:** mainly coarse, natural textures
- **perceptual:** while subjective and open to individual interpretation, the visual landscape may evoke a perception of openness, tranquillity and 'quaintness'.



Figure 8: 'Park Leigh Hill'

Source: Arterra

## 5.3 Visual receptors

The only public domain locations in the viewshed from which the site is presently visible are public roads. On this basis, the sole visual receptors will be travellers on these roads.

It is likely that the majority of travellers will be drivers of private vehicles. It is also expected that a number will be passengers, with a smaller number of cyclists. It is unlikely that walkers will be use the roads.

While most travellers are expected to be local residents, it is likely that some travellers will also be non-resident tourists. This is particularly the case for Nowra Road, which is a designated tourist route (Tourist Drive 15).

Site inspection showed that a relatively small number of people are exposed to the views.

It is not expected that the people's attention will be focussed on views. This is particularly the case given the nature of the roads themselves. While generally well formed and bitumen paved, they are all narrow, two lane, dual direction and have higher speed limits (up to 100km per hour). None of the roads are designated A-roads. On this basis, driving on these roads takes a certain level of care. Having said this, people are however likely to have an interest in the overall landscape character.

Following development of the western and southern parts of the precinct, views of part of the site are likely to be obtained from not only drivers and passengers of private vehicles, but also a larger number of cyclists as well as walkers.

#### 5.4 Pattern of viewing

The combination of visual characteristics and visual receptors suggest that the main pattern of viewing will be panoramas to parts of the site in the background from the long range obtained from roads across flat and / or gently undulating improved and naturalised pasture including single and rows of trees, and occasionally dams, fences and other elements.

Opportunities for glimpses, including filtered glimpses, will also be available from those parts of roads bordered by vegetation.

In the future when the earlier stages of the precinct are developed, views to parts of the site in the background from locations in the west and south will be possible from a more complex urban residential visual setting. Unless sited to terminate or otherwise be in the focus on a road or other linear corridor, this complexity will generally reduce the noticeability of the site to the casual observer.

#### 5.5 Viewpoints

Viewpoints fall broadly into three categories (GLVIA3):

1. **Representative viewpoints:** represent the experience of different types of visual receptor, where larger numbers of viewpoints cannot all be included individually and where the significant effects are unlikely to differ — for example, certain points may be chosen to represent the views of users of particular public footpaths
2. **Specific viewpoints:** key and sometimes promoted viewpoints within the landscape, including for example specific local visitor attractions, viewpoints in areas of particularly noteworthy visual and/or recreational amenity such as landscapes with statutory landscape designations, or viewpoints with particular cultural landscape associations
3. **Illustrative viewpoints:** demonstrate a particular effect or specific issues, which might, for example, be the restricted visibility at certain locations.

The viewpoints used need to cover as wide a range of situations as is possible, reasonable and necessary to cover the likely significant effects (GLVIA3). The selection of the final viewpoints used for the assessment should take account of a range of factors, including:

- the accessibility to the public
- the potential number and sensitivity of viewers who may be affected
- the viewing direction, distance (i.e. short, medium and long-distance views) and elevation
- the nature of the viewing experience (for example static views, views from settlements and views from sequential points along routes)

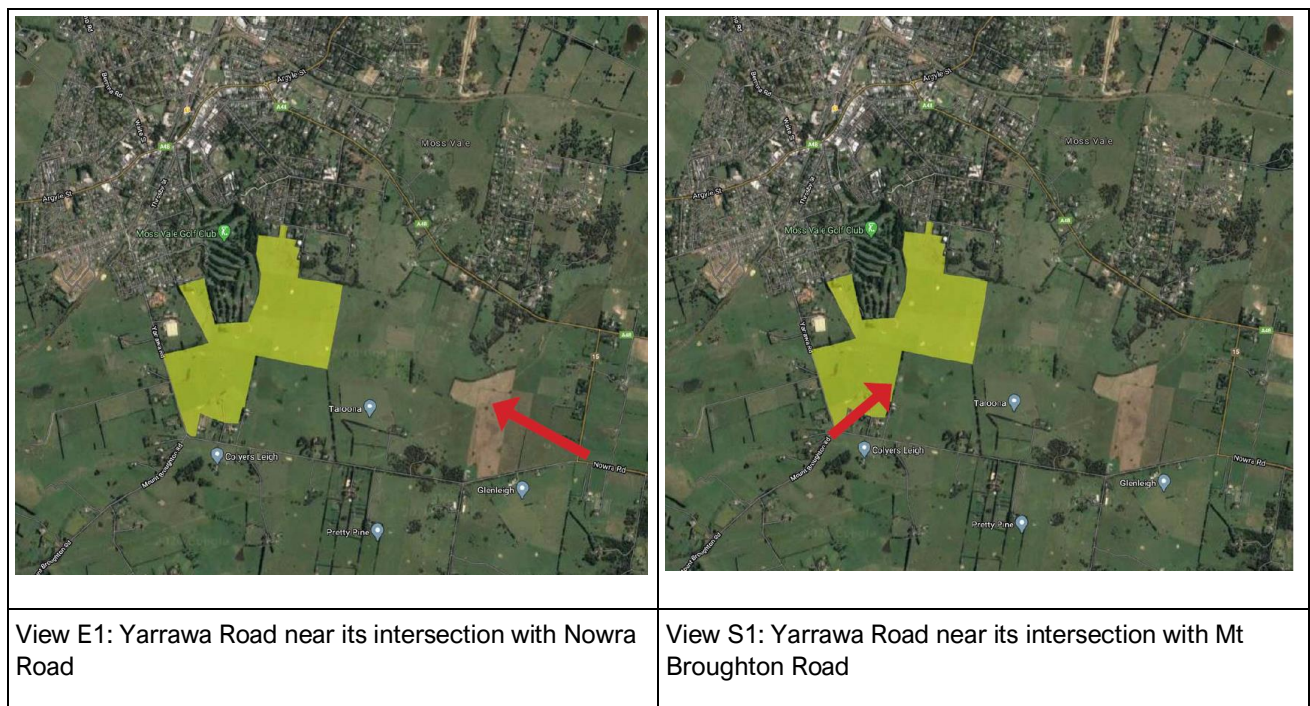


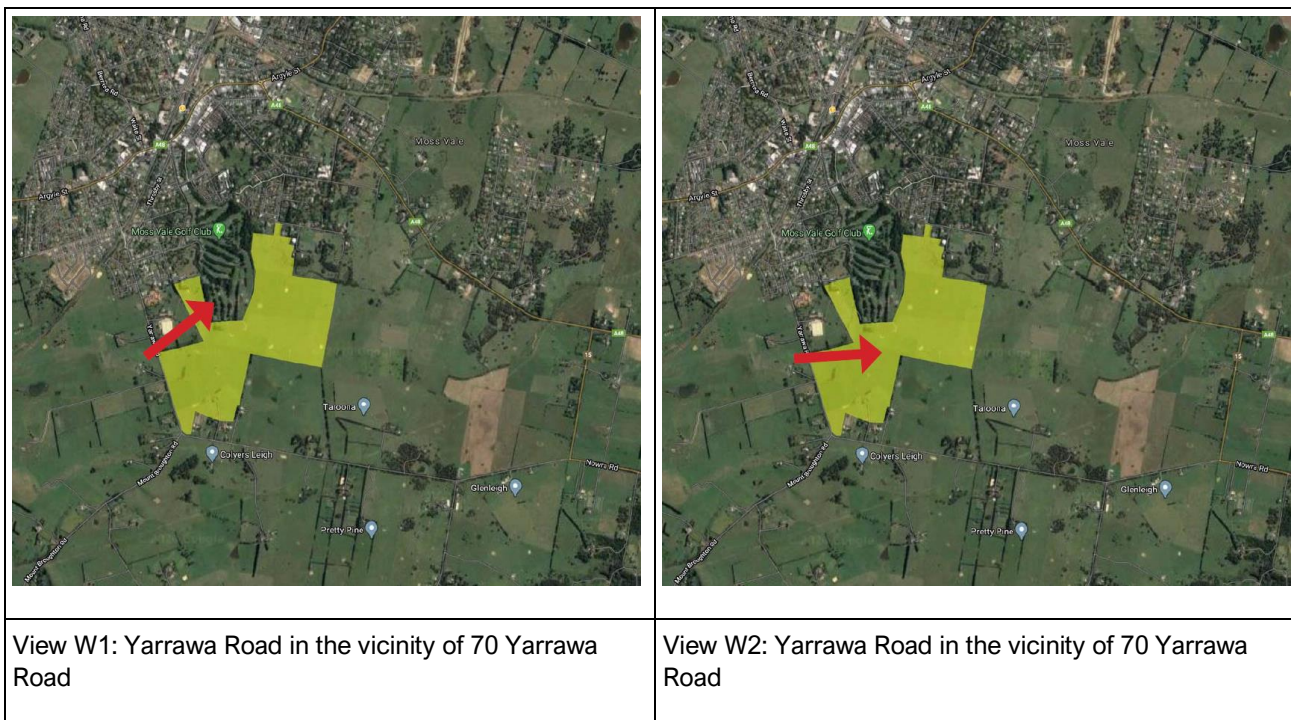
- the view type (e.g. panoramas, vistas and glimpses)
- the potential for cumulative views of the proposed development in conjunction with other developments.

The viewpoints selected for this VIA are identified in **Table 1** and **Figure 9**.

**Table 1: Viewpoints (description)**

Ref	Location	Direction of view	Type of view	Reason for selection
E1	Yarrawa Road near its intersection with Nowra Road	North-west	Illustrative and representative	Illustrative of views obtained from travellers heading west on Nowra Road and representative of views generally from the east of the site
S1	Yarrawa Road near its intersection with Mt Broughton Road	North-east	Illustrative and representative	Illustrative of views obtained from travellers heading north on Mt Broughton Road and representative of views generally from the south of the site
W1	Within the site near Yarrawa Road in the vicinity of 70 Yarrawa Road	North-east	Representative	Representative of views that may be obtained in the future public domain within the precinct
W2	Within the site near Yarrawa Road in the vicinity of 70 Yarrawa Road	East	Representative	Representative of views that may be obtained in the future public domain within the precinct





**Figure 9: Viewpoints (map)**

Source: Arterra

## 6.0 Visual impact assessment

This part of the report identifies and describes the potential visual impact of the proposal on views obtained from the viewpoints, and assesses the significance of these impacts against the factors of sensitivity and magnitude.

### 6.1 Overall

Overall and irrespective of viewpoint, the proposal involves the replacement of grassed grazing land with low density urban residential development. While this inherently contrasts with the existing rural (pastoral) visual character, it is nonetheless consistent with desired future character for the site and precinct articulated in planning controls.

### 6.2 Viewpoint E1: Yarrawa Road near its intersection with Nowra Road





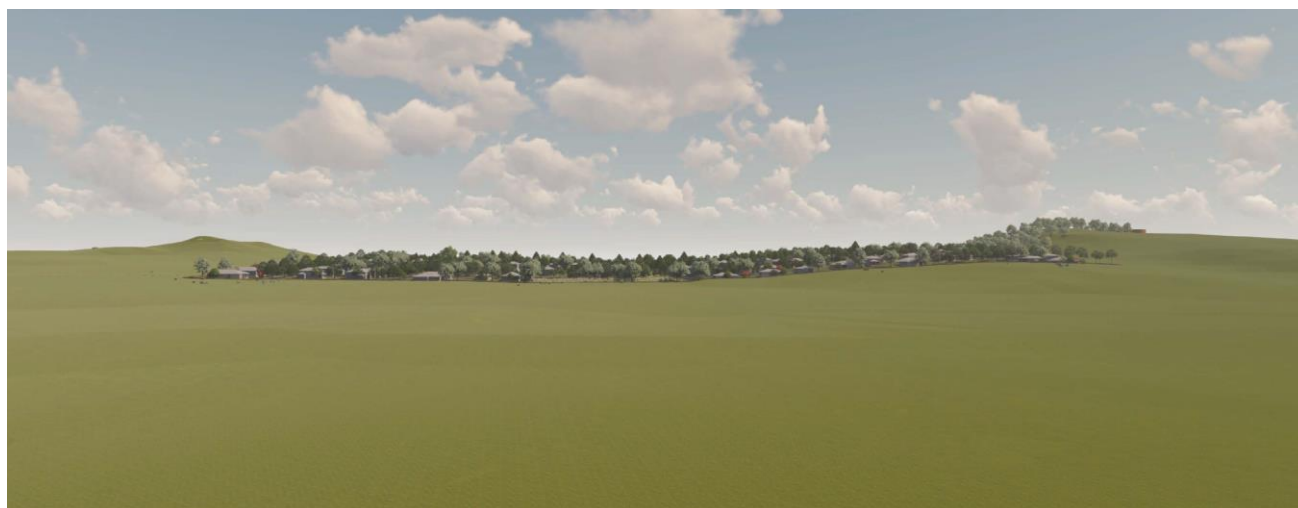
**Figure 10: Viewpoint E1 – Yarrawa Road near its intersection with Nowra Road (existing view)**

Source: Arterra



**Figure 11: Viewpoint E1 – Yarrawa Road near its intersection with Nowra Road (annotated existing view)**

Source: Arterra



**Figure 12: Viewpoint E1 – Yarrawa Road near its intersection with Nowra Road (simulated future view)**

Source: Arterra

### 6.2.1 Description

This is a wide view to the north-west obtained from a viewpoint close to the Yarrawa Road reserve (western side) near its intersection with Nowra Road in a rural (pastoral) visual setting.

It is obtained from a distance of 2.2km, making it a long range view in the context of the selected views.

The elevation of the viewpoint is below the natural ground level of the site.

It is part of a sequence of views that may be obtained when travelling west along Nowra Road.

It is accessible to the public.

Part of the upper eastern slope of Hill Road Knoll is noticeable as a vegetated hill in the background far right side of the view. That part of the site that occupies Hill Road Knoll will not be visible due to landform and



vegetation. A small part of the Eastern Ridge immediately adjoining Hill Road Knoll is perceptible in the background.

### 6.2.2 Analysis – sensitivity

It is likely that a relatively low – moderate number of visual receptors travelling on Nowra Road will be exposed to the view. Their level of attention or interest in the view is likely to be variable. On average, unlike other viewpoints, a high level of sensitivity has been determined due to Nowra Road forming part of a designated tourist route (Tourist Route 15). Having said this, it is likely that most views will be limited to short glimpses as:

- views are only obtained after clearing a small hillock to the right of the road
- most people will be engaged in navigating the intersection of Nowra Road with Yarrowa Road as opposed to focussing on the broader landscape.

The view contains the following elements:

- level, grassed, grazing land
- small dam and associated hillock, scarp and metal cannister
- rows and patches of native and non-native trees
- high voltage electricity pylons and cables
- Park Leigh Hill, Hill Road Knoll and Eastern Ridge
- sky.

Level, grassed, grazing land is the dominant overall feature. Other features include

- trees
- Park Leigh Hill and Hill Road Knoll
- sky.

The view is composed as follows:

- **foreground:** level, grassed grazing land
- **midground:** level, grassed, grazing land; small dam and associated hillock, scarp and metal cannister
- **background:** rows of native and non-native trees (possibly aligned with the eastern edge of a small watercourse running from the south in the vicinity of Mt Prospect northwards to join Kellys Creek) delineate the end of the mid ground from the start of background from this point, the background comprises open, grassed paddocks with patches of trees. Park Leigh Hill is visible as a feature at the southern (left) end of the background. Hill Road Knoll, including part of the Eastern Ridge, is visible as a feature at the northern (right) end of the background. High voltage electricity pylons and wires traverse the background of the view
- **backdrop:** sky.

The skyline is formed mainly by the tops of vegetation, and partly by the cleared tops of Park Leigh Hill and the Eastern Ridge.

The view can be considered to have the following formal aesthetic characteristics:

- **line:** horizontally emphasised

- **shape and form:** mainly organic and gently rounded. The northern slope of the top of Park Leigh Hill is the exception to this pattern, having a relatively steep slope
- **colour:** mainly light, low intensity light greens (turning to yellow / brown in the absence of rainfall) to dark greens. The colour of the sky is variable. There is a presence of grey (high voltage electricity pylon and wires)
- **texture:** largely coarse, natural textures.

Perceptual characteristics are important but often highly individual and subjective. However, the view may be considered to have the following formal perceptual characteristics:

- rural
- open
- simple
- soft
- tranquil.

The view does not include a designated landscape. However, the landscape can be considered to have scenic amenity value. Given this, consideration has been given to the following criteria that help evaluate significance (not significant, local, regional or State):

- **exemplary:** the landscape is representative of that of the Southern Highland, however is not considered exemplary. The presence of urban development (high voltage pylons and cables) reduces it value
- **iconic:** this part of the landscape is not considered iconic. Iconic landscapes in the Southern Highlands include the Fitzroy Falls and Wingecarribee Reservoir
- **scarce:** the landscape is locally common.

On this basis, the landscape is not considered to have local, regional or State significance.

Considering visual receptors and the value attached to the view, it is considered that the view has a medium – high sensitivity to the type and nature of change envisaged.

### 6.2.3 Analysis – magnitude

The visual impact is contained to the Eastern Ridge visible in the northern (right) end of the background. The foreground, midground and most of the skyline is not impacted. Park Leigh Hill and Hill Road Knoll is not impacted.

The proposal is considered to be a minor change over a restricted area that will be ongoing and irreversible. On this basis, the following table identifies the magnitude of visual impact.

**Table 2: Magnitude, viewpoint E1**

		Duration and / or reversibility			
		Ongoing and irreversible	Ongoing capable of being reversed	Limited life (5 – 10 years)	Limited life (< 5 years)
Scale of change	Major change over wide area	Dominant	Considerable	Considerable	Noticeable

		Duration and / or reversibility			
	Major change over restricted area, or Moderate change over wide area	Considerable	Considerable	Noticeable	Noticeable
	Moderate change over restricted area; or Minor change over a wide area	Considerable	Noticeable	Noticeable	Perceptible
	Minor change over a restricted area; or Insignificant change	<b>Perceptible</b>	Perceptible	Perceptible	Imperceptible
	Imperceptible change	Imperceptible	Imperceptible	Imperceptible	Imperceptible

### 6.2.4 Analysis – significance

The following table provides an indication of the potential significance of visual impact.

Table 3: Viewpoint E1 – overall significance of visual impact

		Magnitude				
		Dominant	Considerable	Noticeable	Perceptible	Imperceptible
Sensitivity	High	Major	High	Moderate	<b>Low</b>	Negligible
	Medium	High	Moderate	Low	<b>Low</b>	Negligible
	Low	Moderate	Low	Low	Negligible	Negligible
	Negligible	Low	Low	Negligible	Negligible	Negligible

### 6.3 Viewpoint S1: Yarrawa Road near its intersection with Mt Broughton Road



**Figure 13: Viewpoint S1: Yarrawa Road near its intersection with Mt Broughton Road (existing view)**

Source: Arterra



**Figure 14: Existing View Annotated (Viewpoint S1)**

Source: Arterra



**Figure 15: Simulated view taken at a height higher than eye-level. If at eye level, view would be obscured by foreground (Viewpoint S1)**

Source: Arterra

**6.3.1 Description**

This is a wide view to the north-east obtained from a viewpoint close to the Yarrawa Road reserve (northern side) near its intersection with Mt Broughton Road in a predominantly rural (pastoral) visual setting.

It is obtained from a distance of 1.3km, making it a medium range view in the context of the selected views.

The elevation of the viewpoint is below the natural ground level of the site.

It is part of a sequence of views that may be obtained when travelling north along Nowra Road.

It is accessible to the public.

The entirety of the western and southern slope of Hill Road Knoll is prominent as a predominantly cleared and partially vegetated hill in the background centre and left side of the view. The site, including Parkleigh View Park on its most pronounced part, will be visible. A small part of the Eastern Ridge immediately adjoining Hill Road Knoll is perceptible in the background. It does not form part of the skyline. Rather, that part of the Hill Road Knoll and distant hills are visible against the sky.

**6.3.2 Analysis – sensitivity**

It is likely that a relatively low – moderate number of visual receptors travelling on Yarrawa Road will be exposed to the view. Their level of attention or interest in the view is likely to be moderate.

The view contains the following elements:

- gently sloping, grassed, grazing land
- small dams and associated hillocks and scarps
- fencing (post and wire)
- single non-native trees and rows of native and non-native trees
- Hill Road Knoll and Eastern Ridge
- houses (low profile nestled among trees, roofs visible)
- sky.
- distant hills.

Gently sloping, grassed, grazing land is the dominant overall feature. Other features include:

- trees
- Hill Road Knoll
- sky.

The view is composed as follows:

- **foreground:** gently sloping (downhill away from viewpoint), grassed grazing land, small dam and associated hillock and scarp; fencing (post and wire)
- **midground:** gently sloping (downhill away from viewpoint), grassed, grazing land, small dam and associated scarp; fencing (post and wire); trees (single and rows of non-natives and natives)



- **background:** gently sloping (uphill away from midground), grassed, grazing land; Hill Road Knoll; houses (low profile nested among trees, roofs visible). While the Eastern Ridge is perceptible, the presence of the Hill Road Knoll results in it appearing as a relatively minor landscape element
- **backdrop:** sky.

The skyline is formed by vegetation on the summit and on the northern slope of Hill Road Knoll and distant hills.

- **line:** horizontally emphasised
- **shape and form:** mainly organic and gently rounded. That part of Hill Road Knoll where Park Leigh Hill is proposed to be located is the exception to this pattern, having a relatively steep slope
- **colour:** mainly light, low intensity light greens (turning to yellow / brown in the absence of rainfall) to dark greens. The colour of the sky is variable. There is a presence of grey (roofs of houses)
- **texture:** largely coarse, natural textures.

Perceptual characteristics are important but often highly individual and subjective. However, the view may be considered to have the following formal perceptual characteristics:

- rural
- open
- simple
- soft
- tranquil.

The view does not include a designated landscape. However, the landscape can be considered to have scenic amenity value. Given this, consideration has been given to the following criteria that help evaluate significance (not significant, local, regional or State):

- **exemplary:** the landscape is representative of that of the Southern Highland, however is not considered exemplary. The presence of urban development (houses) reduces it value
- **iconic:** this part of the landscape is not considered iconic. Iconic landscapes in the Southern Highlands include the Fitzroy Falls and Wingecarribee Reservoir
- **scarce:** the landscape is locally common.

On this basis, the landscape is not considered to have local, regional or State significance.

Considering visual receptors and the value attached to the view, it is considered that the view has a medium sensitivity to the type and nature of change envisaged.

### 6.3.3 Analysis – magnitude

The visual impact is contained to the Hill Road Knoll and a small part of the Eastern Ridge visible in the background. The presence of existing low density urban residential development (the southern edge of the existing Moss Vale township) and its location on the Hill Road Knoll is highly relevant to the consideration of visual impact as it reduces its overall sensitivity to change of the nature envisaged by the proposal. Furthermore, it provides a helpful point of reference for the likely nature of future development on the site. Considering this, as well as the layout, type and scale of development envisaged for the site under planning controls, it is likely that future built form will not intrude above the existing tree canopy that forms the skyline

and following growth of trees will be balanced by vegetation. The placement of Parkleigh View Park on the most prominent part of the Hill Road Knoll will contribute to reducing the visual prominence of any built form.

The proposal is considered to be a minor change over a restricted area that will be ongoing and irreversible. On this basis, the following table identifies the magnitude of visual impact.

**Table 4: Magnitude, viewpoint S1**

		Duration and / or reversibility			
		Ongoing and irreversible	Ongoing capable of being reversed	Limited life (5 – 10 years)	Limited life (< 5 years)
<b>Scale of change</b>	<b>Major change over wide area</b>	Dominant	Considerable	Considerable	Noticeable
	<b>Major change over restricted area, or Moderate change over wide area</b>	Considerable	Considerable	Noticeable	Noticeable
	<b>Moderate change over restricted area; or Minor change over a wide area</b>	Considerable	Noticeable	Noticeable	Perceptible
	<b>Minor change over a restricted area; or Insignificant change</b>	<b>Perceptible</b>		Perceptible	Imperceptible
	<b>Imperceptible change</b>	Imperceptible	Imperceptible	Imperceptible	Imperceptible

**6.3.4 Analysis – significance**

The following table provides an indication of the potential significance of visual impact.

**Table 5: Viewpoint S1 – overall significance of visual impact**

		Magnitude				
		Dominant	Considerable	Noticeable	Perceptible	Imperceptible
<b>Sensitivity</b>	<b>High</b>	Major	High	Moderate	Low	Negligible
	<b>Medium</b>	High	Moderate		<b>Low</b>	Negligible

		Magnitude				
	Low	Moderate	Low			Negligible
	Negligible	Low	Low	Negligible	Negligible	Negligible

**6.4 Viewpoint W1: Yarrawa Road in the vicinity of 70 Yarrawa Road**



**Figure 16: Viewpoint W1: Yarrawa Road in the vicinity of 70 Yarrawa Road (existing view)**

Source: Arterra



**Figure 17: Viewpoint W1: Yarrawa Road in the vicinity of 70 Yarrawa Road (annotated existing view)**

Source: Arterra





**Figure 18: Viewpoint W1: Yarrawa Road in the vicinity of 70 Yarrawa Road (simulated future view)**

Source: Arterra

#### **6.4.1 Description**

This is a wide view to the north-east obtained from a viewpoint within the broader precinct close to the row of trees bordering the southern edge of 37 Yarrawa Road in a peri-urban visual setting. In the future the visual setting will be urban residential.

It is obtained from a distance of 1.1km, making it a medium range view in the context of the selected views.

The elevation of the viewpoint is below the natural ground level of the site.

It is a static view obtained from within the future precinct.

At present, it is not accessible to the public. In the future it will be accessible to the public.

The entirety of the upper western slope of Hill Road Knoll is prominent as predominantly cleared and partially vegetated hill in the background of the view. The site, including Parkleigh View Park on its most pronounced part, will be visible. The Eastern Ridge is not visible.

#### **6.4.2 Analysis – sensitivity**

It is likely that a relatively moderate number of visual receptors within the future site will be exposed to the view. Their level of attention or interest in the view is likely to be low.

The current view contains the following elements:

- level, grassed, grazing land
- fence (post and wire)
- single non-native trees and a row of non-native trees associated with the golf course and top of Hill Road Knoll
- Hill Road Knoll
- houses (low profile nestled among trees, roofs visible)
- water storage facility
- sky.

The foreground of the future view will comprise low density urban residential development.

Trees, in particular the rows associated with the golf course and top of Hill Road Knoll, and Hill Road Knoll as the two dominant overall features. Other features include:

- grassed, grazing land (both in valley and hillside)
- sky.

The view is composed as follows:

- **foreground:** gently sloping (downhill away from viewpoint), grassed grazing land; fencing (post and wire); trees (single non-natives)
- **midground:** row of non-native trees associated with the golf course
- **background:** Hill Road Knoll, rows of non-native trees associated with the top of Hill Road Knoll. Houses (low profile nestled among trees, roofs visible) and the water storage facility are visible
- **Backdrop:** sky.

The skyline is formed by vegetation on the summit of Hill Road Knoll.

The view can be considered to have the following formal aesthetic characteristics:

- **line:** particularly horizontally emphasised due to the layering of multiple nearly parallel rows in the form of the foreground landform, the row of trees associated with the golf course, the visible strip of cleared land on the Hill Road Knoll and the rows of trees on the Hill Road Knoll summit
- **shape and form:** mainly organic and gently rounded. That steep upper part of Hill Road Knoll where Park Leigh Hill is proposed to be located is the screened from view by the golf course trees
- **colour:** mainly hue: green following period of rain – brown / yellow (straw) during other periods; value - light, intensity – weak. The colour of the sky is variable. There is a presence of whites and greys (houses)
- **texture:** coarse and largely natural textures.

Perceptual characteristics are important but often highly individual and subjective. However, the view may be considered to have the following formal perceptual characteristics:

- rural
- open
- simple
- soft
- tranquil.

The view does not include a designated landscape. However, the landscape can be considered to have scenic amenity value. Given this, consideration has been given to the following criteria that help evaluate significance (not significant, local, regional or State):

- **exemplary:** the landscape is representative of that of the Southern Highland, however is not considered exemplary. The presence of urban development (houses) reduces its value
- **iconic:** this part of the landscape is not considered iconic. Iconic landscapes in the Southern Highlands include the Fitzroy Falls and Wingecarribee Reservoir

- **scarce:** the landscape is locally common.

On this basis, the landscape is not considered to have local, regional or State significance.

Considering visual receptors and the value attached to the view, it is considered that the view has a low – medium sensitivity to the type and nature of change envisaged.

### 6.4.3 Analysis – magnitude

The visual impact is contained to the cleared part of the Hill Road Knoll visible in the background. This strip of land is located between two dominant features in the form of rows of trees associated with the golf course and top of Hill Road Knoll. The presence of existing low density urban residential development (the southern edge of the existing Moss Vale township) and its location on the Hill Road Knoll is highly relevant to the consideration of visual impact as it reduces its overall sensitivity to change of the nature envisaged by the proposal. Furthermore, it provides a helpful point of reference for the likely nature of future development on the site. Considering this, as well as the layout, type and scale of development envisaged for the site under planning controls, it is likely that future built form will not intrude above the existing tree canopy on the summit of Hill Road Knoll that forms the skyline and following growth of trees will be balanced by vegetation. In this regard, compared to its current largely cleared state, the site will better blend with the two dominant areas of vegetation in the view.

The proposal is considered to be a minor change over a restricted area that will be ongoing and irreversible. On this basis, the following table identifies the magnitude of visual impact.

**Table 6: Magnitude, viewpoint W1**

		Duration and / or reversibility			
		Ongoing and irreversible	Ongoing capable of being reversed	Limited life (5 – 10 years)	Limited life (< 5 years)
<b>Scale of change</b>	<b>Major change over wide area</b>	Dominant	Considerable	Considerable	Noticeable
	<b>Major change over restricted area, or Moderate change over wide area</b>	Considerable	<b>Considerable</b>	Noticeable	Noticeable
	<b>Moderate change over restricted area; or Minor change over a wide area</b>	Considerable	Noticeable	Noticeable	Perceptible
	<b>Minor change over a</b>	<b>Perceptible</b>	Perceptible	Perceptible	Imperceptible

		Duration and / or reversibility			
	restricted area; or Insignificant change				
	Imperceptible change	Imperceptible	Imperceptible	Imperceptible	Imperceptible

### 6.4.4 Analysis – significance

The following table provides an indication of the potential significance of visual impact.

Table 7: Viewpoint W1 – overall significance of visual impact

		Magnitude				
		Dominant	Considerable	Noticeable	Perceptible	Imperceptible
Sensitivity	High	Major	High	Moderate	Low	Negligible
	Medium	High	Moderate		Low	Negligible
	Low	Moderate	Low		Negligible	Negligible
	Negligible	Low	Low	Negligible	Negligible	Negligible

### 6.5 Viewpoint W2: Yarrawa Road in the vicinity of 70 Yarrawa Road



Figure 19: Viewpoint W2: Yarrawa Road in the vicinity of 70 Yarrawa Road (existing view)

Source: Arterra





**Figure 20: Viewpoint W2: Yarra Road in the vicinity of 70 Yarra Road (annotated existing view)**

Source: Arterra



**Figure 21: Viewpoint W2: Yarra Road in the vicinity of 70 Yarra Road (simulated future view)**

Source: Arterra

### 6.5.1 Description

Partially contained wide view to the south-east obtained from a viewpoint within the broader precinct close to Yarra Road in a rural (pastoral) visual setting. In the future the visual setting will be urban residential.

It is obtained from a distance of 1.1m, making it a medium range view in the context of the selected views.

The elevation of the viewpoint is below the natural ground level of the site.

It is part of a sequence of views that may be obtained when travelling north along a future main road within the precinct.

At present, it is not accessible to the public. In the future it will be accessible to the public.

Hill Road Knoll is not visible. Most of the Eastern Ridge is perceptible in the background.

### 6.5.2 Analysis – sensitivity

It is likely that a relatively moderate number of visual receptors within the future site will be exposed to the view. Their level of attention or interest in the view is likely to be low.

The view contains the following elements:

- level and gently sloping, grassed, grazing land
- fence (post and wire)
- small dam and associated scarp
- single non-native trees, small row of non-native trees and strong line of non-native trees
- Park Leigh Hill and Eastern Ridge
- sky.

The future view will wholly comprise low density urban residential development.

Park Leigh Hill is the dominant overall feature. Other features include:

- grassed, grazing land (both in valley and hillside)
- sky.

The view is composed as follows:

- **foreground:** level, grassed grazing land visually contained to the left by a strong line of mature trees leading away from the viewpoint; fencing (post and wire)
- **midground:** level and gently sloping (uphill away from the viewpoint), grassed, grazing land; small dam and associated scarp
- **background:** small row of non-native trees; Park Leigh Hill, the Eastern Ridge and distant hills
- **backdrop:** sky.

The skyline is formed by slope of Park Leigh Hill, the Eastern Ridge and distant hills.

The view can be considered to have the following formal aesthetic characteristics:

- **line:** horizontally emphasised
- **shape and form:** mainly organic and gently rounded. The dual summits of Park Leigh Hill are the exception to this pattern, having a relatively steep slope
- **colour:** mainly hue: green following period of rain – brown / yellow (straw) during other periods; value - light, intensity – weak. The colour of the sky is variable
- **texture:** coarse mainly natural textures.

Perceptual characteristics are important but often highly individual and subjective. However, the view may be considered to have the following formal perceptual characteristics:

- rural
- open
- simple
- soft
- tranquil.

The view does not include a designated landscape. However, the landscape can be considered to have scenic amenity value. Given this, consideration has been given to the following criteria that help evaluate significance (not significant, local, regional or State):

- **exemplary:** the landscape is representative of that of the Southern Highland, however is not considered exemplary. The presence of urban development (houses) reduces its value
- **iconic:** this part of the landscape is not considered iconic. Iconic landscapes in the Southern Highlands include the Fitzroy Falls and Wingecarribee Reservoir
- **scarce:** the landscape is locally common.

On this basis, the landscape is not considered to have local, regional or State significance.

Considering visual receptors and the value attached to the view, it is considered that the view has a low sensitivity to the type and nature of change envisaged.

### 6.5.3 Analysis – magnitude

Development of the precinct will obscure views to the site with low density urban residential development.

The proposal is considered to be an imperceptible change. On this basis, the following table identifies the magnitude of visual impact.

**Table 8: Magnitude, viewpoint W2**

		Duration and / or reversibility			
		Ongoing and irreversible	Ongoing capable of being reversed	Limited life (5 – 10 years)	Limited life (< 5 years)
Scale of change	Major change over wide area	Dominant	Considerable	Considerable	Noticeable
	Major change over restricted area, or Moderate change over wide area	Considerable	Considerable	Noticeable	Noticeable
	Moderate change over restricted area; or Minor change over a wide area	Considerable	Noticeable	Noticeable	Perceptible
	Minor change over a wide area	Perceptible	Perceptible	Perceptible	Imperceptible
	Minor change over a	Perceptible	Perceptible	Perceptible	Imperceptible

		Duration and / or reversibility			
	restricted area; or Insignificant change				
	Imperceptible change	Imperceptible	Imperceptible	Imperceptible	Imperceptible

### 6.5.4 Analysis – significance

The following table provides an indication of the potential significance of visual impact. On the basis of the low – medium significance, further consideration is not considered necessary.

Table 9: Viewpoint W2 – overall significance of visual impact

		Magnitude				
		Dominant	Considerable	Noticeable	Perceptible	Imperceptible
Sensitivity	High	Major	High	Moderate	Low	Negligible
	Medium	High	Moderate	Low	Low	
	Low	Moderate	Low	Low	Negligible	<b>Negligible</b>
	Negligible	Low	Low	Negligible	Negligible	Negligible

### 6.6 Summary

Table 10 provides a summary of the significance of visual impact.

It shows:

- sensitivity ranges from low – medium to medium – high
- magnitude ranges from imperceptible to noticeable
- the significance of visual impact ranges between negligible to low.

It is important to note assessment of significance is not correlated with inappropriateness. Rather, it determines which viewpoints to carry forward into more detailed consideration against the planning framework. Under this method, viewpoints assessed as having a significance of greater than negligible. On this basis, viewpoints 1, 2 and 3 will be assessed against the planning framework.

Table 10: Summary of public viewpoint assessment

Ref	Viewpoint	Sensitivity	Magnitude	Significance
1	Viewpoint E1: Yarrawa Road near its intersection with Nowra Road	High	Perceptible	Low
2	Viewpoint S1: Yarrawa Road near its intersection with Mt Broughton Road	Medium	Perceptible	Low
3	Viewpoint W1: Yarrawa Road in the vicinity of 70 Yarrawa Road	Low – medium	Perceptible	Low – negligible



Ref	Viewpoint	Sensitivity	Magnitude	Significance
4	Viewpoint W2: Yarrawa Road in the vicinity of 70 Yarrawa Road	Low	Imperceptible	Negligible

## 7.0 Assessment against planning instruments

This part of the report assesses the acceptability of the potential visual impacts against relevant planning instruments.

Given that the proposal is consistent with the WLEP2010 as outlined in the SEE, the DCP is the most relevant planning instrument for the assessment of visual impact. In broad terms, the DCP addresses visual impact in the context of amenity and character.

### 7.1 Moss Vale Township DCP – Chelsea Gardens Coomungie Precinct

#### 7.1.1 Section 1.1: Purpose of this Section

**Provision:** Ensure that development at Chelsea Gardens/Coomungie Lands provides a high level of amenity for occupants, neighbours and the broader community

**Response:**

Along with solar access, wind protection and other similar matters, visual amenity is a specific subset of amenity. Under the GLVIA3, visual amenity is defined as:

- ‘The overall pleasantness of the views people enjoy of their surroundings, which provides an attractive visual setting or backdrop for the enjoyment of activities of the people living, working, recreating, visiting or travelling through an area’.

The DCP seeks to create a high level of visual amenity for occupants, neighbours and the broader community through a number of measures. The proposal is consistent with these measures. These measures include:

- consistent with its zoning, the proposal is for a low density residential community intended to be set within a green, landscaped public and private domain. This is inherently a higher amenity visual landscape
- occupants and adjoining neighbours (who will mainly be in the precinct) will have views and outlook across this higher amenity visual landscape
- the site will be mainly visible from locations outside the site and precinct to the south, east and west in the longer range. The nature of the proposal as outlined above, together with other factors such as occluding elements and distance will mean that the site will largely appear as a lesser element in the overall future landscape.

In addition to this, a range of measures covering both the public and private domain have been included in the DCP that seek to minimise the potential for significant adverse impact on visual amenity. These include:

- provisions for extensive street tree planting under section 2.7 (eg 40% coverage to all streets)
- lower building height under section 4.2.9 (eg maximum height of 2 storeys)
- visually recessive colour under section 4.2.13
- rear setbacks of 10m under section 4.4

- perhaps most importantly, under section 4.2 General controls, each DA must demonstrate how it 'fits' with the site, including consideration of views.

The proposal also includes adopts a number of approaches from a range of options that are intended to further minimise impact on visual amenity. These include:

- locating a collector road – the Eastern Ridge boulevard – on the summit of the ridge to substantial tree planting in the public domain as opposed to housing forms, therefore enabling housing when viewed from lower locations such as to the east to have a backdrop of tall trees over time rather than roofs
- provision of a 30m deep buffer planting along the site's entire frontage with Yarrawa Road will effectively preclude views to Hill Road Knoll or the Eastern Ridge from this road
- siting public parkland – Parkleigh View Park – on the most prominent part of the site.

**Consistency:** Yes

**Provision:** Place strong focus on ensuring that development responds to the existing character and enhances the positive characteristics of existing surrounding areas.

**Response:**

Under the GLVIA3, character is defined as:

- 'elements, or combinations of elements, which make a contribution to distinctive landscape character'.

Through its zoning for urban residential uses, the proposal will inherently change the existing visual character of the site. Therefore, the focus is on more specific measures. In this regard, a number of measures are proposed to ensure that development enhances the positive characteristics of existing surrounding areas.

These include:

- placing larger lots on the more elevated parts of the site
- placing larger lots adjacent to existing larger lots at the western end of Hill Road
- setting aside the most visually prominent part of the site as public parkland – Parkleigh View Park
- placing the Eastern Ridge boulevard at the summit of the ridge
- minimising the amount of road traversing the Hill Road Knoll, and ensuring that no road traverses the entire height of the knoll
- aligning the curve of the Eastern Ridge boulevard with Park Leigh Hill, providing a focal vista to this key landscape feature

A number of other measures are proposed that with further respond to the positive characteristics of the site. These include:

- retention of the significant rows of existing trees at the western base of Park Leigh Hill
- providing substantial setbacks for the majority of trees on the periphery of the golf course
- providing opportunities for contiguous planting at key boundaries of the site, in particular its eastern boundary with land included in zone RU2 – Rural Landscape
- creating a network of waterbodies to reference existing dams on the site.

The concept DA is consistent with these outcomes. Furthermore, council will have the opportunity to further realise the outcomes through the subsequent detailed DA process for subdivision and dwellings.

**Consistency:** Yes

### 7.1.2 Section 1.6: Overall Site Vision

**Provision:**

- The overarching project development vision is to foster an authentic Southern Highlands community with a strong 'sense of place'. A thoughtfully designed master planned community, developed in harmony with the natural beauty of its surrounds, offering diverse housing choices, environmental protection, greenery, recreational opportunities and walkable neighbourhoods. A community centred in creating a healthier, happier lifestyle for those who choose to call it home.
- The key pillars underpinning the site vision are:
  - To be true to the southern highlands charm
  - To ensure future development is in harmony with nature

**Response:**

The proposal is intended to be consistent with the key visual characteristics of residential parts of Southern Highlands townships. Most importantly, this is a low density residential community intended to be set within a green, landscaped public and private domain. With regard to the private domain, provisions applying to the site under section 4.4 of the DCP provides for comprehensive and detailed siting provisions and section 4.2 provides detail for built form.

**Consistency:** Yes

### 7.1.3 Section 1.7: Desired Landscape Character

**Provision:** A strong 'sense of place' that reflects the character of the Southern Highlands, whilst being sympathetic to existing conditions of the site and its surrounds.

**Response:**

In accordance with the above, the proposal reflects the character of the Southern Highlands and is sympathetic to existing conditions of the site and its surrounds.

**Consistency:** Yes

### 7.1.4 Section 1.8: Desired Residential Character

**Provision:**

- A highly landscaped setting with tree lined streets to enhance its rural setting, character and views
- Unobtrusive buildings which are low in scale with generous garden settings, simple roof lines, restricted hard surfaces and semi-rural character
- Built form which reinterprets a contemporary 'country style' living with quality detail to provide a visually interesting streetscape

**Response:**

Subsequent development can be assessed against these provisions and if necessary be conditioned to achieve compliance

**Consistency:** Yes

### 7.1.5 Section 4.4: Special Character Area Controls

**Provision:**

iv. To ensure visual impacts from the surrounding area are minimised.

**Response:**

As the VIA had shown, the significance of visual impact is low. This is due to a number of reasons, including those inherently related to the site such as the peri-urban nature of much of the existing visual environment as well as specific design measures such as the location of the Eastern Ridge boulevard and the generous size of the proposed lots providing greater scope for vegetation.

**Consistency:** Yes

**Provision:**

- i. Dwellings must comply with the development controls contained in Table 3
- ii. Address greater cut and fill requirements within the limits of the building envelope to suit appropriate construction methods and level changes, and limit site benching
- iii. Retaining walls are not to exceed 1,000mm to any area visible from the street or surrounding area
- iv. Dwellings are to be designed to respond to the topography of the site. Stepping of buildings or stilt houses are encouraged to avoid cut and fill
- v. Design of dwellings are to have regard to the building on slope diagram in Figure 9 to be consistent with the above objectives

**Response:**

Future dwellings within the site will be required to comply with these detailed and comprehensive provisions.

In addition, council control over this provision is most appropriately executed as part of subsequent detailed development applications for both subdivision and dwellings.

**Consistency:** Yes

## 8.0 Discussion of key issues

This part of the report considers the key issues raised by the VIA and assessment against the planning instruments.

Based on the findings of the VIA and assessment against the planning framework, it is considered that there are four key issues relevant to the determination of acceptability of visual impact. These are:

1. are the Hill Road Knoll and the Eastern Ridge visually prominent?
2. the design response
3. 2,000sqm or 600sqm?
4. is there an option that will allow the concept DA to be approved?

**Are they visually prominent?**

It is important to note that from outside the site and precinct, a number of factors such as large lot size, rural zoning and the location and alignment of roads will result in the dominant viewing pattern being from the mid or long range. This range means that the knoll and ridge will be seen in the context of a broader, expansive and open landscape. Due to this, the landscape overall has a relatively high capacity to accommodate visual change of the nature proposed. Furthermore, the Eastern Ridge will appear as a lesser element when seen next to the larger and higher Hill Road Knoll and Parkleigh Hill, as well the more notable form of Park Leigh Hill. On this basis, the Eastern Ridge cannot be considered to be a visually prominent visual element (refer **Figure 22**).

Due to factors such as its greater scale, height and steepness, Hill Road Knoll is visually prominent in local views. However, due to landform and vegetation, including the obstructing nature of Parkleigh Hill, views to that part of the knoll upon which the proposal is located will be contained to locations to the south and west. The proposed 30m deep vegetated perimeter buffer will screen most views from Yarrowa Road. From within the future precinct, the low lying nature of the land, occluding elements such as buildings and trees and the effect of distance will mean that Hill Road Knoll is either not visible or visible as part of a broader background.

In longer range views from the south and west, the precinct will dramatically change the existing visual environment appearing as a prominent element in the midground. The proposal will appear as a consistent and relatively minor element in this new context. Importantly, the proposal will appear above the canopy of future trees and beneath the existing thickly vegetated skyline.



**Figure 22: Hill Road Knoll and the Eastern Ridge**

Source: Arterra

### The design response

The proposal is a considered design response in relation to amenity, character and other matters related to a broader interpretation of visual impact. As has been noted in the assessment against the planning framework, design measures that help to achieve this outcome include:

- locating a collector road – the Eastern Ridge boulevard – on the summit of the ridge to substantial tree planting in the public domain as opposed to housing forms
- provision of a 30m deep buffer planting along the site's entire frontage with Yarrowa Road
- siting public parkland – Parkleigh View Park – on the most visually prominent part of the site.

### Is 2,000sqm acceptable?

As can be argued, the Eastern Ridge is not an inherently prominent element of the broader landscape and in any event design measures, in particular the location of the Eastern Ridge boulevard, will minimise any visual impacts.

The application of a minimum 2,000sqm lot size on the Hill Road Knoll will result in around only 10-14 dwellings being visible on that part of the site. Review of the DCP has shown that its provisions will require minimum outcomes such as a large rear setback (10m) and provide significant opportunities for the planting of trees and other vegetation, in particular along site boundaries. On this basis, in the context of the detailed DCP controls a 2,000sqm lot size is considered capable of delivering an acceptable visual outcome on this part of the site.

### Is there an option that will allow the concept DA to be approved?

The proposal is the result of an extensive planning process that included the rezoning of the land and the adoption of a comprehensive and detailed DCP.

The proposal is consistent with the WLEP2010.

Furthermore, it is fundamentally consistent with the key provisions of the DCP. More detailed matters will be capable of being adequately controlled by the DCP through the subsequent, separate detailed DA stages for subdivision and dwellings.



Given that the proposal is consistent with the zone and the DCP provides a high level of assurance over future outcomes, there appears to be no compelling reason as to why the concept DA cannot be considered for approval.

## 9.0 Mitigation measures

This part of the document identifies any mitigation measures to address any adverse visual impacts.

It is not considered necessary to make fundamental or otherwise large-scale changes to the proposal in its current form to satisfactorily manage visual impact. Critical to the overall visual acceptability of the proposal are:

- maintenance of a minimum lot size of 2,000sqm
- development of the site subsequent to stages to the west
- subsequent development applications, including for dwelling houses where relevant, demonstrating overall consistency with the DCP.

## 10.0 Conclusion

This part of the document identifies whether the proposal in its current form can be supported on visual impact grounds, and summarises the basis for this determination.

The main findings of this VIA include:

- the sensitivity of the site to the proposal is medium- high. Factors that increase the rating include the inherent scenic amenity of the existing visual environment, while factors that reduce its rating include the commonality of the landscape in the local context, the fundamental change to the visual environment as a result of the broader precinct development and most visual receptors being travellers in vehicles on roads
- the magnitude of visual impact experienced from the public domain is likely to range from imperceptible to noticeable. The greatest magnitude will be experienced from viewpoints to the south and west. However, site will only be visible as an element located above existing trees within the Moss Vale golf course and a skyline of trees associated with other parts of the Hill Road Knoll. Furthermore, the site will be consistent with development of the broader precinct which will appear in the fore and mid ground of any views from more elevated ground. Due to a dominant fore and midground, distance and occluding elements such as landform and trees, the magnitude of visual impact is only perceptible from locations to the east
- considering the factors of sensitivity and magnitude, the significance of visual impact is assessed as ranging from low to medium
- the proposal is consistent with the LEP. Assessment has found that the proposal, including the proposed minimum 2,000sqm lot size is consistent with the DCP. The making of subsequent, separate detailed DAs provide council with further assurance of acceptable development outcomes through implementation of the DCPs comprehensive and detailed provisions that include a fine grain level of detail such as proportion of tree coverage in the public domain and the colour of external elevations of houses
- mitigation measures are not considered necessary to achieve an acceptable level of visual impact.

On this basis and subject to the mitigation measures outlined in the document, it is considered that the proposal in its current form has acceptable visual impact and as such can be supported on visual grounds.

## Appendix A. Outline methodology

### 1.0 Methodological basis

The overall outcome of VIA is to assist the proponent and / or a decision maker to make an informed decision on whether the proposal has a significant and unacceptable visual impact. Visual impact assessment is but one part of judging the acceptability of a proposal. It must be weighed up against the full spectrum of other relevant considerations.

VIA is inherently a subjective process that involves informed, professional value judgements. While typically undertaken by landscape architects, it can also be carried out by other built environment professionals. This includes planners, urban designers and architects. In evolving urban contexts, in some respects the latter group may be better placed to undertake VIA. The application of a consistent and rigorous process for VIA can work to make the process more objective to provide meaningful guidance for planning and development decisions.

There is currently no national level guideline document for VIA in Australia (AILA, 2018). However, there are a number of key international documents that are commonly referred to in Australian VIAs. One of these is the ‘Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment’ (GLVIA3) published by the Landscape Institute and Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment in 2013. Unlike other documents which are largely focussed on natural and rural landscapes, the GLVIA provides more broadly applicable guidance that is able to be applied to urban contexts. On this basis, it has been adopted as the methodological basis for this VIA.

The methodology has also been adjusted to better reflect the local NSW context by including consideration of:

- the requirements of the NSW planning system under the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979
- NSW Land and Environment Court planning principles
- NSW Land and Environment Court policy.

The GLVIA methodology is broadly outlined in the **table below**.

<p><b>Stage 1</b></p> <p>Identify and describe existing visual environment</p>
<p><b>Stage 2</b></p> <p>Identify and describe potential visual impacts (for each viewpoint)</p>
<p><b>Stage 3</b></p> <p>Determine significance of visual impact based on sensitivity and magnitude (for each viewpoint)</p>
<p><b>Stage 4</b></p> <p>Where significant, assess appropriateness against the planning framework</p> <p>If an adequate planning framework for visual considerations does not exist, assess appropriateness against the principles of visual amenity</p>
<p><b>Stage 5</b></p>

Recommend mitigation measures

**Stage 6**

Draw conclusion, with clear articulation of reasons

## 2.0 Components of a view

For the purposes of this methodology, there are two main components that make up the nature of a view:

1. characteristics, or what is in the view
2. composition, or how these come together.

Characteristics include elements (eg, trees) and features (eg a large, mature Moreton Bay fig). Composition can generally be considered as the foreground, midground, background, backdrop and skyline, as well as how things are placed when read left to right across the view.

## 3.0 Sensitivity

The sensitivity of visual receptors to changes in views and visual amenity is mainly a function of:

1. **people:** the occupation or activity of people experiencing the view at particular locations and therefore the extent to which their attention or interest may therefore be focused on the views and the visual amenity they experience at particular locations
2. **the view:** the value attached to the view itself.

### People

The **table below** shows factors that are typically correlated to different sensitivity ratings. It is important to note that this needs to be considered individually for each situation.

Rating	Details
<b>High</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Residents at home</li> <li>• Communities where views contribute to the landscape setting enjoyed by residents in the area</li> <li>• People, whether residents or visitors, who are engaged in outdoor recreation (active or passive), whose attention or interest is likely to be focused on the landscape and on particular views</li> <li>• Visitors to heritage assets, or to other attractions, where views of the surroundings are an important contributor to the experience</li> </ul>
<b>Medium</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Travellers on road, rail or other transport routes</li> <li>• People, whether residents or visitors, who are engaged in outdoor recreation (active or passive), who have an interest in the landscape</li> </ul>
<b>Low</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• People engaged in outdoor sport or recreation which does not involve or depend upon appreciation of views of the landscape</li> <li>• People at their place of work whose attention may be focused on their work or activity, not on their surroundings, and where the setting is not important to the quality of working life (although there may on occasion be cases where views are an important contributor to the setting and to the quality of working life)</li> </ul>

Rating	Details
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• People engaged in entertainment activities</li> </ul>
<b>Negligible</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Viewing locations outside of the above parameters</li> </ul>

**The view**

Sensitivity is also informed by objective and subjective value.

In general, objective value is based on assessment of characteristics and composition when considered against formal aesthetic principles (eg, line, form, colour), perceptual matters (eg, balance, proportion, scale) and other aspects such as rarity, representativeness and condition (LI and IEMA, 2013) and iconic status (Planisphere, 2016) (NSW Land and Environment Court).

Subjective value is determined by people’s perception. While there is variation according to factors such as culture, the following principles have been consistently found in scenic preference studies and community consultation (AILA, 2018):

- water and natural elements are preferred over urban scenes
- mountains and hills are preferred over flat land
- views are preferred which include both mid-ground elements (with some detail discernible) and a background
- views with skyline features and views which include focal points are preferred.

More specifically, the following elements have been found to be of high scenic value (Queensland Government, 2007):

- sandy beaches
- ocean, rivers, creeks and dams
- eucalypt forest and native plantations.

In general, views that have the following parameters are capable of being considered to have a high value:

- designated landscapes or the backdrop to a heritage item
- recognised and important viewpoints or from recognised scenic routes
- full views to iconic landscape elements (eg Sydney Opera House)
- other specific designation in an environmental planning instrument.

**Capacity to accommodate change of the nature proposed**

Sensitivity also involves consideration of the capacity of a view to accommodate ‘the amount of change of a particular type’. Without resorting to the ‘now largely discredited thinking about landscape evaluation’ (Scottish Natural Heritage and The Countryside Agency’, is does suggest consideration of ‘value’. While designation in a study, policy, strategy or plan may be of assistance, it does not automatically equate to value. This is recognised as an ‘oversimplification of complex issues’. Similarly, there is no linear relationship between sensitivity and capacity.

**Tenacity**

In his judgement in Tenacity Consulting v Waringah [2004] NSWLEC 140 that is the basis for the NSW planning principle for general views, Roseth SC determined that the nature of the view with particular

consideration to extent (eg, whole vs partial), and nature (eg water vs land; presence of iconic elements) of the views.

## 4.0 Magnitude

The categories of magnitude are:

1. dominant
2. considerable
3. noticeable
4. perceptible
5. imperceptible.

Under the GLVIA, the category of magnitude is determined against three main factors:

1. size or scale
2. geographical extent of the area influenced
3. duration and reversibility.

### **Size or scale**

The categories of size or scale are:

- major
- moderate
- minor
- imperceptible.

Size or scale requires consideration of the following factors:

- the scale of the change in the view with respect to the loss or addition of features in the view and changes in its composition, including the proportion of the view occupied by the proposed development
- the degree of contrast or integration of any new features or changes in the landscape with the existing or remaining landscape elements and characteristics in terms of form, scale and mass, line, height, colour and texture
- the nature of the view of the proposed development, in terms of the relative amount of time over which it will be experienced and whether views will be full, partial or glimpses.

In general, large-scale changes which introduce new, non-characteristic or discordant or intrusive elements into the view are more likely to have a higher magnitude.

### **Geographical extent of the area influenced**

The categories of size and scale are:

1. wide
2. restricted.



The apparent geographical extent will vary with different viewpoints. Determining which category the impact fits within requires consideration of the following factors:

- the angle of view in relation to the main activity of the receptor
- the distance of the viewpoint from the proposed development
- the extent of the area over which the changes would be visible.

Distance is of particular relevance. In general, the greater the distance between the viewing location and the proposal the lesser the impact.

### Duration and reversibility

Duration and reversibility comprise the following (in descending order of general visual impact):

- ongoing and irreversible (noting that major, strata titled residential development usually falls within this category)
- ongoing capable of being reversed
- limited life (5 – 10 years)
- limited life (< 5 years).

The factors of size or scale, geographical extent of the area influenced and duration and reversibility are combined to determine the magnitude of the impact. This is shown in the **table below**.

		Duration and / or reversibility			
		Ongoing and irreversible	Ongoing capable of being reversed	Limited life (5 – 10 years)	Limited life (< 5 years)
<b>Scale of change</b>	<b>Major change over wide area</b>	Dominant	Considerable	Considerable	Noticeable
	<b>Major change over restricted area, or Moderate change over wide area</b>	Considerable	Considerable	Noticeable	Noticeable
	<b>Moderate change over restricted area; or Minor change over a wide area</b>	Considerable	Noticeable	Noticeable	Perceptible
	<b>Minor change over a restricted area; or Insignificant change</b>	Perceptible	Perceptible	Perceptible	Imperceptible

		Duration and / or reversibility			
	<b>Imperceptible change</b>	Imperceptible	Imperceptible	Imperceptible	Imperceptible

## 5.0 Significance

Significance is determined by combining judgements about sensitivity and magnitude (refer **table below**). The categories of significance are as follows:

1. major
2. high
3. moderate
4. low
5. negligible.

It should be noted that determination of significance does not automatically mean that the impact is unacceptable. Rather, where the level of significance is determined to be moderate or higher subsequent assessment is required to be undertaken against relevant environmental planning instruments, or where they are inadequate in terms of visual impact, the principles of visual amenity.

		Magnitude				
		Dominant	Considerable	Noticeable	Perceptible	Imperceptible
Sensitivity	High	Major	High	Moderate	Low	Negligible
	Medium	High	Moderate	Low	Low	Negligible
	Low	Moderate	Low	Low	Negligible	Negligible
	Negligible	Low	Low	Negligible	Negligible	Negligible

## 6.0 Other relevant matters

### Amenity

The NSW planning system requires the consideration of amenity as part of the assessment and determination of development applications. Amenity is a broad term that covers a range of matter such as noise, dust, daylight, vibration, outlook and visual amenity (LI, 2018). In general, amenity refers to the pleasantness, attractiveness, desirability or utility of a place, facility, building or feature (NSW Government, 2020). VIA is only concerned with visual amenity.

### Fit

The intent of environmental planning instruments is a foundational aspect of determining the acceptability of visual impact. In general, most current NSW planning instruments seek for development to achieve a 'fit' with its context. This has further been articulated by a number of other relevant entities, including:

- the NSW Land and Environment Court in its judgement in *Veloshin v Randwick Council* [2007] NSWLEC 428 at 32-33
- the Government Architects Office by Objective 1: Better fit of Better Placed (2018).

As the NSW Land and Environment Court noted, fit should not be construed as 'sameness'. In certain situations, a development may be visually different to the existing visual environment, however be appropriate when considered against a balance of other planning considerations.

While not a planning instrument (and as such not having statutory weight in the assessment and determination of development applications), Batter Placed (GAO, 2018) can be a relevant consideration in visual impact assessment. It can also be used to help interpret or judge amenity considerations under object (g) of the Act. Objective 1: Better fit, states:

- 'Good design in the built environment is informed by and derived from its location, context and social setting. It is place-based and relevant to and resonant with local character, heritage and communal aspirations. It also contributes to evolving and future character and setting'.

### **Mitigation**

Where assessment suggests that the visual impact is likely to be both significant and unacceptable, mitigation measures should be considered. Mitigation measures are generally on a spectrum including avoid, reduce and offset. Common strategies in urban contexts include siting, layout and design, factoring in intent and key constraints and opportunities

### **Photomontages and simulations**

The constraints inherent in photomontages and simulations as static, 2D representations of a dynamic, 3D actual experience needs to be recognised. In particular, perception of depth can often be reduced. In some instances, elements or features at different distances to the viewpoint can appear overly close together.