

Kings Park Metal Recovery and Recycling Facility Expansion (SSD-10396)- proposed acoustic fence

VISUAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT



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Prepared for: Ethos Urban Pty Ltd on behalf of the Proponent, Sell & Parker Pty Ltd

Prepared by: Envisage Consulting Pty Ltd

Stacey Brodbeck, MEnvPlan, BLArch, AlLA Registered Landscape Architect and PlA Registered Planner and Alison Dodds, PGCert Public Policy, BPlan, BLArch, PIA Registered Planner

Envisage Consulting has specialised in visual impact assessment for more than 15 years.

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ENVISAGE CONSULTING PTY LTD ABN 89 139 313 296 envisageconsulting.com.au

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Introduction

1.1 Purpose of report

Envisage Consulting has prepared this visual impact assessment (VIA) for Ethos Urban Pty Ltd, on behalf of the proponent, Sell & Parker Pty Ltd.

The subject of the VIA is a proposed 16 metre (m) high acoustic fence at 23-43 and 45 Tattersalls Road, Kings Park (the 'Proposal site') - part of the proposed State Significant Development of the Kings Park Metal Recovery and Recycling Facility Expansion (the Proposal) (SSD-10396).

The VIA responds to visual requirements within a request for information (RFI) (letter dated 1 February 2022) made by the approval authority, the Department of Planning and Environment (DPE), following the submission of the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) and Response to Submissions (RtS). It also responds to visual matters raised in a letter by Blacktown City Council dated 20 January 2022.

The applied methodology used for the assessment has been tailored to address these RFIs and is based on techniques and principles presented in accepted visual assessment methodologies, as further explained in **Section 2.0**.

1.2 RFI Visual components

provided.

The following table sets out the relevant requirements within the RFI requests and where these are addressed in this report.

triese are addressed in triis report.					
DPE Visual requirement	Where addressed in this report				
Provide a detailed visual impact assessment (including photomontages and perspectives) of the proposed noise fence, including height and scale, materials and finishes and colours.	Section 4.0 (visual impact assessment) Section 3.0 (description of proposed acoustic fence)				
Please ensure the assessment responds to Council's comments dated 20 January 2022 [see below] and also addresses potential impacts to adjacent industrial facilities.	Yes – see below				
Council requirements	Where addressed in this report				
Additional information is required to illustrate clearly the proposed location, length, construction materials and potential impacts of the proposed acoustic barrier.	Section 3.0 (description of proposed acoustic fence)				
The potential impacts for the site and surrounding properties, have not been adequately considered in the applicant's response, in particular: neighbourhood amenity, the bulk, scale and shadow impacts of the barrier	Section 3.0 (description of proposed acoustic fence) Section 3.0 (describes the 'bulk and scale' changes) and Section 4.0 (covers the visual impact component of 'neighbourhood amenity' and the visual change, including bulk and scale). Shadow impacts are not covered in this report.				
• the potential streetscape impacts specifically if the proposed 16m acoustic barrier is orientated towards the nearby residential area. Insufficient streetscape views and treatment details have been	Section 4.0 (covers the 'streetscape impact to the nearby residential area under visual impact assessment).				

1.3 Site description and context

The location of the Proposal site is shown in **Figure 1-1**, with a plan of the key elements of the Proposal, including the proposed acoustic fence, shown in **Figure 1-2**.

The Proposal site is approximately 6.4 hectares (ha) in size and is currently used as a metal recovery and recycling facility. The legal description of the Proposal site is Lot 2 DP5500522 and Lot 5 DP7086. The Proposal site comprises several existing structures and associated infrastructure including warehouses, offices, an acoustic fence, plant and equipment, water management infrastructure and roads and carparking.

The Proposal site is situated within the Blacktown Local Government Area (LGA) about 40 kilometres (km) north-west of the Sydney Central Business District (CBD) and around 3 km from Blacktown CBD. Access is from Tattersall Road, to which the Proposal site has a frontage of about 240m. Tattersall Road connects to Sunnyholt Road to the east, and Vardys Road to the north-west. Sunnyholt Road connects in turn to the M7 Motorway.

The immediate area is dominated by industrial and commercial development. The Proposal site is under the *Blacktown Local Environmental Plan (LEP) 2015* and zoned IN1 General Industrial.

The area surrounding the Proposal site includes:

- North Tattersall Road, with light and general industrial activities on both sides.
- East and south An intermittent drainage channel (Fenceer Creek) which connects to Breakfast Creek – a highly modified watercourse flowing along the southern boundary of the Proposal site. Both watercourses physically separate the Proposal site from the adjoining industrial development.
- West An automotive wrecking and recycling facility (Pick 'N' Payless facility at 57 Tattersall Road) with further industrial activities beyond.
- The nearest residential development is approximately 300 m to the east (Anthony Street and surrounds). Between this residential area and the Proposal site are industrial structures and Sunnyholt Road (which has an acoustic fence alongside the road that visually separates the closest residences to the east, apart from where Anthony Street intercedes).

The location of the Proposal site is shown in **Figure 4-1** (Section 4.0).

2 Applied assessment methodology

2.1 Applied methodology and impact ratings

The applied methodology used in this VIA has been tailored to this Proposal, and is based on principles presented in several well-regarded visual assessment guidelines used by government authorities and professional organisations in Australia and internationally, including:

- 'Guideline for Landscape Character and Visual Impact Assessment Environmental Impact Assessment Guidance Note EIA–NO4'Transport for NSW, 2020.
- 'Guidance Note for Landscape and Visual Assessment', Australian Institute of Landscape Architects, 2018.
- 'Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment,', the United Kingdom's Landscape Institute and Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment, 2013.

2.2 Assessing visual impact

The VIA aims to:

- 1. identify the likely visual effects of the Proposal
- 2. estimate the magnitude of the effects
- 3. assess the nature and significance of these effects and
- 4. if necessary, consider measures to avoid, reduce or compensate for those effects.

A preliminary visual impact analysis was firstly undertaken by reviewing available aerial photography, and topographic mapping, to determine the broad visibility of the proposed acoustic fence and potential viewpoints. Field investigations were then undertaken to confirm and photograph potential ground-level viewpoints and select the most appropriate locations for photomontages. Those investigations were kept to publicly accessible locations such as roads, car parks and public parks.

The predicted level of visual impact was then determined through detailed analysis by:

Step 1 – Identify main viewpoints and viewpoint sensitivity

This step identifies where the main viewpoints are, and how sensitive each viewpoint is to potential visual change. 'Viewpoint sensitivity' considers the capacity of the viewpoint to accommodate change without undue consequences (including to the landscape character of the natural and built environment). For this proposed development, viewpoint sensitivity has been assumed to be:

- Low Kings Park industrial area
- Moderate Sunnyholt Road (main road) and surrounding residential areas, with nearest all low density.
- High There were none identified. An example of viewpoints with a high sensitivity could be those from a National Park or important heritage building.

Step 2 - Determine the anticipated 'magnitude of visual change

Magnitude of visual change considers how the proposed change would relate to the existing view (including the landscape character of the natural and built environment) and views in terms of aspects such as:

■ The extent of proposed change (size, scale, form and character) when compared to the existing condition

- The degree to which aesthetic or perceptual aspects are altered
- The geographical extent of the effect
- Whether the effect changes key characteristics critical to its distinctive character
- The duration and reversibility of change.

Table 2-1 sets out a broad guide for rating the 'magnitude of visual change'.

Table 2-1: Broad description of 'magnitude of visual change' levels

Level of visual impact	Broad description		
None or Negligible	No or only a very small part of the Proposal is discernible and/or is at such a distance that it is scarcely appreciated. Consequently, it would have very little effect on the scene.		
Minor	The Proposal constitutes only a minor component of the wider view, which might be missed by the casual observer or receptor. Awareness of the Proposal would not have a marked effect on the overall quality of the scene.		
Moderate	The Proposal may form a visible and recognisable new element within the overall scene that affects and changes its overall character, possibly in a negative way.		
High	The Proposal forms a significant and immediately apparent part of the scene that affects and changes its overall character, usually in a negative way.		
Very high	The Proposal becomes the dominant feature of the scene to which other elements become subordinate, and significantly affects and changes the character in a highly negative way.		

Step 3 – Combine the aspects

These two aspects ('viewpoint sensitivity' and 'magnitude of visual change') are then combined to determine a visual impact rating. **Table 2-2** illustrates the matrix used in this step, and the five possible ratings (i.e., high, moderate-high, moderate, low-moderate, low or negligible).

Table 2-2: Visual impact rating levels (levels shown in italics)

		Magnitude (of change)			
		High	Moderate	Low	Negligible
ge)	High	High	Moderate-high	Moderate	Negligible
(to chan	Moderate	Moderate-High	Moderate	Low - moderate	Negligible
Visual sensitivity (to change)	Low	Moderate	Low -moderate	Low	Negligible
Visual	Negligible	Negligible	Negligible	Negligible	Negligible

Step 4 – Visual impact assessment

The above three steps were undertaken for each of the main viewpoints and put into context with the existing visual environment, leading to the visual impact assessment presented in **Section 4.0**.

Under Step 4, mitigation measures are also discussed and recommended where appropriate. Design alternatives considered for the proposed acoustic fence are described in **Section 3-3**.

2.3 Photography

Photographs in this report have been taken in landscape format using a full-frame sensor digital camera with a fixed 50mm lens and GPS positioning. The fixed 50mm focal length lens is widely considered the benchmark for technical landscape photography. It ensures that the image parameters of every photograph are the same, ensures compatibility of photography for all viewpoints, and minimises optical distortion. The 50mm lens is regarded as being the closest to human eyesight, although it does not illustrate our wider (unfocussed) peripheral vision. Unless otherwise noted, all photographs within this report were taken by Envisage Consulting.

2.4 Photomontages

During the site inspection, viewpoints were selected for photomontages to be prepared to illustrate the predicted view. The photomontages in this report have been independently prepared by Cambium Group.

Photomontages are provided in **Section 4.0** to illustrate the predicted view from two viewpoints. For each photomontage, the following images are included:

- Existing view
- Analytical view (highlighting proposed acoustic fence in a different colour)
- Photomontage (simulated, realistic-like view).

Each photomontage is based on detailed GPS information that includes the position of the camera and key components in the view to calibrate the photomontage and ensure accuracy. A surveyor also surveyed the camera locations and key elements in each view to confirm accuracy.

To view the photomontages correctly, each image should be printed at A3 size, or the screen enlarged to full A3 size height (if possible). Each A3 sized image should be viewed at a comfortable arm's distance away, to approximate most closely with what would be seen from that viewpoint.

3 Proposed acoustic fence

3.1 Proposed acoustic fence description

The Proposal consists of a 16m high acoustic fence along most of the eastern boundary of the Proposal site beside an existing drainage channel. The acoustic fence is setback about 35m from the Tattersall Road boundary and runs about 165m in length along the eastern boundary. The acoustic fence then extends diagonally across the south-eastern corner of the Proposal site (for about 17m) and then partially along the southern boundary (for about 20m).

The acoustic fence would be constructed from powder-coated metal fence sheeting, fixed to metal girts, and coloured 'Cottage Green' (Colourbond colour) on the outer, eastern side (similar to the existing acoustic fence on the Proposal site shown in **Figure 3-1,** which is about 8m high).

The lower section of the acoustic fence would be comprised of insulated fence panels fixed by hinges to allow for overland flow requirements associated with the existing earth

Figure 3-1: View of existing acoustic fence which will remain (about 8m high) along Proposal site at western end



Figure 3-2: View along existing drainage channel from Tattersall Road near site of proposed acoustic fence

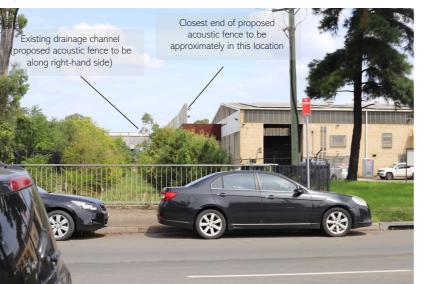


Figure 3-3: View east along Tattersall Road (opposite proposed acoustic fence site)



drainage channel to the immediate east. An existing 4m high security mesh, electric fence, would remain along the outer, eastern side.

Photographs of the area in the vicinity of the proposed acoustic fence are provided as **Figures 3-1** to **3-3**. **Figure 3-4** illustrates the location of the proposed acoustic fence within the Proposal site (including a full site elevation), with **Figure 3-5** providing fence elevations and a typical construction section.

3.2 Bulk and scale

The acoustic fence at 16m high would be about 1.5 times the height of the nearest building to its west ('Building B' within the Proposal site, shown in **Figure 3-2** and the elevation in **Figure 3-5**)), however similar to the type of bulk and scale of the many other large warehouse-type buildings in the surrounding industrial area. It is also of a similar height to other structures on the Proposal site, including the red conveyor (seen in **Figure 4-4** and **Figure 4-7**) which is about 13.5m high when compared to the proposed acoustic fence. (To clarify, the red conveyor is about 14.5m above ground level, however, has a reduced level (RL) of about 13.5m).

Seen side-on (i.e. the longest, northern side), as it would be from the main viewpoints which are from the east (refer **Section 4.0**), the acoustic fence would appear similar to a typical industrial warehouse. It would also be of a comparable height to the large Eucalypts along the closest part of Tattersall Road.

3.3 Design alternatives

During preparation of this assessment, design alternatives were recommended to reduce the visual impact, particularly to reduce the extent of the acoustic fence potentially seen from Tattersall Road, and views from the eastern residential area around Anthony Street.

In response, the acoustic fence was setback further from the Tattersall Road boundary. The design provided in the last RFI (prepared by Arcadis – dated 21/12/2021) was for the acoustic fence to be closer to Tattersall Road.

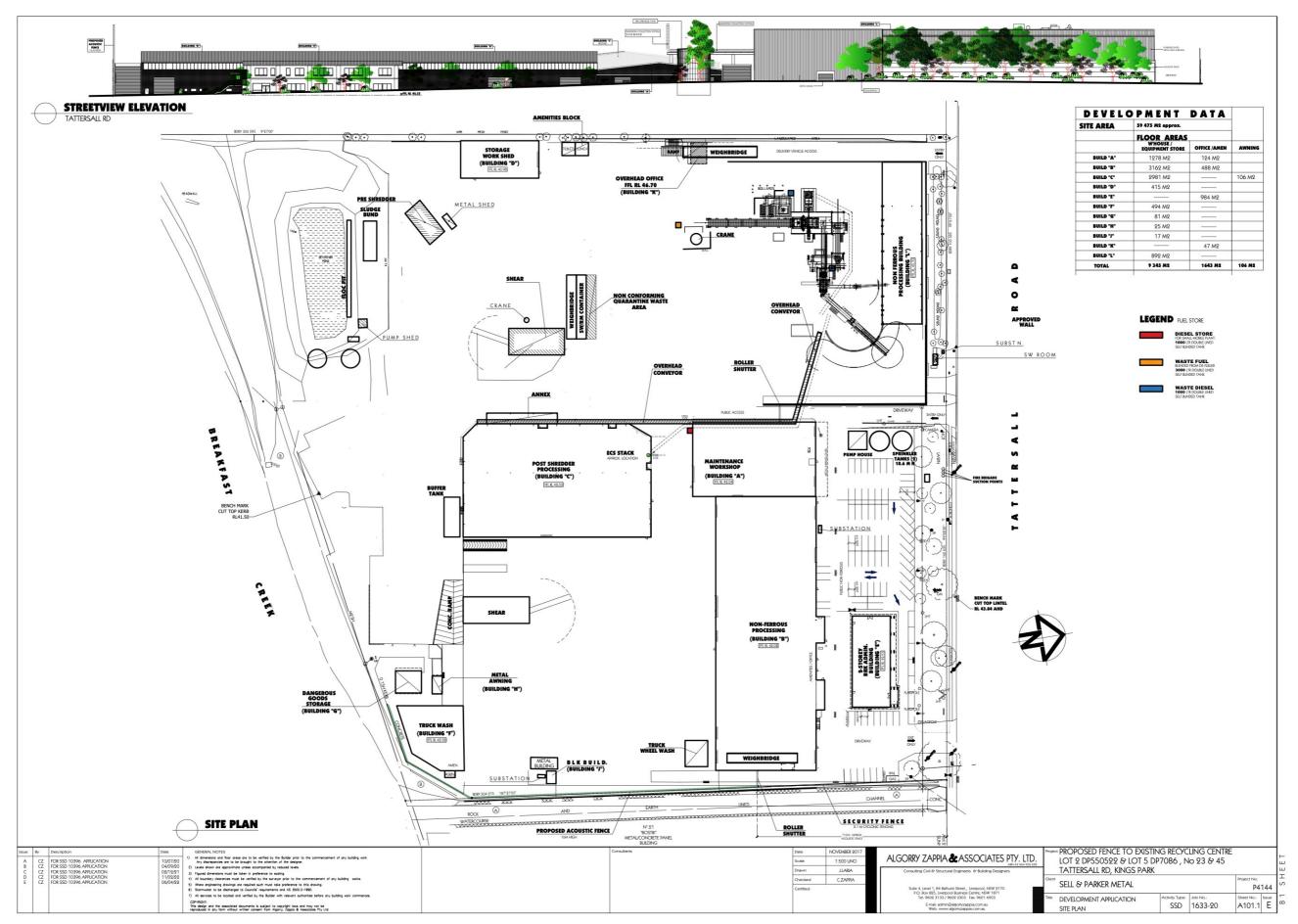


Figure 3-4: Plan of overall Proposal site showing proposed acoustic wall (indicated by green line)

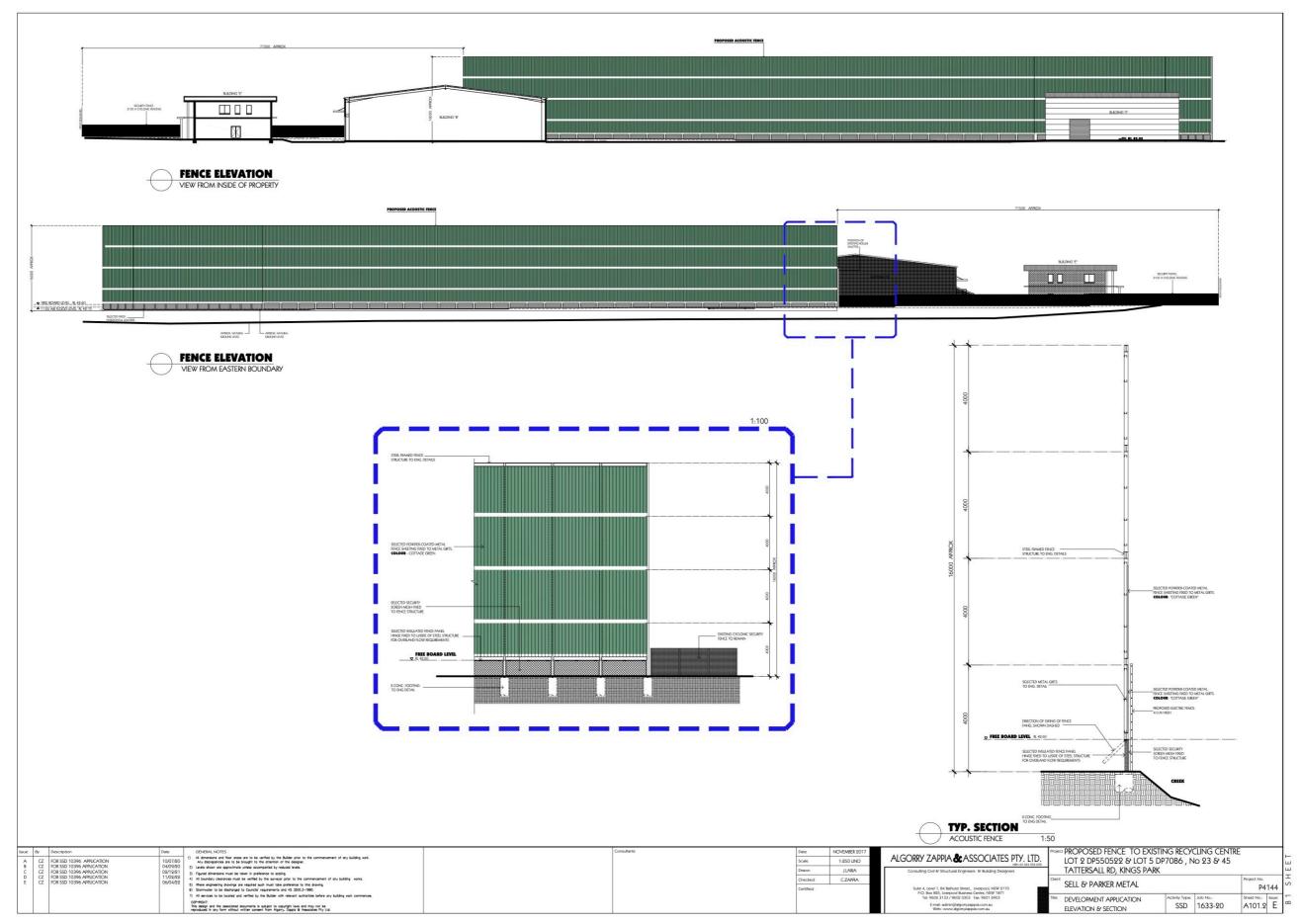


Figure 3-5: Proposed acoustic fence - elevations and typical construction section

4 Visual impact assessment

4.1 Potential visibility from surrounding locations

The potential visibility of the proposed acoustic fence is relatively limited. The location is surrounded by industrial buildings on all sides, with many tall buildings, including the Bostik premises some 90m to the east (estimated at 50m) and the tall concrete batching structures associated with the Concrite concrete batching plant at 77A Tattersall Road (some 465m to west). Many buildings within the industrial area are at least 10m high.

There are also some large Eucalypts (about 15m high) along the Tattersall Road boundary on either side the drainage channel east of the proposed acoustic fence, which provide substantial visual screening. The combination of existing tall structures and trees reduces the potential for views of the proposed acoustic fence both beyond the industrial area and within it.

Site investigations undertaken for this assessment have determined that views to the acoustic fence would not be possible, or very limited, from:

 low-density residential areas to the north, between the industrial area and M7, which comprise mostly single and two storey houses, and include a local park - Faulkland Crescent Reserve

- a commercial area to the north-east of the industrial area, along Garling Road (parallel to Sunnyholt Road) which includes a McDonalds, KFC and Kings Park Tavern
- parts of Sunnyholt Road, to the north and south of Tattersall Road, and the M7
- ground-level locations around Blacktown city centre, which at its closest is 1.5km to the south.

Site investigations and the assessment process have also identified potential viewpoints from where the acoustic fence would be seen. The three broad areas are:

- 1. <u>Tattersall Road, within Kings Park industrial area</u> with public viewpoints limited to Tattersall Road east of about 50 Tattersall Road (due mostly to large trees and buildings obstructing views from further west).
- 2. <u>Eastern low-density residential area, Anthony Street</u> clearest views from the higher parts of Anthony Street, above Charles Street, down along Anthony Street. Existing acoustic walls alongside Sunnyholt Road prevent most close views.

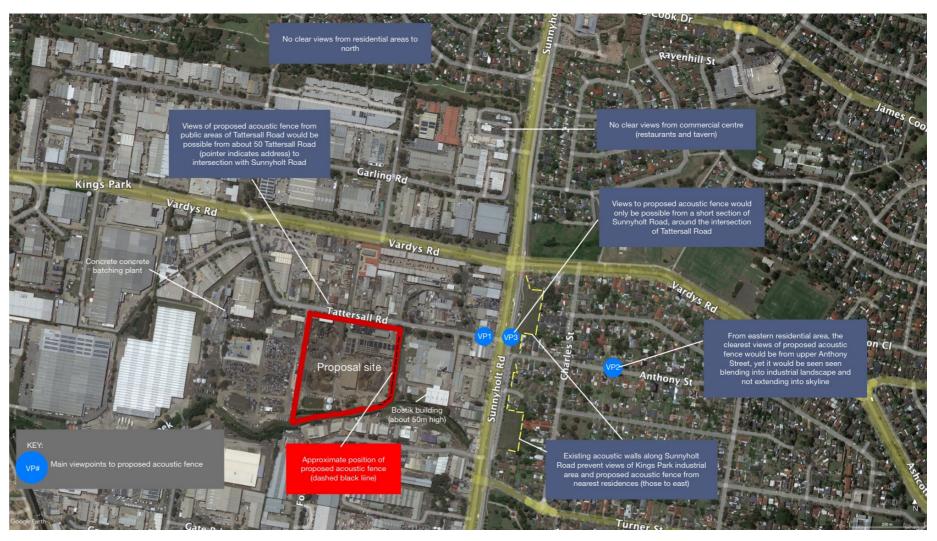


Figure 4-1: Site location, analysis of potential visibility and identification of main viewpoints

3. <u>Sunnyholt Road</u> – for a short section when immediately opposite Tattersall Road and able to look along it (which would be for a brief time whilst travelling in a vehicle along that road).

Figure 4-1 illustrates the analysis of the visual environment, indicating the potential area of visibility and the main potential viewpoints. The changes to the existing views seen from each of the above three viewing locations, and the main viewpoints within each area, are subsequently assessed.

4.2 Viewpoint 1: visual changes seen from Tattersall Road, within Kings Park industrial area

Public views of the acoustic fence would be possible from the intersection of Sunnyholt Road with Tattersall Road in the east to about 50 Tattersall Road further west (indicated in **Figure 4-1**). Views further west would be obstructed by existing large Eucalypts within the road verge, and nearby buildings, including the warehouse within the Proposal site on the western side of the acoustic fence (about 10m high).

When seen from the nearest part of Tattersall Road, that is near the drainage channel (refer **Figure 3-2**), the height of the acoustic fence would be about 5m taller than the existing warehouse to the immediate west, and a similar height to the large Eucalypts along Tattersall Road viewed from this location. The existing trees would serve to partially filter views from the road and industrial premises immediately opposite and further to the west.

Clearer views of the acoustic fence would be possible from Tattersall Road to the east of the drainage channel, with the extent of fence seen side-on increasing as the viewer moves further east.

Representative view for Viewpoint 1 – Tattersall Road (about 230m to east)

The eastern end of Tattersall Road would provide the widest possible view of the acoustic fence. A photograph from this location is shown in **Figure 4-2**. An analytical image of the same view with pink to indicate the location and bulk of the proposal is shown in **Figure 4-3**. A photomontage of the predicted view, that is, how the acoustic fence is predicted to look from this viewpoint when constructed, is shown in **Figure 4-4**.

As described in Section 2.0, visual impact is a function of the visual sensitivity of a given viewpoint and the magnitude of change to that view. In the case of views from the industrial area of Tattersall Road, views are considered of a <u>low sensitivity</u>. This location supports heavy industry and as such is dominated by large warehouses, security and other acoustic fencing, machinery and tall industrial structures (including the Bostick building (about 50m) and Concrite concrete batching plant).

It is also a busy visual environment with large trucks a prevalent feature. Visitors and workers within this area expect an industrial landscape and the addition of the proposed acoustic fence would not be particularly out of place within this existing industrial environment. The proposed magnitude of change is assessed as being moderate.

Taking both aspects into consideration (low sensitivity and the moderate magnitude of change), the predicted visual impact to Viewpoint 1 is assessed as low-moderate which is representative of the overall impact to the eastern end of Tattersall Road.







4.3 Viewpoint 2: Visual changes seen from eastern residential area (Anthony Street)

There is an existing acoustic wall alongside Sunnyholt Road which prevents most views toward the Proposal site from the eastern residential area (refer **Figure 4-1**). Public views toward the proposed acoustic fence from this residential area are limited to Anthony Street due to a break in the existing acoustic wall on either side of this street.

Existing views along Anthony Street toward the proposal site include large warehouses/buildings within Kings Park heavy industrial area, including the tall Bostick building which is relatively close feature of the industrial area, and other elements including the Concrite concrete batching plant and a red conveyor within the Proposal site.

From parts of the road reserve of Anthony Street, the eastern, longest side of the acoustic fence would be seen (about 160m long). The extent of the acoustic fence that would be in view would vary depending on viewer elevation and position, with views becoming clearer from the higher parts of Anthony Street above the intersection with Charles Street. There may also be views possible from some residences on Charles Street, particularly two storey houses (due to the higher viewing location), however, due to intervening buildings and trees those view changes would be relatively limited. If seen, the proposed acoustic fence would be a relatively minor component within the overall industrial area. It would not extend into the skyline, and would not be a bulky, dominant structure.

As Charles Street runs north-south, public views along that street are not oriented toward the Proposal site. Views from the lower part of Anthony Street, which are parallel to Sunnyholt Road, would be largely obscured by intervening structures and buildings within the industrial area.

Representative view for Viewpoint 2 – Anthony Street (about 550m to east)

Viewpoint 2, indicated in **Figure 4-1**, represents the maximum view that would be possible of the proposed acoustic fence from Anthony Street, with that location about 120m above Charles Street. The existing view is shown in **Figure 4-5**, an analytical image as **Figure 4-6** and a photomontage of how the acoustic fence would look from this viewpoint is shown in **Figure 4-7**.

Views from this viewpoint and surrounding residential area are considered to have <u>moderate sensitivity</u>. The view toward the Kings Park industrial area is dominated by industrial elements, with the Bostick building the tallest structure at some 50m prominent in the skyline.

As shown in **Figure 4-7**, from Viewpoint 2 the long side of the proposed acoustic fence would be seen, however it would be quite difficult to discern as it would be coloured Cottage Green (a colour that would help conceal the fence against the background of buildings and surrounding trees) and it would not be seen against the skyline. By keeping below the skyline, the acoustic fence would not be seen with a sky background, allowing for greater integration into the existing industrial landscape. The proposed magnitude of change is assessed as being <u>low</u> from this viewpoint.

Taking into consideration both the low sensitivity of views from this eastern residential area, and the low magnitude of change when seen within the Kings Park heavy industrial area, the visual impact to Viewpoint 2 is assessed as **low-moderate**. No more than a low-moderate visual impact would occur to other views available from Anthony Street.







4.4 Viewpoint 3: Visual changes seen from Sunnyholt Road

Sunnyholt Road is a linear viewpoint and generally provides temporary views to people in-transit. There is a short section of Sunnyholt Road, immediately opposite Tattersall Road, where there would be views of the acoustic fence about 265m away at its closest location. That view would be available for a very brief period of time whilst travelling north or south. The view would be available to all road users — pedestrians, cyclists or people in vehicles — however, the view toward the site is not in the direct line of view.

Representative view for Viewpoint 3 – Sunnyholt Road (about 300m to east)

Viewpoint 3, indicated in **Figure 4-1**, represents the clearest views of the site of the proposed acoustic fence seen from Sunnyholt Road, which is on the eastern side of Sunnyholt Road about 265m away.

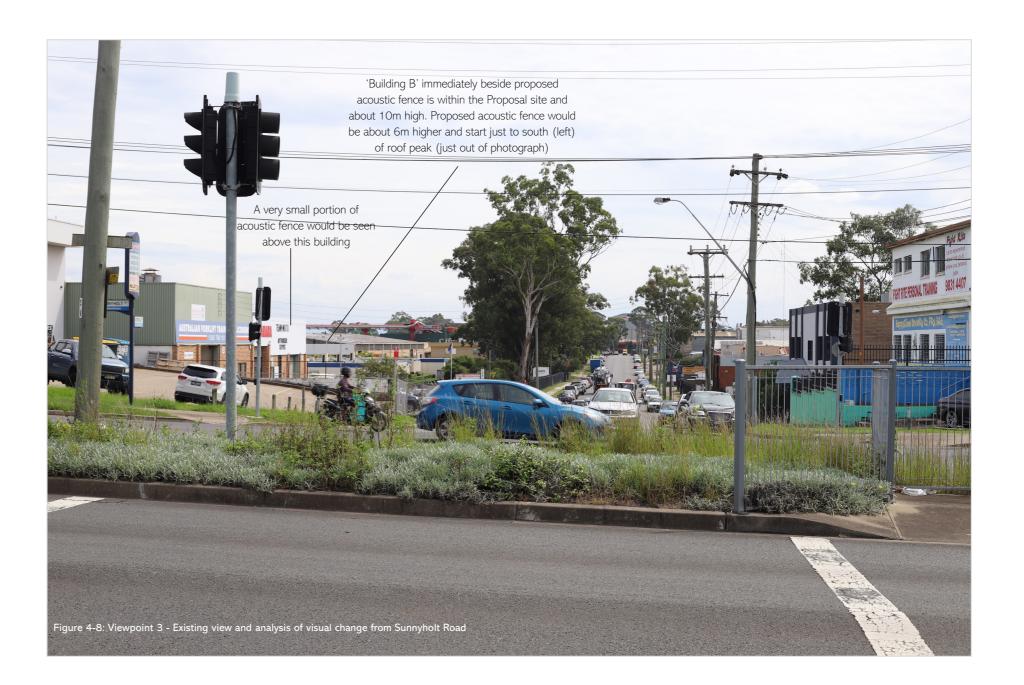
A photomontage has not been provided of this view as it would be similar to that shown in **Figure 4-4** with **Figure 4-8** illustrating the existing view and providing analysis of the likely effect.

Views from this viewpoint are considered to have a moderate sensitivity. It is a public viewpoint with a high number of users; however, most views would be made in transit and brief, and views in the direction of Kings Park are already dominated by heavy industry, including the Bostick building (about 50m high), warehouses, a concrete batching plant, large tanks, trucks, machinery and other tall fencing and walls.

Viewers at this location would be unlikely to notice the addition of the proposed acoustic fence in this existing industrial landscape, and it would not be particularly out of place in terms of scale and materials. The proposed magnitude of change is assessed as being low.

Taking into consideration both the moderate sensitivity of views from Sunnyholt Road, and the low magnitude of change within this heavy, industrial environment, the visual impact to Viewpoint 3 is assessed as <u>low-moderate</u>.

This low-moderate visual impact is representative of the overall impact to views from this short section of Sunnyholt Road.



5 Conclusion

The potential visibility of the proposed acoustic fence is relatively limited, largely due to its location within the large industrial area of Kings Park. Its location is surrounded by industrial uses on all sides, with many nearby tall structures (including the Bostik building estimated at 50m) and the tall concrete batching structures associated with the Concrite batching plant to the west). Many buildings within the industrial area are at least 10m high.

There are also some large Eucalypts (about 15m high) along the nearest Tattersall Road boundary which add substantial screening. The combination of tall structures and trees reduces potential views both beyond the industrial area and within it.

Three main viewpoints with potential views of the proposal have been identified as:

- <u>Viewpoint 1 Tattersall Road, within Kings Park industrial area</u> with public viewpoints limited to Tattersall Road east of about 50 Tattersall Road (due mostly to large trees and buildings obstructing views from further west).
- <u>Viewpoint 2- Eastern low-density residential area, Anthony Street</u> clearest views from the higher parts of Anthony Street, above Charles Street, down along Anthony Street. Existing acoustic walls alongside Sunnyholt Road prevent most close views.
- Viewpoint 3 Sunnyholt Road for a short section when immediately opposite
 Tattersall Road and able to look along it (which would be for a brief time whilst
 travelling in a vehicle along that road).

For each of those viewing locations, a 'worst case' change to views was assessed, with the predicted visual impact levels being:

- Viewpoint 1: Tattersall Road, eastern end, low-moderate visual impact
- Viewpoint 2: Anthony Street, low-moderate visual impact
- Viewpoint 3 Sunnyholt Road, low-moderate visual impact.

The acoustic fence at 16m high would be about 1.5 times the height of the nearest building to its west ('Building B' within the Proposal site), and similar to the type of bulk and scale of the many other large warehouse-type buildings in the surrounding industrial area.

Seen facing the longest side, as it would be from the three main viewpoints (which are all from the east), the acoustic fence would appear similar to a typical industrial warehouse. It would be of a height comparable to other structures on the Proposal site, including the red conveyor (about 13.5m high), and the large Eucalypts along the closest part of Tattersall Road. The acoustic fence would be coloured 'Cottage Green' to blend into the background and be of low visual contrast.

During this assessment a recommendation was made to locate the acoustic fence as far back as possible from the Tattersall Road boundary, which was adopted. No further mitigation has been recommended.

Overall, the proposed acoustic fence would have no more than a <u>low-moderate impact</u> to a limited number of viewpoints from the surrounding area, including the nearest residential area to the east around Anthony Street, and be generally visually compatible to its surroundings.

0422 956 528

mail@envisageconsulting.com.au

envisageconsulting.com.au

