Visual Impact Assessment

Timber Processing and Landscape Supplies/Production Facility

60 Hawken Street, Oberon NSW

Borg Manufacturing Pty Ltd

26 February 2019

Revision History

Rev No.	Revision Date	Author / Position	Details	Authorised	
				Name / Position	Signature
0	14/01/19	Sam Coles Development Planner	Draft	Mark Daniels Manager Planning & Development	
1	26/2/2019	Sam Coles Development Planner	Final	Mark Daniels Manager Planning & Development	

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1 Introduction

This Visual Impact Assessment (VIA) has been prepared by Borgs Manufacturing Pty Ltd for the proposed development and operation of a Timber Processing and Landscape Supplies/Production Facility (the proposal) on 26 Endeavour Street, Oberon – part Lot 34 & 33 DP 1228591 and 59 Maher Drive, Oberon - Lot 18 DP 1249431. A locality plan showing the site and surrounding uses is shown as Figure 1.

The purpose of this report is to provide a qualitative and quantitative assessment of the visibility and potential visual impacts of the proposal. The VIA will support the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) under Part 4 & Section 89(c) of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979 (EP&A Act) for development application to be submitted to Oberon Council. The report has been developed with regard to the local statutory planning as per the Local Environment Plan.

Survey work was undertaken during February 2019 using key viewpoints and locations with potential views towards the site. The report details the results of the fieldwork, documents the assessment of the landscape character and visual setting, and assesses potential visual impacts associated with the proposal.

The report also provides an overview of the proposed landscape treatments, which may be considered to assist in the mitigation of any potential visual impacts. This information is provided to aid understanding the likely impacts and how they may be managed to ensure that the positive character of the immediate area and surrounding visual landscape are not overly modified or diminished.

Figure 1. Aerial view of site with surrounding land uses Source: Jackson Environment and Planning.

1.1 Site Conditions

The site is located at 60 Hawken St, Oberon, within the Oberon Council local government area. The Oberon LGA is located adjacent to the Blue Mountains of New South Wales on the Great Dividing Range, nearly 200 km west of Sydney.

The site is located to the North of the Oberon community and residential development. A number of existing commercial and industrial premises exist between the site and the Oberon residential area, including a recycling facility operated by Australian Native Landscapes. The site is currently vacant and unused.

The site consists of approximately 5 hectares, comprising roughly half of Lot 34, DP 1228591, a small part of Lot 33 DP 1228591 and an additional small area of land between that lot and Maher Drive being Lot 18 DP1249431.

The site is reasonably level, with a gentle slope from the southwest to the northeast, and a total change in levels of approximately 2m. Minimal earthworks (cut and fill) are expected to be required, apart from the proposed earth mounds. A large mound is currently on the site, which is old burden from the adjoining panel site. This mound will be reduced, repositioned and extended to run the whole length of the perimeter to reduce visual impact. The entranceway to the site, between Maher Drive and Lot 34, DP 1228591 slopes downwards approximately 3m from south to north.

There is a band of vegetation existing in the centre of the site, mainly consisting of large pine trees. The majority of this vegetation will be retained and incorporated into the design.

1.2 Overview of the Proposed Development

It is proposed that the facility will process and recycle up to 99,000 tonnes per annum of pine bark residuals, including offcuts from Borg's MDF Manufacturing Facility, as well as pallets. The site may also accept timbers from other sources. The intent of the facility is to provide a best practice, sustainable and well-designed facility to enable the beneficial recycling of pine bark, (clean, heat treated) pallets and clean untreated timbers into value-added landscape materials, with a focus on quality horticultural mulches for gardens and landscaping. No MDF, particle board or any other form of manufactured timber products will be accepted at the site. No mixed waste or any other type of waste will be accepted at the site.

The proposed development of the site seeks a new Development Consent with a maximum tonnage of waste processing of up to 99,000 tonnes per year. Approval is sought to construct a bark/timber processing facility, including an office, weighbridge, wheel wash, dedicated waste tipping and storage areas, including processing and product storage areas. The development will also involve construction of a hardstand, roads, drainage infrastructure, stormwater treatment infrastructure, landscaping and noise attenuation mounds / barriers. Car parking will also be established as part of the development.
A concept site plan providing an overview of the proposed layout of the site is given at Figure 2. The building on the site will be minimal in scale, and will not be higher than the proposed earth berm.

A new site entrance and driveway will be developed, with sufficient width to accommodate the largest expected vehicle (B-Double truck) and turning path. This entrance will be a minimum of 8.1m in width to meet Australian Standard 2890.2 for articulated vehicles.

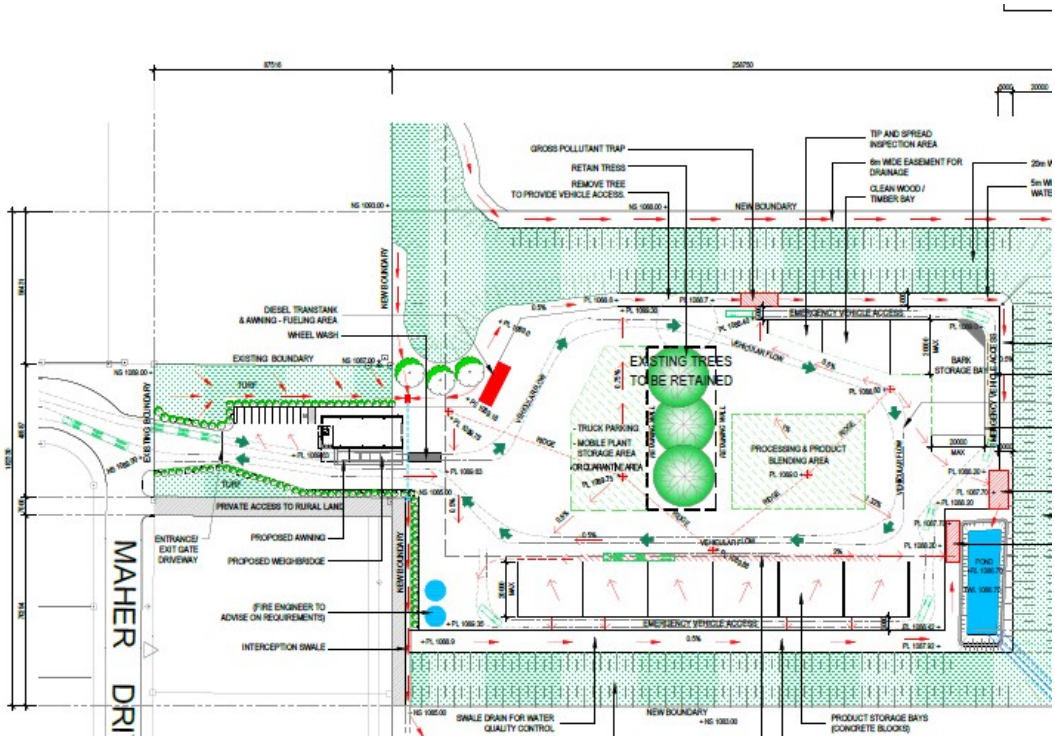

Figure 2. Proposed Site Plan

1.3 Operational Detail

Site feedstocks will include bark residuals and sawdust, along with pallets. Pallets and timbers will also be trucked via backloading to Oberon from Borg's other sites for recycling. Delivery vehicles will enter the facility over the weighbridge. Pallets and timbers will be tipped into a dedicated waste tipping and inspection area, where treated timbers and manufactured timbers (e.g. MDF) will be removed and disposed lawfully off-site. Any other contaminants in loads will be removed.

Incoming loads of bark from pine log processing in the MDF Manufacturing Facility will bypass the dedicated waste tipping and inspection area and be stored separately in a large concrete block storage bay, awaiting processing. Pre-inspection of this feedstock is not necessary, as it will contain clean, separated pine bark only.

Processing of feedstock is expected to include mulching via grinders and shredders, with screening by a trommel for sizing processed material. No composting will take place on site, and products will be transported from the site shortly after processing.

Processed landscaping materials will be stored in dedicated concrete block bays. To ensure the recovered products are consistently fit for purpose, and comply with The Mulch Order 2016, regular sampling will be undertaken in accordance with a quality assurance program and quality control measures.

The facility is proposed to operate from 7am to 6pm, Monday to Friday, and 8am to 1pm on Saturdays. The site, however, is proposed to be able to accept deliveries of pine bark and timber, and pick up of products from the site on a 24/7 basis.

2 Landscape Context

The subject site is located on the northern outskirts of Oberon, part of the towns industrial estate. Historically, the primary local industries have been farming, forestry and wood products. Originally known as Bullock Flat by early pioneers, Oberon began to attract permanent settlers in the 1820s who used the land for grazing. From the 1930s onwards, native hardwood timbers were harvested from the local area; replanting with pine has sustained the timber industry in the locality. The surrounding area is generally characterised by grassy rolling hills interspersed with State Forest including Blenheim, Essington, Hampton and Lowes Mount. Most of the roads in the district are flanked with trees on both sides.

Oberon's industrial area is located in the north of the town, along Albion Street and the streets leading off it to the north, including Endeavour Street, Hawken Street and Horace Street (Figure 3). The subject site is located at the northern extent of the industrial area, off Hawken Street/Maher Drive. Another large landscape supplies site, Australian Natural Landscape Products, is located to the south-west of the proposed site at 7 Endeavour Street. Other uses in the area include warehousing, wholesale, retail, engineering and transport, many of which are related to the timber industry. The industrial area is characterised by very large warehouse type buildings, generally Colorbond in subdued shades of cream, beige and green, reflecting the surrounding landscape, interspersed with a few brighter reds and blues.

Figure 3. Aerial photo showing Oberon Industrial area. SixMaps.

The town of Oberon is generally characterised by single storey detached houses of varying age on quarter acre blocks. The main street is primarily single storey; many of the shops have high parapets, which help to block views of the Oberon Timber Complex and industrial area.

The proposed site is visible from the south-east, east, north-east and north. Views to the site are not possible from the south of site, south-west and west of the site given the existing topography, vegetation and the existing Borgs Panel Site next door. The approximate viewable area is shown below in figure 4.

Figure 4. Approximate view cones-SixMaps

The land to the north and east of proposal is rural, with dwellings scattered throughout the landscape. The topography is undulating, with the development site only visible on the down slopes of Hazelgrove Road closer to the Albion Street end. The site is not visible beyond the Town View Road turnoff, given the topography and vegetation. To the north, the site is visible from parts of Rutters Ridge Road, however it is heavily obscured due to the topography and vegetation.

The site is also visible to the south-east when viewed from Albion Street, and higher vantage points including Cole Crescent. The viewing area to the south-east is limited due to topography.

The existing landscape and views to the site are dominated by the adjoining Borgs Panel site that is visible from a large distance. The scale and extent of the operations at the Borgs

site dominates all views from the east, north-east and south east of the site. The proposed development is minor to non-existent when compared to the adjoining site, and is consistent with the scale of the other industrial development within the immediate vicinity.

3 Visual Assessment Method

3.1 Visual Impact Assessment

A VIA is used to identify and determine the value, significance and sensitivity of a landscape. The method applied to this study involved systematically evaluating the visual environment pertaining to the site and using judgements based on landscape values.

The assessment was undertaken in stages as noted below:

• Objective assessment of the relative aesthetic value of the landscape, defined as visual quality and expressed as high, medium or low. This assessment generally relates to variety, uniqueness, prominence and naturalness of the landform, vegetation and water forms within each character type.

• Determination of the landscape sensitivity and its ability to absorb different types of development based on physical and environmental character.

• An assessment of viewer sensitivity to change. This includes how different groups of people view the landscape (for example, a resident as opposed to a tourist), and how many people are viewing and from how far.

• The undertaking of a viewpoint analysis to identify areas likely to be affected by development of the site and a photographic survey using a digital camera and a handheld GPS unit to record position and altitude.

• An assessment of visual impacts and the preparation of recommendations for impact mitigation. Suggestions are made for suitable development patterns that would maintain the areas visual quality.

The purpose of the above methodology is to reduce the amount of subjectivity entering into the visual impact assessment and to provide sufficient data to allow for third party verification of results

3.2 Definition of Terms

3.2.1 Landscape Value

Landscape values are the set of principles that aid judgement of the proposal. These include cultural attributes (social, indigenous, artistic and environmental) as well as the aesthetics of a place, shown below in Figure 5.

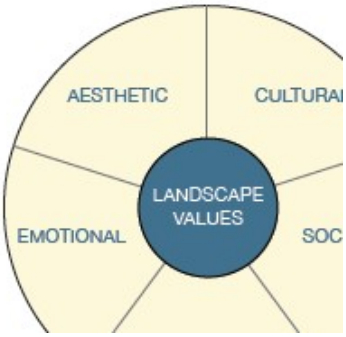

Figure 5 Landscape Values

3.2.2 Visual Quality

Visual quality of an area is essentially an assessment of how viewers may respond to designated scenery. Scenes of high visual quality are those, which are valued by a community for the enjoyment and improved amenity they can create. Conversely, scenes of low visual quality are of little value to the community with a preference that they be changed and improved, often through the introduction of landscape treatments.

As visual quality relates to aesthetics, its assessment is largely subjective. There is evidence to suggest that certain landscapes are constantly preferred over others with preferences related to the presence or absence of certain elements. The rating of visual quality for this study has been based on scenic quality ratings and on the following generally accepted assumptions arising from scientific research (DOP, 1988):

• Visual quality increases as relative relief and topographic ruggedness increases;

• Visual quality increases as vegetation pattern variations increase;

• Visual quality increases due to the presence of natural and/or agricultural landscapes;

• Visual quality increases owing to the presence of water forms (without becoming too common) and related to water quality and associated activity; and

• Visual quality increases with increases in land use compatibility.

• In addition to the above, cultural items may also endow a distinct character to an area and therefore contribute to its visual quality due to nostalgic associations and the desire to preserve items of heritage significance.

In addition to the before mentioned, cultural items may also endow a distinct character to an area and therefore contribute to its visual quality due to nostalgic associations and the desire to preserve items of heritage significance.

3.2.3 Visual Sensitivity

Visual sensitivity is a measure of how critically a change to the existing landscape is viewed by people from different areas. The assessment is based on the number of people affected, land use, and the distance of the viewer from the proposal. (EDAW, 2000).

For example, a significant change that is not frequently seen may result in a low visual sensitivity although its impact on a landscape may be high. Generally, the following principles apply:

• Visual sensitivity decreases as the viewer distance increases.

• Visual sensitivity decreases as the viewing time decreases.

• Visual sensitivity can also be related to viewer activity (eg. a person viewing an affected site whilst engaged in recreational activities will be more strongly affected by change than someone passing a scene in a car travelling to a desired destination).

Sensitivity ratings are defined as high, moderate or low and are shown in the table below (Adapted from EDAW, 2000).

Table 1. Visual Sensitivity Table

Visual Sensitivity					
Land-use	**Distance Zones- Km**				
	Foreground		Middle Ground		Background
	0-1	1-2	2-4.5	4.5-7	>7
Tourist/Recreation	High	High	High	Mod	Low
Residential: Rural or Urban	High	High	High	Mod	Low
Main travel corridor	Mod	Mod	Low	Low	Low
Minor/Local Roads	Mod	Mod	Low	Low	Low
Railway line	Low	Low	Low	Low	Low
Industrial areas	Low	Low	Low	Low	Low

3.2.4 Visual Effect

Visual effect is the interaction between a proposal and the existing visual environment. It is often expressed as the level of visual contrast of the proposal against its setting or background in which it is viewed.

Low visual effect: occurs when a proposal blends in with its existing viewed landscape due to a high level of integration of one or several of the following: form, shape, pattern, line, texture or colour. It can also result from the use of effective screening often using a combination of landform and landscaping.

Moderate visual effect: occurs where a proposal is visible and contrasts with its viewed landscape however, there has been some degree of integration (eg. good siting principles employed, retention of significant existing vegetation, provision of screen landscaping, appropriate colour selection and/or suitably scaled development).

High visual effect: results when a proposal has a high visual contrast to the surrounding landscape with little or no natural screening or integration created by vegetation or topography.

3.2.5 Visual Impact

Visual impact is the combined effect of visual sensitivity and visual effect. Various combinations of visual sensitivity and visual effect will result in high, moderate and low overall visual impacts as suggested in the below table.

Table 2. Visual Impact Table

Visual Impact				
		Visual Effect Zones		
		High	Moderate	Low
Visual Sensitivity Levels	High	High Impact	High Impact	Moderate Impact
	Moderate	High Impact	Moderate Impact	Low Impact
	Low	Moderate Impact	Low Impact	Low Impact

4 View Point Analysis and Visibility

4.1 View Points

For the purposes of this Visual Impact Assessment:

- View Points are key locations, which most clearly convey the visual effects of the Project, and the viewer groups potentially affected. View Points are determined based on a combination of Viewing Zones and View sheds.

Based on the topography and land uses of the locality, we took the approach of identifying viewpoints by reviewing the surrounding area by sector based on compass points and likely viewing zones. The desktop review and site visit indicated that due to topography and vegetation the site could not be viewed from a public place in the district area to the north, northwest, west, south or south west, nor could it be viewed in the immediate vicinity from the north-west or west, as the view is blocked by the Borg Panels. Figure 4 shows the locations of the photographs taken during the site visit.

Given the limited visibility of the proposed site, eight (8) View Points were identified in order to investigate the potential impacts of the proposed development on the visual landscape character. The majority of these viewpoints were taken from publicly accessible roads surrounding the site. The viewpoints, which have been included, represent the areas from where the development would appear most prominent, either based on the degree of exposure or the number of people likely to be affected.

The viewpoints as identified on Figure 6;

1- Rutters Ridge Road - 1.8km from site - North
2- Clover Lane - 1.2km from site - North
3- Cole Crescent - 1km from site - South east
4- 151 Hazelgrove Road - 1.1km from site - North east
5- 54 Hazelgrove Road - 1km from site - East
6- 59 Maher Drive - 230m from site - South east
7- Albion Road - 600m from site - South east
8- Mt. Lowes Road- 900m from site - North-west

Figure 6. Viewpoint Assessment Locations-SixMaps

Photos and assessment of each viewpoint can be seen below.

4.2 View Point Analysis

Viewpoint 1- Rutters Ridge Road

Viewpoint 1			
Summary of Viewpoint		**Viewpoint Description**	**Potential Visual Impact**
Location	Road frontage of 30 Rutters Ridge Road	The photograph was taken from the front road frontage of 30 Rutters Ridge Road with a view towards the site. Rutters Ridge Road is a small rural residential subdivision with most dwellings using vegetation as a screen. Given there is no visibility of the site, this viewpoint has been rated as low.	From this position, views to the site are not possible. Desktop analysis of surrounding dwelling sites shows that views would be obscured by vegetation and topography from this area. The resulting visual impact from the development is assessed as low from this viewpoint.
Coordinates	Lat-33:40:38.49:S Lo-149:51:48.31:E		
Elevation	1100m		
Viewing Direction	South East		
Distance to site	1.8km		
Land Use	Rural-Rural residential		
Visual Effect	Not visible-low		
Visual Impact	Not visible-low		

Viewpoint 2- Clover Lane

Viewpoint 2			
Summary of Viewpoint		**Viewpoint Description**	**Potential Visual Impact**
Location	Corner of Mt. Lowes Road & Clover Lane	The photograph was taken from the corner of Mt. Lowes Road and Clover Lane with a view towards the site. Clover Lane is a small rural residential subdivision with most dwellings using vegetation as a screen. Given there is no visibility of the site, this viewpoint has been rated as low.	From this position, views to the site are not possible. Desktop analysis of surrounding dwelling sites shows that views would be obscured by vegetation and topography from this area. The resulting visual impact from the development is assessed as low from this viewpoint.
Coordinates	Lat-33:41:1.72:S Lo-149:51:30.4:E		
Elevation	1100m		
Viewing Direction	South East		
Distance to site	1.2km		
Land Use	Rural-Rural residential		
Visual Effect	Not visible-low		
Visual Impact	Not visible-low		

Viewpoint 3- Cole Crescent

Viewpoint 3			
Summary of Viewpoint		**Viewpoint Description**	**Potential Visual Impact**
Location	End of Cole Crescent, above Albion Street	The photograph was taken from Private land at the end of Cole Crescent. The site is elevated and sits above Albion Street. The amount of views from this site and amount of viewers is limited The site is clearly visible from this vantage point; however, proposed landscaping and earth mound will mitigate potential impacts.	Views from this point are dominated by the Borgs Panel site, which immediately adjoins the site. The proposed scale of the development is low and the visual impact can will be mitigated through landscape screening and the earth mound. The proposed landscaping will allow the development to blend with the existing industrial development adjoining and the impact is expected to be low.
Coordinates	Lat-33:42:04.99:S Lo-149:52:25.66:E		
Elevation	1097m		
Viewing Direction	North West		
Distance to site	1km		
Land Use	Residential		
Visual Effect	Moderate		
Visual Impact	High- rated as high visual sensitivity with moderate visual effect		

Viewpoint 4. 151 Hazelgrove Road

Viewpoint 4			
Summary of Viewpoint		**Viewpoint Description**	**Potential Visual Impact**
Location	151 Hazelgrove Road, Oberon	The photograph was taken from a gap in the vegetation on Hazelgrove Road; The site is only visible for a very short period if driving. The surrounding dwellings have vegetation screening potential views of the site The site is clearly visible from this vantage point; however, proposed landscaping and earth mound will mitigate potential impacts.	Views from this point are dominated by the Borgs Panel site, which immediately adjoins the site. The proposed scale of the development is low and the visual impact can will be mitigated through landscape screening and the earth mound. The proposed landscaping will allow the development to blend with the existing industrial development adjoining and the impact is expected to be low.
Coordinates	Lat-33:41:16.81:S Lo-149:52:31.39:E		
Elevation	1112m		
Viewing Direction	South West		
Distance to site	1.1km		
Land Use	Rural/ Rural Residential		
Visual Effect	Moderate		
Visual Impact	Moderate- rated as high visual sensitivity with low visual effect		

Viewpoint 5. 54 Hazelgrove Road

Viewpoint 5			
Summary of Viewpoint		**Viewpoint Description**	**Potential Visual Impact**
Location	54 Hazelgrove Road, Oberon	The photograph was taken from a gap in the vegetation on Hazelgrove Road, opposite the Oberon Abattoir; The site is only visible for a very short period if driving. The site is clearly visible from this vantage point; however, proposed landscaping and earth mound will mitigate potential impacts.	Views from this point are dominated by the Borgs Panel site, which immediately adjoins the site. The proposed scale of the development is low and the visual impact can will be mitigated through landscape screening and the earth mound. The proposed landscaping will allow the development to blend with the existing industrial development adjoining and the impact is expected to be low.
Coordinates	Lat-33:41:47.00:S Lo-149:52:31.39:E		
Elevation	1076m		
Viewing Direction	West		
Distance to site	1km		
Land Use	Rural/ Rural Residential		
Visual Effect	Moderate		
Visual Impact	Moderate- rated as high visual sensitivity with low visual effect		

Viewpoint 6. Maher Drive

Viewpoint 6			
Summary of Viewpoint		**Viewpoint Description**	**Potential Visual Impact**
Location	Vacant land at end of Maher Drive	The photograph was taken from a vacant lot at the end of Maher Drive, currently being used for storage of gravel and soil. The land is zoned industrial. The photo shows the existing extent of the earth mound that will be continued around the site, mitigating any potential impacts.	The potential visual impact from this site is high, given the close proximity to the site, however, given the land is industrial the impact is low. The operation of the site will not be visible due to the proposed landscaping and earth mound. Further development of Maher Drive will also decrease potential impacts from site located further south, including Albion Street and Cole Crescent.
Coordinates	Lat-33:41:48.42:S Lo-149:52:02.11:E		
Elevation	1085m		
Viewing Direction	West		
Distance to site	230m		
Land Use	Industrial		
Visual Effect	High		
Visual Impact	Low-industrial land use		

Viewpoint 7. Albion Street

Viewpoint 7			
Summary of Viewpoint		**Viewpoint Description**	**Potential Visual Impact**
Location	Albion Street	This photo is taken from one of the main roads heading into Oberon. A number of dwellings are located opposite this viewpoint. Given setbacks and existing vegetation, the proposal would have a minimal impact on these dwellings. A bike/pedestrian path traverses the opposite side of the road, which would increase viewership numbers from this area. The vegetation in the middle ground of this photo will reduce impact once maturity is reached.	The potential visual impact from this site is moderate. The operation of the site will not be visible due to the proposed landscaping and earth mound. Further development of Maher Drive will also decrease potential impacts, along with maturity of vegetation on other sites adjoining. The potential impact is comparable to other industrial development in the near vicinity.
Coordinates	Lat-33:42:01.85:S Lo-149:52:12.39:E		
Elevation	1089m		
Viewing Direction	North		
Distance to site	600m		
Land Use	Main Road/Residential		
Visual Effect	Moderate		
Visual Impact	Moderate		

Viewpoint 8- Mt. Lowes Road

Viewpoint 8			
Summary of Viewpoint		**Viewpoint Description**	**Potential Visual Impact**
Location	Mt. Lowes Road just north of Borg Panels site	The photograph was taken Mt. Lowes Road just north of the Borg Panels site. Mt Lowes Road is a minor road. Given there is no visibility of the site, this viewpoint has been rated as low.	From this position, views to the site are not possible. Desktop analysis of surrounding dwelling sites shows that views would be obscured by vegetation and topography from this area. The resulting visual impact from the development is assessed as low from this viewpoint.
Coordinates	Lat-33:41:13.85:S Lo-149:51:28.44:E		
Elevation	1097m		
Viewing Direction	South East		
Distance to site	900m		
Land Use	Rural-Rural residential		
Visual Effect	Not visible-low		
Visual Impact	Not visible-low		

4.2 Overview of View Point Analysis

For each viewpoint, the potential visual impact was analysed using a combination of topographic maps and on site analysis.

The visual sensitivity and visual effect of each viewpoint have been assessed which, when combined, result in an overall visual impact for the viewpoint (Refer to Table 3).

Of the eight (8) viewpoints assessed as part of this VIA, the proposal would be visible from five (5) viewpoints. Of the five (5) viewpoints from which the proposal would be visible, three (3) of these have been assessed as having a moderate visual impact with one (1) having a high visual Impact and one (1) a low visual impact.

The incorporated mitigation measures outlined in Section 6.0 of this report seek to avoid, reduce and where possible remedy adverse visual effects arising from the proposed development.

Table 3 Viewpoint assessment

View Point	Visual Sensitivity	Visual Effect	Potential Visual Impact
V1	Not visible	Not visible	No impact
V2	Not visible	Not visible	No impact
V3	High	Moderate	High
V4	High	Low	Moderate
V5	High	Low	Moderate
V6	Low	Moderate	Low
V7	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate
V8	Not visible	Not visible	No impact

5 Visual Impact Assessment

The existing character of the surrounding lands to the north and northeast is rural and rural residential. As can be seen from the presented Viewpoints the visibility of the site is restricted by vegetation and topography. The majority of dwellings within these areas have existing vegetation screens that restrict views to the site. It is evident that the vegetation screens are used to minimise impacts of the dominating factor within the landscape being the Borgs Panel site, which is visible from distance for a greater range then the proposed landscape facility. The sensitivity of this landscape has been assessed as moderate to high, as the amenity of the location, with established vegetation and rolling hills, somewhat picturesque and valued.

The impact of the development on the northern and north-eastern area is expected to be limited, given the minor nature of the development. The only building on-site will be a site office, which will sit behind the proposed earth mounds, and is unlikely to be visible from outside of the site. Proposed goods bunkers will be managed so that stockpiles will sit below the height of the bunker wall or earth mound. The proposed vegetation screening will enable the site to sit comfortably within the rural landscape, with a number of other pine screens evident within the landscape.

To the south and southeast, the character is urban with industrial and residential development. Minimal impact is expected from the adjoining properties immediately to the south given that it is an industrial estate, with no sensitive receivers. The development will be similar in size and scale of an existing landscape supplies site located at 7 Endeavour Street, Oberon. The existing industrial area also assists in screening the development from central part of Oberon.

The residential area identified by viewpoint 3, to the south west of the site, will be impacted by the development, with an assessment showing a high visual impact. The limited dwellings located in this area will experience a change in character of their views to the north, characterised by a larger/extended earth mound and elevated vegetation screen. It is unlikely that the site building or plant will be visible from this location. Overall the impact is expected to be minimal given the view is currently dominated by the Borgs Panel site, with the scale of the proposed development consistent with other existing industrial development viewable from the location, with the proposed mound and vegetation also minimising any visual contrast.

The proposal is likely to be viewed as a continuation of the existing industrial development in a large-scale industrial zone and as the site is already disturbed, it is our determination that the visual impacts from public domain areas are acceptable. The mitigation measures outlined in section 6 will also minimise any visual impact of the development on the wider region.

The proposal is consistent with the design guidelines outlined in the Oberon Development Control Plan. The proposed landscaping incorporated in to the design allows the site to sit comfortably within the context of the area and not impact on the visual amenity of the Oberon area.

6 Mitigation

These principles have incorporated into the concept design to achieve better visual integration of the proposal and the existing visual character at both, local and regional scales. The mitigation measures can mitigate any visual impact of the proposed development whilst enhancing the visual character of the surrounding environment.

Methods incorporated into the concept design for mitigating the potential visual impact include:

• The built form of the proposed buildings (site office and workshop) are of a minor scale to the surrounding industrial buildings, and is unlikely to be visible external to the site.

• Building materials selected will reduce colour contrast and blend any new and existing structures, as far as possible, into the surrounding landscape.

• Retention of existing trees within the Site to assist in fragmenting views of the proposed development.

• Extension of existing earth mound around the perimeter of the site will limit views and screen material bunkers and plant machinery.

• Vegetation screening incorporating species that integrate with existing landscape character. The proposed landscaping can be seen below in figure 7.

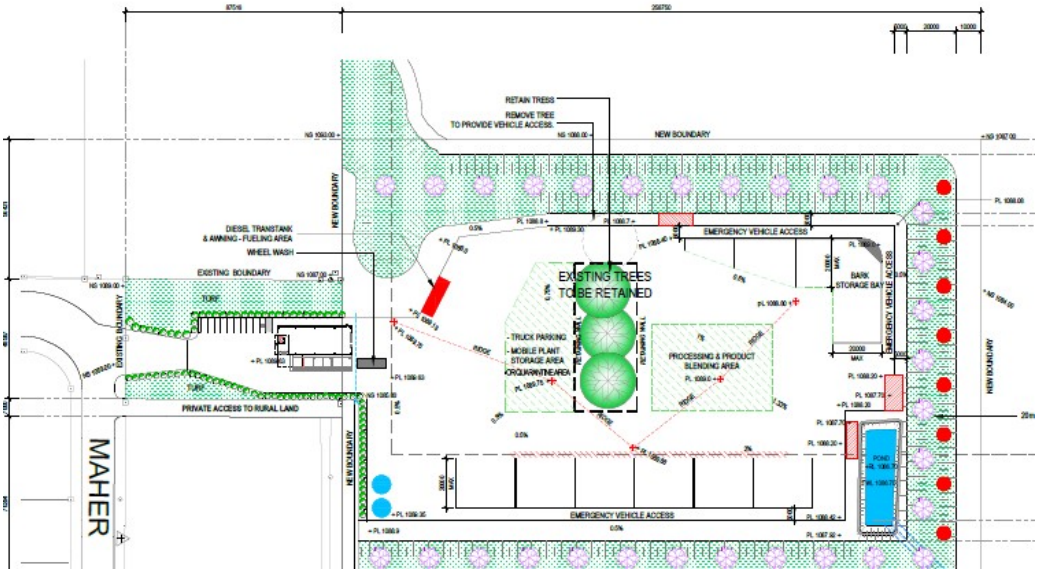

Figure 7. Proposed landscaping plan incorporating screening around the perimeter

7 Conclusion

The existing landscape character is a mix of industrial development, rural properties and bushland ridgelines and corridors. The scale of the built form in the proposal is small compared to existing industrial developments adjoining, mainly the Borgs Panel site, which dominates views from the surrounding area.

The implemented design principles outlined in Section 6.0 of this report seek to avoid, reduce and where possible, remedy adverse effects on the environment arising from the proposed development. The proposed mitigation measures will reduce any visual impacts of the development.

8 References

EDAW (Australia) Pty Ltd (2000) *'*Section 12 – Visual Assessment', The Mount Arthur North Coal Project: Environmental Impact Statement*, URS Australia Pty Ltd, Prepared for Coal Operations Limited.*

DOP (1988) Rural Land Evaluation*, Government Printer, Department of Planning.*

Moir Landscape Architecture Pty Ltd (2019) *'Visual Impact Assessment', Kariong Sand and Soil Supplies, Project: Environmental Impact Statement, Project No. 1569*

SixMaps- https://maps.six.nsw.gov.au/