

Visual Impact Analysis

48 Midge Orchid Road Darawank 2428

LOT: 5 DP1089990

Revision B – October 2025



WAKOOL KATOWA PARAI – ONE WITH COUNTRY – 2022 – Saretta Fielding

Acknowledgment Of Country

We, October Urban acknowledge the Gadigal people of the Eora Nation, the traditional custodians of the unceded land on which we live and work on today, and their connections to land, water and community.

We pay our respect to Elders past and present, the original storytellers of these lands where we learn today. We extend that respect to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and honour their continuation of the oldest peoples in the world.

Always Was, Always Will Be.

Revisions

Revision A	August 2025	First Draft
Revision B	October 2025	Second Draft

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Executive Summary

October Urban has undertaken a Visual Impact Analysis (VIA) of the proposed MidCoast Regional Organics Processing Solution (MC ROPS), to be developed on Lot 5 DP 1089990 at 48 Midge Orchid Road, Darawank. The proposal involves the construction of a fully enclosed Food Organics and Garden Organics (FOGO) processing facility adjacent to the existing Tuncurry Waste Management Centre, operated by MidCoast Council.

This report assesses the visual effects and potential visual impacts of the facility, which comprises a receival building, in-vessel composting tunnels, anaerobic digesters, enclosed maturation areas, odour and leachate management infrastructure, weighbridges, ancillary office and administration buildings, and associated access, roadworks and landscaping. The facility will operate as a key component of Council’s resource recovery network and will process up to 146,000 tonnes per annum of organics.

The purpose of this report is to provide a qualitative and quantitative assessment of the visibility and potential visual impacts of the proposal on the surrounding landscape character and nearby sensitive receivers. The assessment is based on site inspections, review of architectural and engineering documentation, and professional landscape and visual analysis. It considers the visual catchment, potential viewpoints, the degree of change introduced by the proposed facility, and the sensitivity of affected receptors.

The analysis establishes the anticipated extent and significance of visual change arising from the proposed development. While the facility introduces large-scale built form into a currently undeveloped site, its co-location with the existing Waste Management Centre ensures that the proposal is consistent with the utility and service character of the area. The visual impacts are primarily experienced from Midge Orchid Road and a limited number of rural residences to the south and west. These impacts are moderated by distance, existing vegetation, and proposed landscape buffers.

The extent and significance of the potential visual change has been assessed using established and widely accepted VIA methodologies. Representative viewpoints were identified, and the anticipated visual change was assessed against the existing baseline conditions.

The results of the assessment conclude that:

- From the public domain, the development will be perceived as a logical extension of the Waste Management Centre;
- From nearby residences, views of the facility are largely filtered by distance and vegetation, with the greatest exposure occurring to the south;
- From the wider regional landscape, including Nine Mile Beach and Darawank Nature Reserve, the facility will not be visible; and

With the implementation of vegetated buffers, non-reflective building finishes, and siting measures, residual visual impacts are assessed as low to moderate and acceptable within the landscape setting.

This VIA supports the Environmental Impact Statement to be submitted for State Significant Development approval of the MC ROPS project. It provides an independent, professional analysis of the landscape character and visual setting, and establishes the anticipated visual outcomes of the proposal. extent and significance of the potential visual change has been assessed using a well-established and accepted Visual Impact Assessment (VIA) methodology, which is detailed in the Visual Analysis section.

The overall significance of visual impact at this location is judged to be **MINOR / NEGLIGIBLE**.



FIGURE 1: SITE LOCALITY (Source Near Maps, July 2025)

Introduction

OBJECTIVES

The objectives of this report are as follows:

- Identify Visual Impact: assess how the proposed MidCoast Regional Organics Processing Solution (MC ROPS) will alter the existing visual character of the Site and its surrounding landscape..
- Assess Visual Significance: Evaluate the extent and significance of visual changes in relation to nearby sensitive receivers, including rural residences, public road users, and environmental lands..
- Evaluate Aesthetic Compatibility: Consider the design, scale, materials, and siting of the proposed facility — including the receival building, in-vessel composting tunnels, anaerobic digesters, maturation structures and ancillary infrastructure — to determine their compatibility with the established waste management and rural landscape character of the locality.
- Consider Public Views: Analyse the potential impacts of the facility on public domain views, particularly from Midge Orchid Road and surrounding rural landholdings, and determine whether the proposal maintains acceptable levels of visual amenity.
- Mitigate Adverse Effects: Identify and recommend design and landscape measures (such as vegetated buffers, building setbacks, and use of muted, non-reflective finishes) to minimise potential adverse visual effects.
- Ensure Regulatory Compliance: Demonstrate consistency with relevant planning and assessment requirements, including the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979, the State Significant Development framework, and accepted VIA methodologies.
- Inform Decision-Making: provide independent, professional analysis to inform planning authorities, decision-makers and the community of the anticipated visual outcomes of the proposed MC ROPS facility.

METHODOLOGY

The methodology for this Visual Impact Assessment (VIA) has been guided by recognised industry best practice, including the Guideline for Landscape Character and Visual Impact Assessment: Environmental Impact Assessment Practice Note E1A–NO4 (TfNSW, Version 2.3, 2023) and the Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (GLVIA) – Third Edition (LI/IEMA, 2013). The TfNSW guideline has the following main purposes:

- 1– To inform the development of the concept design so the project can avoid and minimise potential landscape character and visual impacts;
- 2– To inform Transport, other agencies and the community about the landscape character and visual impacts of the project; and
- 3– To identify the avoidance, management and mitigation strategies already embedded and those that would be implemented if the project was approved.

The Guideline for landscape character and visual impact assessment: Environmental impact assessment practice note E1A–NO4 (TfNSW, version 2.3, 2023), further identifies the difference between landscape character impact and visual impact as follows:

Landscape character impact is to determine the impact of the project on the area’s sense of place. The sense of place encompasses both built and natural environment. Landscape character impact is therefore about the ‘fit’ of the project within its context. Visual impact is concerned with what people see, and how the project might change views and outlook, whether the viewpoints are from public spaces (e.g. streets, parks, rail corridors, shared paths) or from private spaces (homes, gardens). With consideration of the process defined in the Guideline, the visual impact of this project is assessed.

This assessment also draws on the following:

GLVIA3 (2013) – which provides the international benchmark for assessing landscape and visual effects, emphasising professional judgement supported by transparent criteria;

Landscape Institute Advice Note 01/2011 – Photography and Photomontage in Landscape and Visual Assessment, providing guidance on visual representation and accurate montages;

NSW Environment Court principles – which require clarity, consistency, and reliance on transparent methodologies for assessing visual significance.

Visual Impact Assessment is concerned with changes to the physical landscape in terms of features/elements that may give rise to changes in character. Visual appraisal is concerned with the changes that arise in the composition of available views as a result of changes to the landscape, people’s responses to the changes and to the overall effects on visual amenity. The following assessment is based on the best practice guidance listed above, information and data analysis techniques, uses subjective professional judgment and quantifiable factors wherever possible and is based on clearly defined terms. As stated in paragraph 1.20 of the GLVIA:

“The guidance concentrates on principles while also seeking to steer specific approaches where there is a general consensus on methods and techniques. It is not intended to be prescriptive, in that it does not provide a detailed ‘recipe’ that can be followed in every situation. It is always the primary responsibility of any landscape professional carrying out an assessment to ensure that the approach and methodology adopted are appropriate to the particular circumstances.”

TERMINOLOGY

For this report, the following definitions apply:

- Proposal/Development Site: The activity with potential visual impacts during construction or as a result of the development;
- Subject Site: The land directly impacted by the proposal, defined by the boundaries of Lots;
- Study Area: The subject site plus the immediate surrounding land potentially affected during construction and operation.
- Study Locality: The regional visual catchment where the proposal is recognisable, typically within a five-kilometre radius.

The following classifications for describing the degree of landscape and visual of impact are required to be used in any Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment to achieve a level of consistency from Landscape Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment, 2002:

- None – No part of the proposal, or work or activity associated with it, is discernible.
- Negligible – 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.
- Severe – The proposal forms a significant and immediately apparent part of the scene that affects and changes its overall character.
- Devastating– The proposal becomes the dominant feature of the scene to which other elements become subordinate, and significantly affects and changes the character.

Site Location

The subject site, formally identified as Lot 5, DP 1089990, is located at 48 Midge Orchid Road, Darawank, NSW 2428, within the MidCoast Council Local Government Area. The Site covers approximately 5.82 hectares and is positioned immediately adjacent to the existing Tuncurry Waste Management Centre, which accommodates recycling, disposal and community waste management services.

The Site is relatively flat to gently undulating, with elevations ranging from approximately 2 to 6 metres AHD. It has been historically cleared and is currently vegetated with regrowth native shrubland, exotic grasses and scattered mature eucalypts. There are no existing built structures on the land.

Access to the Site is gained via Midge Orchid Road, which serves both the subject land and the adjoining Waste Management Centre. This road connects south to The Lakes Way, providing direct links to Tuncurry and Forster townships, and the broader MidCoast region.

The Site is located within a semi-rural setting characterised by a mix of essential services, scattered rural residences, and conservation lands. To the north, the land adjoins the Darawank Nature Reserve; to the east, it adjoins the existing Waste Management Centre; to the south, the land is bounded by bushland with scattered rural dwellings beyond; and to the west, the landscape extends towards rural residential properties and the Wallamba River approximately 600 metres away.

The locality is strongly defined by the co-location of waste and utility related land uses, together with conservation areas. The proposed development site is therefore well positioned to accommodate a regional-scale organics processing facility as a logical extension of the existing Waste Management centre.



FIGURE 2 : SITE LOCATION (Source Near Maps, July 2025)

Visual Context

LOCATION

The subject site is located in the locality of Darawank, approximately 3 kilometres north of Tuncurry and 42 kilometres south of Taree, within the MidCoast Council Local Government Area (LGA). The site is legally described as Lot 5, DP 1089990, with a street address of 48 Midge Orchid Road, Darawank NSW 2428.

The site has a total area of approximately 5.82 hectares and is situated immediately adjacent to the Tuncurry Waste Management Centre, which provides waste disposal, recycling and community education services.

The land is presently undeveloped, having been historically cleared and now containing regrowth vegetation, including native shrubland and scattered mature trees. Access to the site is provided via Midge Orchid Road, which connects directly to The Lakes Way and facilitates movement between the site, Tuncurry/Forster, and the Pacific Highway.

KEY SITE CHARACTERISTICS

Site Area	The subject site has a total area of approximately 5.82 hectares.
Current Use	The land is presently undeveloped, having been historically cleared. It is characterised by regrowth native vegetation, grasses and scattered mature eucalypts. There are no existing buildings or structures on the site.
Topography	The site is generally flat to gently undulating, with elevations ranging from approximately 2 metres AHD to 6 metres AHD. The even terrain allows for efficient construction and integration of proposed infrastructure.
Vegetation	The site supports areas of native regrowth vegetation and exotic grass cover, with scattered trees across the allotment. Denser vegetation is located along parts of the southern and western boundaries, providing partial visual buffering to nearby rural dwellings.
Watercourses	There are no watercourses traversing the site. The Wallamba River is located approximately 600 metres west, and Nine Mile Beach lies about 1.4 kilometres east of the site
Heritage	The site is not listed as a heritage item and is not located within a heritage conservation area under the Mid-Coast Local Environmental Plan.



FIGURE 3 : LOCALE IMAGERY (Source: Adobe Images)

Visual Character

VISUAL CHARACTER OF THE SITE

The subject site is an irregularly shaped allotment with a total area of approximately 5.82 hectares. It is presently vacant land, having been historically cleared and now supporting areas of native regrowth vegetation, exotic grasses and scattered mature eucalypts. There are no existing buildings or structures on the site.

Topographically, the land is flat to gently undulating, with elevations ranging from approximately 2 to 6 metres AHD. This relatively even terrain contributes to a simple and low-lying visual character, typical of the surrounding rural and service-infrastructure setting.

The site has direct vehicle access from Midge Orchid Road, which also provides access to the adjoining Tuncurry Waste Management Centre to the east. The road frontage is vegetated in parts, offering a degree of screening from the public domain.

Overall, the site presents as a cleared, partially revegetated landscape within a broader setting of waste management infrastructure, rural residential dwellings, and conservation lands. Its visual character is more closely aligned with the adjoining Waste Management Centre than with the scattered rural housing in the wider locality.



FIGURE 4 : VIEW ON MIDGE ORCHID ROAD LOOKING S (Source: Google Earth Pro)



FIGURE 5 : VIEW ON MIDGE ORCHID ROAD LOOKING N (Source: OU Image)



FIGURE 6 : VIEW ON THE LAKES WAY LOOKING E (Source: OU Photo)

Surroundings

North

To the north, the site adjoins Darawank Nature Reserve and vegetated bushland areas. This land presents a strong natural character, dominated by native vegetation and forming part of a larger conservation corridor. The landform rises gently northwards, and the dense vegetation provides effective screening from this direction.

East

Immediately east of the site is the Tuncurry Waste Management Centre, a large operational facility incorporating recycling, disposal, and community education. Its existing built form and hardstand areas create an established service and utility character. The presence of sheds, stockpiles, and operational infrastructure gives this part of the landscape a distinctly industrial and utilitarian visual quality, contrasting with the surrounding natural and rural setting.

South

To the south, the land is characterised by bushland and scattered rural dwellings set within vegetated allotments. Residential receptors in this area are located approximately 430 metres from the site boundary (R5), with views generally filtered or partially screened by existing vegetation. Further south, the Lakes Way corridor introduces a regional road element, with traffic and associated infrastructure contributing to the semi-rural service character.

West

The western outlook consists of rural residential properties located between 415 metres and 680 metres from the site (R1–R4). These dwellings are situated on larger lots, with vegetative screening separating them from the site. Beyond the residences, the Wallamba River is located approximately 600 metres west, surrounded by riparian vegetation and open rural land. The visual character is more rural-residential, with a natural landscape quality.

The surrounding area therefore displays a mixed visual character:

- Natural bushland and conservation areas to the north and south;
- Utility and waste management infrastructure immediately east;
- Rural residential and riparian landscapes to the west.

Within this context, the subject site reads as a transitional space between the service/ infrastructure character of the Waste Management Centre and the natural and rural character of the broader locality.

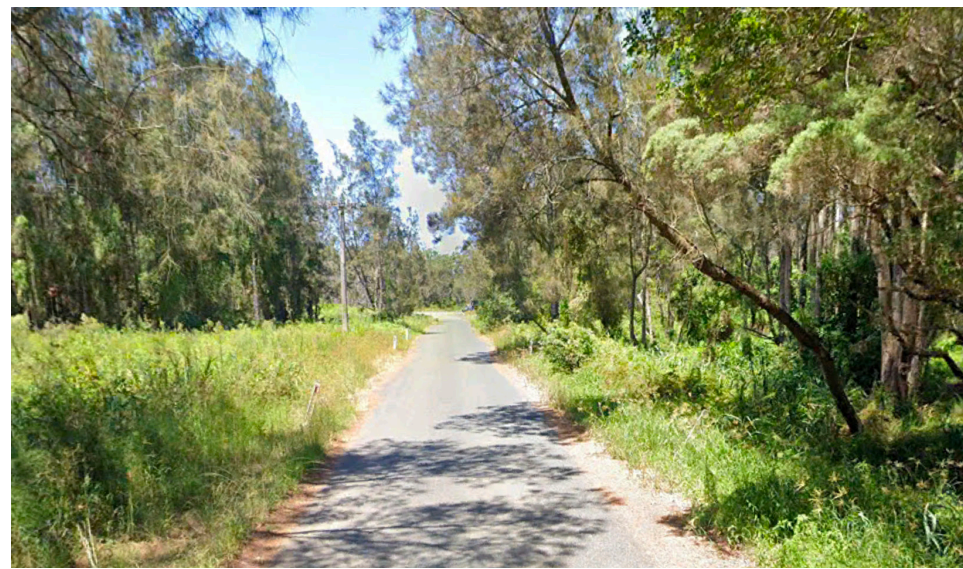


FIGURE 7 : SURROUNDING DEVELOPMENT EXAMPLES (Source: OU Photo and Google Earth Pro)

Land Use

The subject site at 48 Midge Orchid Road, Darawank (Lot 5 DP 1089990) is zoned RU2 Rural Landscape under the MidCoast Local Environmental Plan 2015. This zone allows for rural and infrastructure-compatible land uses and maintains a predominantly rural landscape character. The proposed MidCoast Regional Organics Processing Solution (MC ROPS) is consistent with the strategic intent of this zoning, given its co-location with the adjoining waste management facility.

Immediately north of the site, the land remains zoned RU2 Rural Landscape, providing a continuation of the rural setting. Beyond this, the Darawank Nature Reserve is zoned C1 National Parks and Nature Reserves and C2 Environmental Conservation, which extend northwards and connect to the Hallidays Point Sewage Treatment Plant. These zones reflect the strong environmental values of the broader landscape and provide a natural conservation buffer to the north of the proposal.

To the east, the site directly adjoins the Tuncurry Waste Management Facility, which is zoned SP2 Infrastructure (Waste Management Facility). This zoning reinforces the site’s suitability for utility-based land uses and underpins the compatibility of the proposed MC ROPS development. Further east, the land transitions to the C2 Environmental Conservation zone, encompassing Nine Mile Beach and its extensive coastal dune system, which represents a sensitive natural landscape.

Immediately to the south, the land is zoned E4 Environmental Living, containing scattered dwellings set within bushland. Beyond this, land transitions into C2 Environmental Conservation, interspersed with pockets of RU2 Rural Landscape before reaching the town of Tuncurry. This progression highlights the transition from conservation areas into low-density residential and service-based urban development.

To the west, the zoning pattern comprises a mix of C2 Environmental Conservation and RU2 Rural Landscape. This land accommodates rural residential dwellings (R1–R4) and bushland, before the landscape opens towards the Wallamba River riparian corridor. These zones reinforce the rural–environmental interface of the locality.

In the broader setting, zoning patterns reflect a transition between rural (RU2), environmental (C1 and C2), and infrastructure (SP2) land uses. The site is serviced by Midge Orchid Road, which connects directly to The Lakes Way south of the site. The Lakes Way provides a strategic regional road corridor linking the locality with Tuncurry and Forster to the south-east, and the Pacific Highway to the north-west, facilitating connections to Taree, Newcastle, and Sydney. This transport network ensures that the site is well positioned for regional-scale infrastructure such as the MC ROPS facility, with minimal exposure to residential areas or sensitive tourist destinations.

Overall, the zoning and land use context demonstrates that the site is located within an established waste and infrastructure precinct, buffered on all sides by rural and environmental zones, with strong connections to the regional road network and nearby urban centres.



FIGURE 8 : Land Use Zones (Source NSW Spatial Viewer)

Project Description

PROPOSAL STATUS

Development consent is sought for the construction and operation of the MidCoast Regional Organics Processing Solution (MC ROPS) on Lot 5 DP 1089990 at 48 Midge Orchid Road, Darawank.

The proposal has been advanced by NALG in partnership with Kanadevia Inova (KVI) for MidCoast Council as part of the wider waste management precinct at Tuncurry. The facility is identified as State Significant Development (SSD) under the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979, as it constitutes a waste and resource recovery facility of regional significance with a capital investment value exceeding the relevant threshold.

The subject site is currently vacant rural land zoned RU2 Rural Landscape and has not been subject to prior built development. The co-location of the facility with the adjoining SP2-zoned Tuncurry Waste Management Centre reflects a strategic planning outcome, consolidating Council’s waste, recycling, and resource recovery operations within a defined precinct serviced by Midge Orchid Road and The Lakes Way.

The project forms a key part of MidCoast Council’s strategy to expand organics recovery, reduce landfill demand, and generate renewable energy from local waste streams.

PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

The proposed MC ROPS facility will occupy a site area of approximately 5.82 hectares and is designed to process up to 146,000 tonnes per annum of organic material, including Council’s kerbside FOGO, self-haul loads, and commercial and industrial sources. In summary, the proposal will comprise the following key components:

Receival Building (3,375 m²): Fully enclosed under negative pressure, including automated fast-acting doors and self-haul drop-off area.

In-Vessel Composting (IVC) Tunnels: Five concrete tunnels (35m × 8m each) for enclosed composting and pasteurisation.

Anaerobic Digesters (AD): Two PF2100 digesters for biogas generation, with gas storage, flare, and Combined Heat and Power (CHP) unit.

Maturation Building: Semi-enclosed aerated bays for curing and stabilisation of compost.

Odour and Particulate Control: Two-stage system including a chemical scrubber and engineered biofilter.

Leachate and Stormwater Management: Fully contained drainage, storage tanks, and treatment ponds with reuse of water in the composting process.

Ancillary Infrastructure: Administration office, weighbridges, truck holding areas, internal roads, fire suppression systems, and perimeter landscaping.

Landscaping and Buffers: Retention of boundary vegetation where possible, with additional planting to reinforce buffers to the south and west.

General site establishment works include clearing of regrowth vegetation, bulk earthworks, and construction of access roads. The built form will reach a maximum height of approximately 16.45m AGL (20.65m AHD) at the anaerobic digesters.



FIGURE 9: Architecture Package Imagery (Source MRA Consulting)

Topography

The topography of the subject site at 48 Midge Orchid Road, Darawank is characterised by flat to gently undulating landforms, typical of the low-lying rural landscape around Tuncurry. The site ranges in elevation from approximately 2 metres AHD at its lowest point to around 6 metres AHD at its highest point, creating a relatively even surface suitable for large-scale infrastructure development without the need for extensive cut-and-fill works.

The visual catchment of the subject site is strongly influenced by the low-lying topography of the land and the vegetated ridgelines and dune systems that surround it. While the site itself is relatively open and flat, its broader context provides effective visual containment.

To the north, the rising land within the Darawank Nature Reserve establishes a natural ridgeline backdrop that limits long-distance views into the site from the northward direction.

To the east, the coastal dune system of Nine Mile Beach acts as a prominent topographic and vegetated barrier, preventing views from the coastline and recreational areas associated with the beach.

To the south, intervening bushland and the gentle rise towards The Lakes Way restricts direct line-of-sight for motorists. Filtered views may be possible when travelling southbound along the corridor, though these are moderated by distance, roadside vegetation, and the broader infrastructure context of the adjoining Waste Management Centre.

To the west, the topography gently descends toward the Wallamba River, which is fringed by riparian vegetation. This natural buffer restricts visibility from riverfront locations and rural residential properties, although some filtered views of upper built elements may be available from elevated positions within private lots.

Overall, the combination of flat terrain on the site itself with vegetated ridgelines, dune systems, and bushland buffers in the surrounding locality provides strong visual containment. These features significantly reduce the visibility of the proposal from the wider landscape, confining potential views primarily to the immediate surrounds of Midge Orchid Road, nearby rural dwellings to the south and west, and limited sections of The Lakes Way.

In a broader context, the topography of the site and surrounds contributes to the locality’s semi-rural landscape character, with flat to gently undulating land punctuated by vegetated ridgelines and coastal dune systems. This relatively subdued topographic setting ensures that the proposed MC ROPS facility will be visually contained within the existing waste management precinct and buffered from the wider conservation and residential landscapes.



FIGURE 10: Topography (Source GIS)

Visual Analysis

VISUAL CATCHMENT

The potential visual catchment for the proposed MidCoast Regional Organics Processing Solution is defined as the theoretical area within which the facility may be visible. In practice, the extent of discernible visual impact is considerably narrower, as visibility is influenced by vegetation, topography, distance, and the presence of existing infrastructure.

A combination of desktop review (including aerial imagery, topographic data, and NSW Spatial Viewer zoning) and field-based inspections was undertaken to establish the potential visual catchment. This analysis considered the scale of proposed structures, particularly the anaerobic digesters (up to 16.45 m AGL), and the extent to which intervening vegetation and landform act to contain views.

The fieldwork analysis found that:

Close-Range Views:

– Views from Midge Orchid Road are the most direct and prominent, with the receival building, IVC tunnels and digesters visible from the site access point.

– The development will be perceived in conjunction with the adjoining Tuncurry Waste Management Centre, reducing contrast with its surrounds.

– From immediately adjacent rural land (including Council-owned land to the west), filtered views are likely, though vegetation along the boundaries provides screening.

Medium-Distance Views:

– From rural residences to the south, approximately 430 metres away, views of the taller built elements may be possible above or through tree cover. Landscaping and existing vegetation will provide substantial visual buffering.

– From residences to the west (415–680 metres), the digesters and upper rooflines may be visible at distance, though heavily filtered by vegetation.

– From sections of The Lakes Way, southbound motorists may obtain glimpsed or filtered views, depending on vegetation clearance. This corridor is a key consideration for cumulative visual impact, as noted by Council.

– From residences to the west (415–680 metres), the digesters and upper rooflines may be visible at distance, though heavily filtered by vegetation.

From sections of The Lakes Way, southbound motorists may obtain glimpsed or filtered views, depending on vegetation clearance. This corridor is a key consideration for cumulative visual impact, as noted by Council.

Distant Views:

– From the Wallamba River (600 m west), intervening vegetation and riparian corridors restrict direct sightlines. Views are likely negligible or limited to glimpses of taller structures.

– From Nine Mile Beach (1.4 km east) and the Darawank Nature Reserve, no direct line-of-sight is anticipated due to the intervening dune system and dense vegetation.

– From the broader landscape, including elevated ridgelines north of Darawank, the development is unlikely to be visible given the low profile of the site and strong vegetated containment.

The visibility of the proposed development is spatially contained, with views confined primarily to the immediate road corridor (Midge Orchid Road), adjoining rural land, and selected medium-range viewpoints including nearby rural residences and sections of The Lakes Way. Beyond this immediate catchment, intervening vegetation, ridgelines and dune systems ensure that visibility is minimal or negligible.

VISUAL QUALITY

Visual quality refers to how viewers perceive and respond to a given landscape, based on its aesthetic appeal and the enjoyment it provides. Areas of high visual quality are those that are valued by the community for their scenic beauty and positive impact on the overall environment. In contrast, areas of low visual quality are often perceived as lacking aesthetic value, prompting a preference for improvement, often through interventions such as landscaping space or screen planting. The criteria for assessing scenic quality are informed by empirical research conducted in Australia by scholars such as Terrance Purcell, Richard Lamb, Colleen Morris, and Gary Moore, who have developed frameworks for evaluating the cultural and aesthetic value of landscapes. These criteria take into account elements such as natural features, built form, and the overall visual harmony of an area.

In the case of 48 Midge Orchid Road, Darawank, the existing visual quality of the site and surrounds is defined by a combination of natural and utilitarian elements:

As visual quality is inherently subjective, its assessment depends on the specific preferences and expectations of the community. Research has shown that certain landscapes tend to be consistently preferred over others, particularly when they incorporate specific elements that enhance their appeal. This study visual quality rating is based on widely accepted principles from scientific research (DOP, 1988), including:

Natural Features:	The broader setting includes the Darawank Nature Reserve, Wallamba River, and Nine Mile Beach, which are valued for their ecological and recreational qualities and are considered to have high scenic quality.
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Topographic Variation:	The site itself is flat to gently undulating, with limited variation in landform. The subdued topography contributes to a neutral visual character, neither highly scenic nor visually distinctive..
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Vegetation Diversity:	The subject land supports regrowth native vegetation and scattered eucalypts, which provide some natural screening. While these plantings contribute to the rural character, they lack the diversity and maturity of intact bushland..
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Existing Land Use	:	The adjoining Tuncurry Waste Management Centre introduces a strong utilitarian character, with visible sheds, hardstand areas, and operational infrastructure. This reduces the overall visual quality of the immediate precinct compared to surrounding natural and conservation areas.
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Water Features:	The Wallamba River, approximately 600 metres west, and the coastal dunes of Nine Mile Beach, approximately 1.4 kilometres east, contribute positively to the scenic value of the wider locality, though they are not visually connected to the site due to intervening vegetation.
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Land Use Compatibility:	The subject site sits at the interface of rural, conservation, and infrastructure land uses. While the broader area is valued for its natural and semi-rural character, the presence of the Waste Management Centre establishes a precedent for large-scale service infrastructure, moderating expectations of pristine scenic quality within the immediate catchment.
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Overall, the existing visual quality of the subject site is considered to be of low to moderate value. The flat landform, regrowth vegetation, and presence of adjoining waste infrastructure reduce its scenic appeal compared to surrounding conservation and natural landscapes. However, the broader locality retains areas of high visual quality associated with the river, coastal reserves, and bushland.

The proposed MC ROPS development will therefore be assessed in terms of how well it integrates into this transitional setting, softens its visual bulk, and complements the existing infrastructure character without eroding the high scenic values of the wider conservation landscape.

Visual Analysis

COMMENT: The surrounding context of 48 Midge Orchid Road, Darawank is predominantly rural and environmental, interspersed with essential infrastructure. The area includes regrowth vegetation, bushland reserves, scattered rural dwellings, and the adjoining Tuncurry Waste Management Centre, which establishes a clear utility-based character.

To the north, RU2-zoned land transitions into the Darawank Nature Reserve (C1/C2), with the Hallidays Point Sewage Treatment Plant located further beyond. To the east, the site directly adjoins the SP2 Waste Management Facility, with the Nine Mile Beach conservation dunes (C2) extending further east. To the south, land zoned E4 Environmental Living contains scattered dwellings within bushland, transitioning to RU2 and C2 pockets before reaching Tuncurry. To the west, a mix of RU2 and C2 zones supports rural residences and bushland extending toward the Wallamba River.

Overall, the context of the subject site is characterised by a transitional rural setting, where natural and conservation lands sit alongside essential infrastructure. The presence of the Waste Management Centre directly east of the site strongly influences the local character, creating a functional and utilitarian precinct that contrasts with the higher scenic values of the surrounding natural landscape.

visual quality table				
		rating		
		low	medium	high
element	landform / relief			
	CONTRAST	FLAT TERRAIN DOMINANT. RIDGE-LINES NOT OFTEN SEEN.	UNDULATING TERRAIN DOMINANT. LITTLE CONTRAST OR RUGGED-NESS RIDGELINES PROMINENT IN ONLY HALF OF LESS OF LAND-SCAPE UNITS.	HIGH HILLS IN FOREGROUND AND MIDDLE GROUND. PRESENCE OF CLIFFS, ROCKS AND OTHER GEO-LOGICAL FEATURES. HIGH RELIEF (E.G. STEEP SLOPES RISING FROM WATER OR PLAIN). RIDGELINES PROMINENT IN MOST OF LAND-SCAPE UNIT.
	vegetation			
	DIVERSITY AND CHANGING PAT-TERNS	ONE OR TWO VEGETATION TYPES PRESENT IN FOREGROUND. UNIFOR-MITY ALONG SKYLINE	PATTERNING IN ONLY ONE OR TWO AREAS. 3 OR 4 VEGETATION TYPES IN FOREGROUND FEW EMERGENT OR FEATURE TREES	HIGH DEGREE OF PATTERNING IN VEGETATION. 4 OR MORE DISTINCT VEGETATION TYPES. EMERGENT TREES PROMINENT AND DISTINCTIVE TO REGION.
	naturalness			
	CORRECT BALANCE	DOMINANCE OF DEVELOPMENT WITHIN MANY PARTS OF A LAND-SCAPE	SOME EVIDENCE OF DEVELOP-MENT BUT NOT DOMINANT	ABSENCE OF DEVELOPMENT OR MINIMAL DISTURBANCE WITHIN LANDSCAPE UNIT. PRESENCE OF PARKLAND OR OTHER OPEN SPACE INCLUDING BEACH, LAKE-SIDE, ETC.
	water			
	PRESENCE, EXTENT AND CHARACTER	LITTLE OR NO VIEW OF WATER. WATER IN THE BACKGROUND WITH-OUT PROMINENCE. PRESENCE OF POLLUTED WATER OR STAGNANT WATER.	MODERATE EXTENT OF WATER. PRESENCE OF CALM WATER. NO ISLANDS, CHANNELS, MEAN-DERING WATER. INTERMITTENT STREAMS, LAKES, RIVERS, ETC.	DOMINANCE OF WATER IN FORE-GROUND AND MIDDLE GROUND. PRESENCE OF FLOWING WATER, TURBULENCE AND PERMANENT WATER.
	development			
	FORM & IDENTITY	PRESENCE OF COMMERCIAL AND INDUSTRIAL STRUCTURES. PRESENCE OF LARGE SCALE DE-VELOPMENT (E.G. MINING INFRA-STRUCTURE, ETC) RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT	PRESENCE OF ESTABLISHED RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT. SMALL SCALE, INDUSTRIAL ETC IN MIDDLE GROUND. PRESENCE OF SPORTS AND RECREATION FACILI-TIES.	PRESENCE OF RURAL STRUC-TURES (E.G. FARM BUILDINGS, FENCES ETC.). HERITAGE BUILD-INGS AND OTHER STRUCTURES APPARENT. ISOLATED DOMESTIC SCALE STRUCTURES.

Source: After Clouston & Brouwer, 1995

VISUAL SENSITIVITY

View place sensitivity refers to the significance of a particular view or viewing location within the public domain. It measures the level of public interest in the view, which is often determined by the number of people likely to experience it from publicly accessible spaces. Locations offering close- or mid-distance views that are visible to large numbers of people, such as roads, parks, or reserves, are considered sensitive viewing places. This also includes areas where people may have prolonged views, such as walking tracks or beaches, where smaller or larger groups may spend extended periods of time. These places are deemed sensitive due to their high visibility and public accessibility.

Visual Sensitivity estimates the significance that a change will have on a landscape and to those viewing it. 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. The assessment is based on variables such as the number of people affected, viewer access, viewer location including distance from the source, viewer position (i.e., inferior, neutral, superior), the surrounding land use and degree of change.

Generally, the following principles apply:

- Visual sensitivity decreases and the viewer distance increases.
- Visual sensitivity decreases as the viewing time decreases.
- Visual sensitivity can also be related to viewer activity (e.g., a person viewing a site while engaged in recreational activities will be more strongly affected by change than someone passing a scene in a car traveling to a desired destination).

Visually sensitive landscapes include: Main ridge lines, significant natural landscape features such as coastal headlands, prominent hills, lake channel entrances, lake islands and lake promontories, National Parks, State Recreation Areas and other protected natural conservation areas, other areas zoned for natural values (areas zoned e2 – Environmental Conservation), within 100m of the lake edge, within 300m of the coastal edge, heritage conservation areas and precincts.

visual sensitivity table	
CATEGORY	DEFINITION
Very High	Typically a view to or from a heritage / protected asset. Key protected viewpoint e.g. interpretive signs. References in literature and art/or guidebooks and tourist maps. Protected view in planning policy designation [LEP, DCP etc]. Views from the main living space of residential properties, state public rights of way e.g. bush trails and state designat-ed landscape feature with public access. Visitors to heritage assets of state importance.
High	View of clear value but may not be formally recognised e.g. framed view of high scenic value from an individual private dwelling or garden. It may also be inferred that the view is likely to have value e.g. to local residents. Local public rights of way and access land. Road and rail routes promoted in tourist guides for their scenic value.
Medium	Non-promoted view in any published sources and may be typical of the views experienced from a given receptor. People engaged in outdoor sport where an appreciation of the landscape has little or no importance or possible road users on main routes (Motorway/Freeway/Highway) and passengers on trains.
Low	View of clearly lesser value than similar views experienced from nearby visual receptors that may be more accessible. Road users on minor roads. People at their place of work or views from commercial buildings where views of the sur-rounding landscape may have some importance.
Very Low	A view affected by many landscape detractors and unlikely to be valued. People at their place of work or other locations where the views of the wider landscape have little or no importance.

Source: Adapted from GLVIA 2013

Viewshed

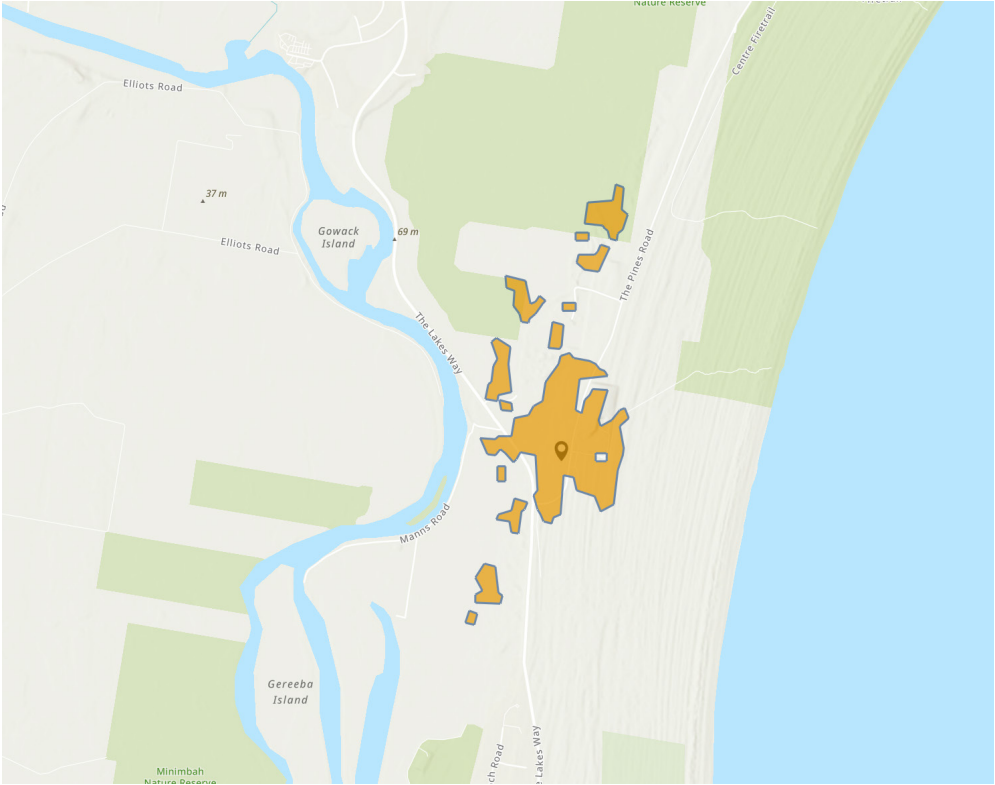
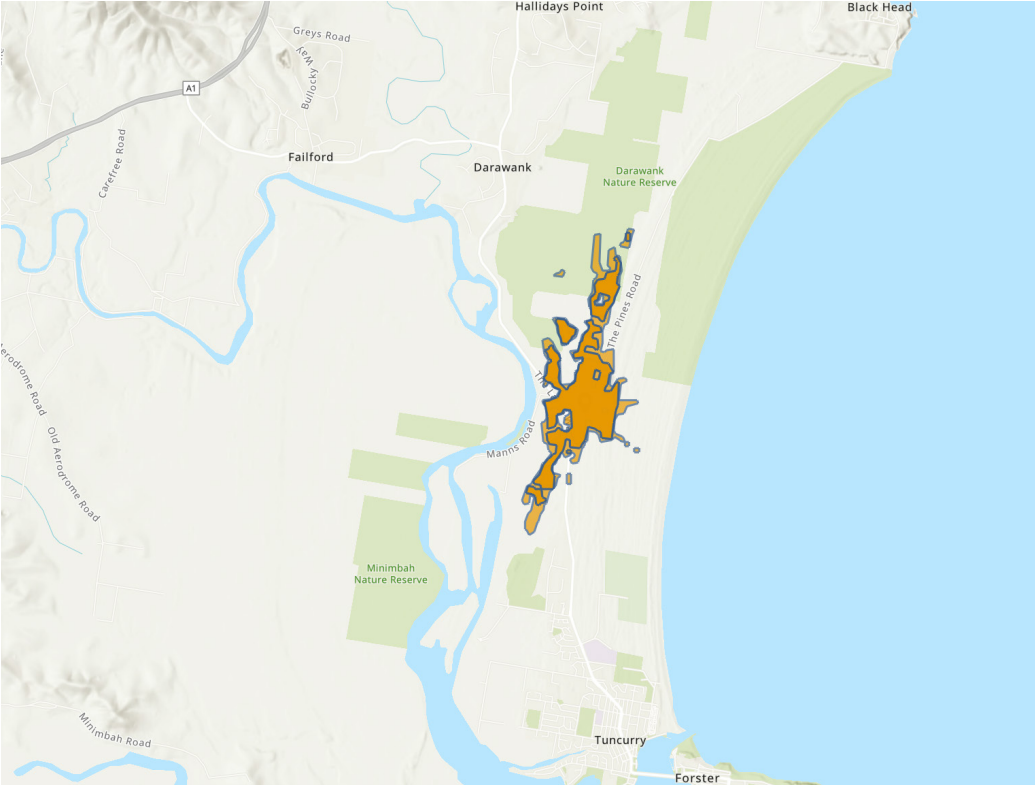
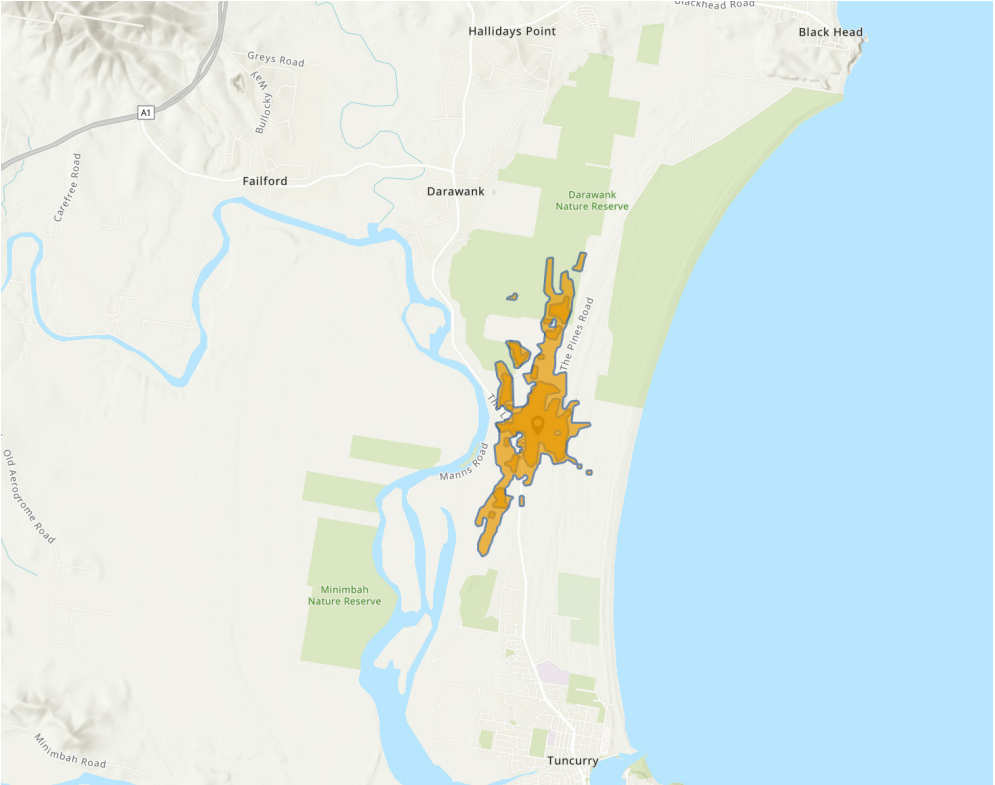


FIGURE 12 : Viewshed map showing the indicative visibility of the proposal. (Source ARCGIS)



COMMENT: The site at 48 Midge Orchid Road, Darawank is mainly visible from Midge Orchid Road and a small number of nearby rural dwellings. Views along Midge Orchid Road are brief and occur within an established service setting defined by the adjoining Waste Management Centre.

To the south (approx. 430 m) and west (415–680 m), rural residences may experience filtered views of taller elements such as the digesters. From The Lakes Way, visibility is intermittent and transient, limited to sections where vegetation allows. Beyond the immediate locality, views are screened by the Darawank Nature Reserve, Nine Mile Beach dunes, and riparian vegetation along the Wallamba River.

Key Findings:Views confined to Midge Orchid Road., some filtered views from nearby rural dwellings, potential intermittent, transient views from The Lakes Way.

VIEWER ACCESS

Viewer sensitivity assesses how likely individuals are to notice and be affected by the visual impacts of the proposed development. This depends on several factors, including the distance between the viewer and the site, the duration of exposure to the view, and the specific vantage points from which the development is observed. These factors influence the perceived significance of the visual impact and how it may affect those in the private domain.

Around 48 Midge Orchid Road, Darawank, the most sensitive viewers are the occupants of nearby permanent rural residences to the south (approx. 430 m) and west (415–680 m). These properties may experience partial or filtered views of taller facility elements, with sensitivity elevated by the permanent and private nature of residential outlooks..

Midge Orchid Road provides the most direct public views, though exposure is brief and functional, limited to waste facility users, Council staff, and local residents accessing the area. The Lakes Way also offers some intermittent views for passing motorists, but these are transient and carry less weight in terms of sensitivity.

Beyond the immediate catchment, conservation lands including the Darawank Nature Reserve and Nine Mile Beach are unlikely to have visibility of the site due to vegetation and topographic containment. Similarly, views from the Wallamba River are screened by riparian vegetation, reducing sensitivity to negligible.

Overall, sensitivity is highest for permanent rural residences within 500–700 m of the site, moderate for road users on Midge Orchid Road and The Lakes Way, and low to negligible for conservation lands and waterways where views are effectively screened.

VIEWER ACCESS MATRIX												
	VIEWER DISTANCE											
	LONG/DISTANT (>3km)			MEDIUM (2–3km)			SHORT (1–2km)			VERY SHORT (<1km)		
	VIEWING DURATION											
	<10 mins	10 – 30 mins	>30 mins	<10 mins	10 – 30 mins	>30 mins	<10 mins	10 – 30 mins	>30 mins	<10 mins	10 – 30 mins	>30 mins
High (>200 PEOPLE PER DAY)	L	L	M	L	M	M	M	H	H	H	H	H
Medium (150–199 PEOPLE PER DAY)	L	L	L	L	M	M	M	M	H	M	H	H
Low (50–149 PEOPLE PER DAY)	L	L	L	L	L	M	L	M	M	L	M	H
Very Low (>49 PEOPLE PER DAY)	L	L	L	L	L	M/L	L	M	M	L	M	H

Source: Adapted from GLVIA 2013

Visual Analysis

VISUAL MAGNITUDE OF CHANGE

The sensitivity of visual receptors may be influenced by the value or importance attributed by individuals to available views. For example, road users may be more sensitive to changes in areas with a high level of scenic quality, while residents of certain properties may be less affected due to an already compromised or highly urbanised visual setting. Typically, the sensitivity of visual receptors is categorised as very high, medium, low, or very low.

The visual effect of a development is determined by the interaction between the proposal and the existing visual environment, expressed through the level of contrast between the new built form and its surrounding setting. This is particularly relevant if a proposed development extends above the skyline, unless specific circumstances influence viewer perception and overall visual impact. It is important to note that a high visual effect does not necessarily equate to a reduction in scenic quality, as visual impact is assessed through the combination of both visual sensitivity and visual effect.

The proposed MC ROPS facility at 48 Midge Orchid Road, Darawank will introduce a prominent new built form into a rural and environmental setting, most noticeable in views from Midge Orchid Road and nearby rural dwellings. Taller elements such as the anaerobic digesters (16.45 m AGL) will create moderate visual contrast, while lower buildings and tunnels will be more contained by vegetation and setbacks. For residences to the south and west (430–680 m), visibility will be filtered by distance and tree cover, reducing the degree of change. For road users, effects will be immediate along Midge Orchid Road but read in context with the adjoining Waste Management Centre, while views from The Lakes Way will be intermittent and transient. From Darawank Nature Reserve, Nine Mile Beach, and the Wallamba River, topography and vegetation provide effective screening, limiting visual change to negligible. Overall, the magnitude of change is assessed as moderate in the immediate catchment, diminishing rapidly with distance.

The table below outlines the visual magnitude based on the above criteria.

CATEGORY	DEFINITION
Very High	A substantial change to the baseline, with the proposed development creating a new focus and having a defining influence on the view. Direct views at close range with changes over a wide horizontal and vertical extent
High	The proposed development will be clearly noticeable and the view would be fundamentally altered by its presence. Direct or oblique views at close range with changes over a noticeable horizontal and or/vertical extent.
Medium	The proposed development will form a new and recognisable element within the view which is likely to be recognised by the receptor. Direct or oblique views at medium range with a moderate horizontal and/or vertical extent of the view affected.
Low	The proposed development will be a minor part of the view, partially visible or at sufficient distance to be a small component. Oblique views at medium or long range with a small horizontal/vertical extent of the view affected.
Very Low	Proposed development is minimally noticeable, and the view whilst slightly altered is similar to the baseline situation. Long range views with a negligible part of the view affected
Negligible	There are no views of the proposal and as such there is no impact.

Source: Adapted from GLVIA 2013

VISUAL IMPACT

The following table illustrates how visual effect and visual sensitivity levels combine to produce varying degrees of visual impact.

It is important to note that a high visual impact does not necessarily equate to a reduction in scenic quality. The degree of visual impact must be assessed in relation to both the existing scenic quality of the area and the design merits of the proposed development. A well-designed proposal with a high visual impact may, in some cases, enhance the visual environment, particularly in areas with lower existing scenic quality.

For each receptor type, the sensitivity of the location is combined with the predicted magnitude of change to determine the level of effect on any particular receptor.

The shaded area of the assessment identifies where the visual effect could be considered moderate or high, indicating a significant impact. However, individual perception and external factors may influence how these effects are experienced. This report exercises flexibility where necessary in assessing the significance of effects, considering the most probable scenario unless otherwise stated. The visual impacts of the MC ROPS facility at 48 Midge Orchid Road, Darawank are therefore assessed in isolation to determine their effect on surrounding residences, road corridors, and conservation landscapes.

The table below outlines the visual impact based on the above criteria.

Sensitivity Receptor	Magnitude of Change					
	Very High	High	Medium	Low	Very Low	
	Very High	Substantial	Major	Major / Moderate	Moderate	Moderate/ Minor
	High	Major	Major/ Moderate	Moderate	Moderate/ Minor	Minor
	Medium	Major / Moderate	Moderate	Moderate/ Minor	Minor	Minor/ Negligible
	Low	Moderate	Moderate/ Minor	Minor	Minor/ Negligible	Negligible
	Very Low	Moderate/ Minor	Minor	Minor/ Negligible	Negligible	Negligible/ None

Source: Adapted from GLVIA 2013

VIA Tools

VIA TOOLS

Photos and studies were taken at multiple locations around the subject site. Images in combination with on-line mapping tools, Sketch Up and Adobe Creative Suite can be used to create simulated views of the proposed development. These do not exactly replicate what is seen through the human eye and in some cases only provide an indication of the bulk and scale of the proposed development. They provide a useful tool in analysing the potential impact from the receptor locations.

The horizontal field of view (FOV) within the photo-montages exceeds the parameters of normal human vision. Human eye FOV is understood to be approximately 160°, the actual amount of detail in focus decreases towards the outer extents of the FOV. The ‘Cone of Visual Attention’ of the human eye is approximately 55° however, in reality the eyes, head and body can all move and, under normal conditions, the human brain would ‘see’ a broad area of landscape within a panoramic view. A single photographic image from a 50mm lens has a horizontal viewing angle of 39.6°. Whilst a photo-montage can provide an image that illustrates a representation of a development in relation to its proposed location and scale relative to the surrounding landscape, it is acknowledged that large scale objects in the landscape can appear smaller in photo-montages than reality. This is partly due to the fact that a flat image does not allow the viewer to perceive information relating to depth or distance. An extract taken from the Photography and Photo-montage in LVIA, Landscape Institute Advice Note 01/11 states that:

‘it is also important to recognise that two-dimensional photographic images and photo-montages alone cannot capture or reflect the complexity underlying the visual experience and should therefore be considered an approximate of the three-dimensional visual experiences that an observer would receive in the field’

Using Adobe Photoshop, the report includes overlays and photo-montages. Proposed elements within the photo-montages have not been created to absolute photo-real standard. The photo-montages are purely a tool to supplement this visual assessment and are intended to demonstrate a predicted likely visual appearance.

A site visit took place in May 2025 which verified the results of the desktop study and evaluated the existing visual character of the area. Photographs taken at eye-level only allow a partial judgment on which residential properties, commercial properties, public open spaces and public rights of way (classed as visual receptors) in the immediate vicinity, may see the development from ground level to the top of the building line. There are limitations due to existing development, topography and surrounding vegetation, therefore, it is not possible to gain a complete understanding of the visual envelope.

DIGITAL 3D SCENE CREATION

The subject site and representative viewing locations have been surveyed to provide a common geospatial reference system using the Map Grid of Australia Zone 56 (MGA56) – Geocentric Datum of Australia 1994 (GDA94). All data sources are aligned to this reference framework to ensure consistency and accuracy in the visual analysis.

The 3D scene for this assessment was created using a combination of:

Registered survey data supplied for the site;

GPS coordinates collected during field inspections to identify precise viewpoint locations;

Architectural and engineering models of the proposed facility, including building envelopes and process infrastructure; and

Photogrammetric and aerial imagery datasets to represent surrounding topography, vegetation, and built form.

Where data sources were not natively aligned to MGA56 (GDA94), common reference points (such as site boundaries, roads, or building outlines) were used to georeference and align them within the same coordinate system.

This report applies GDA94 as the coordinate base. While GDA2020 is the updated national standard, the positional difference of approximately 1.8 metres is negligible in the context of this assessment and has no bearing on the accuracy or reliability of the 3D visual modelling.

PROPOSAL MODELLING

Using Adobe Photoshop, the report includes overlays and photo-montages. Proposed elements within the photo-montages have not been created to absolute photo-real standard. The photo-montages are purely a tool to supplement this visual assessment and are intended to demonstrate a predicted likely visual appearance.

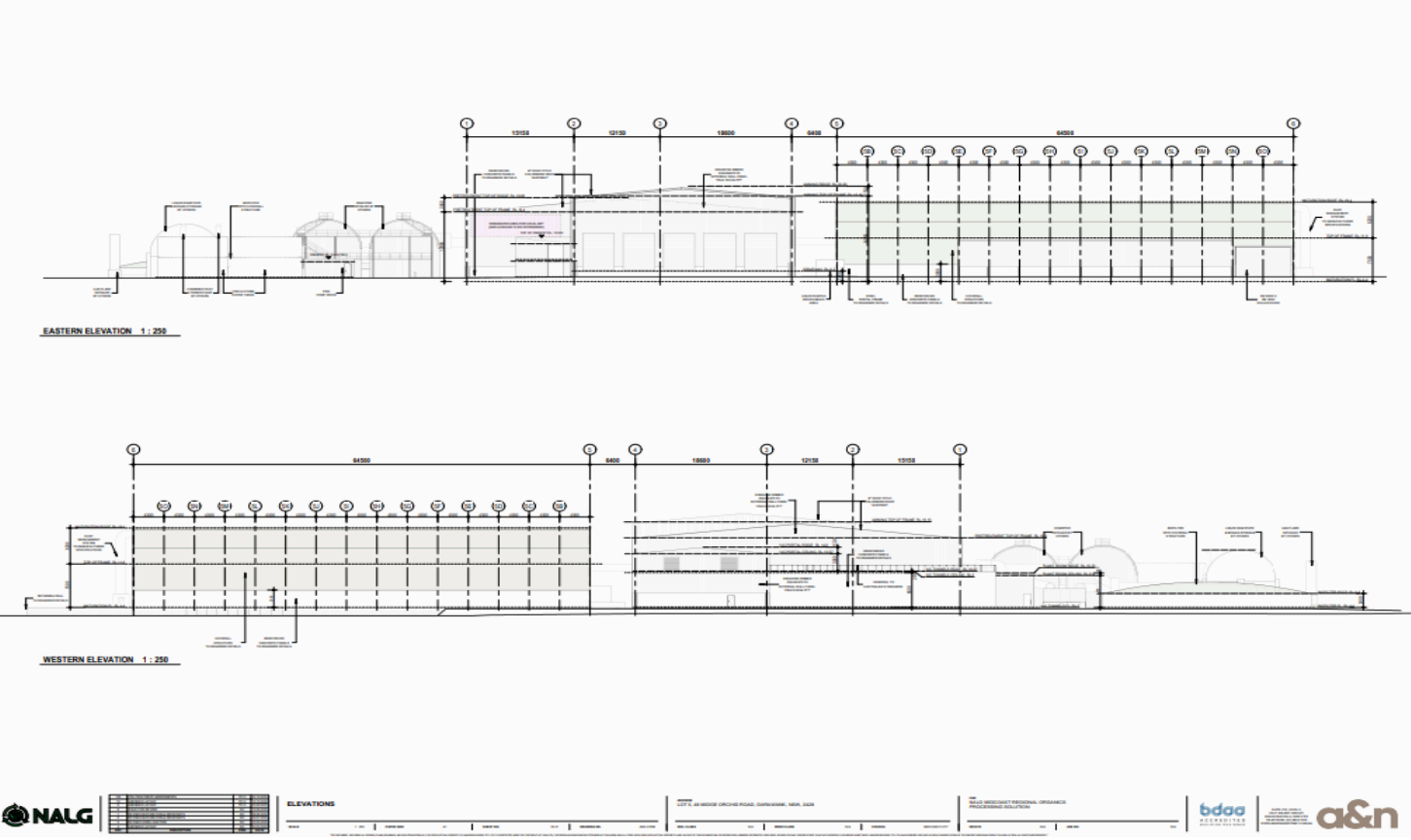


FIGURE 13: Architecture Package Samples (Source NALG)

Visual Impact Assessment

IDENTIFICATION OF VIEWPOINTS

Prior to undertaking fieldwork, a desktop review was carried out including analysis of statutory and non-statutory planning documents, aerial imagery, topography, and viewshed data. This process was used to establish the potential visual catchment and to inform fieldwork inspections of the subject site at 48 Midge Orchid Road, Darawank.

A total of 18 representative viewpoints have been selected for assessment in this report. These viewpoints are shown in two diagrams:

Figure 14 – Viewpoints within and around a 1,000 m radius of the site; and

Figure 15 – Viewpoints within and around a 5,000 m radius of the site.

The selection of viewpoints has been guided by the Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (GLVIA3, LI/IEMA 2013), supplemented by field observations, topographic mapping, and consideration of public accessibility. Viewpoints were chosen to provide a representative sample across:

- Landscape character types (rural residential, road corridors, environmental lands);
- Areas of higher scenic value, including bushland and riparian edges;
- A range of distances (close, mid-range, and distant views);
- Varying orientations and elevations; and
- Locations where the development would be fully, partially, or intermittently visible.

Where direct access to a visual receptor was not possible (such as inside private dwellings), a representative public vantage point has been selected to approximate the likely significance of impact. From each selected viewpoint, either a development overlay or photo-montage has been prepared to illustrate the proposed facility within the landscape.

The assessment acknowledges that landscape and visual analysis requires both objective measurement and subjective professional judgement. While many potential viewpoints were reviewed, the final selection of 18 locations provides a balanced and representative sample of visual experiences from the surrounding landscape.

Eye-level photo-montages are presented at A3 scale for assessment, intended to be viewed at a comfortable distance (300–500 mm) in flat projection, consistent with current industry guidance.

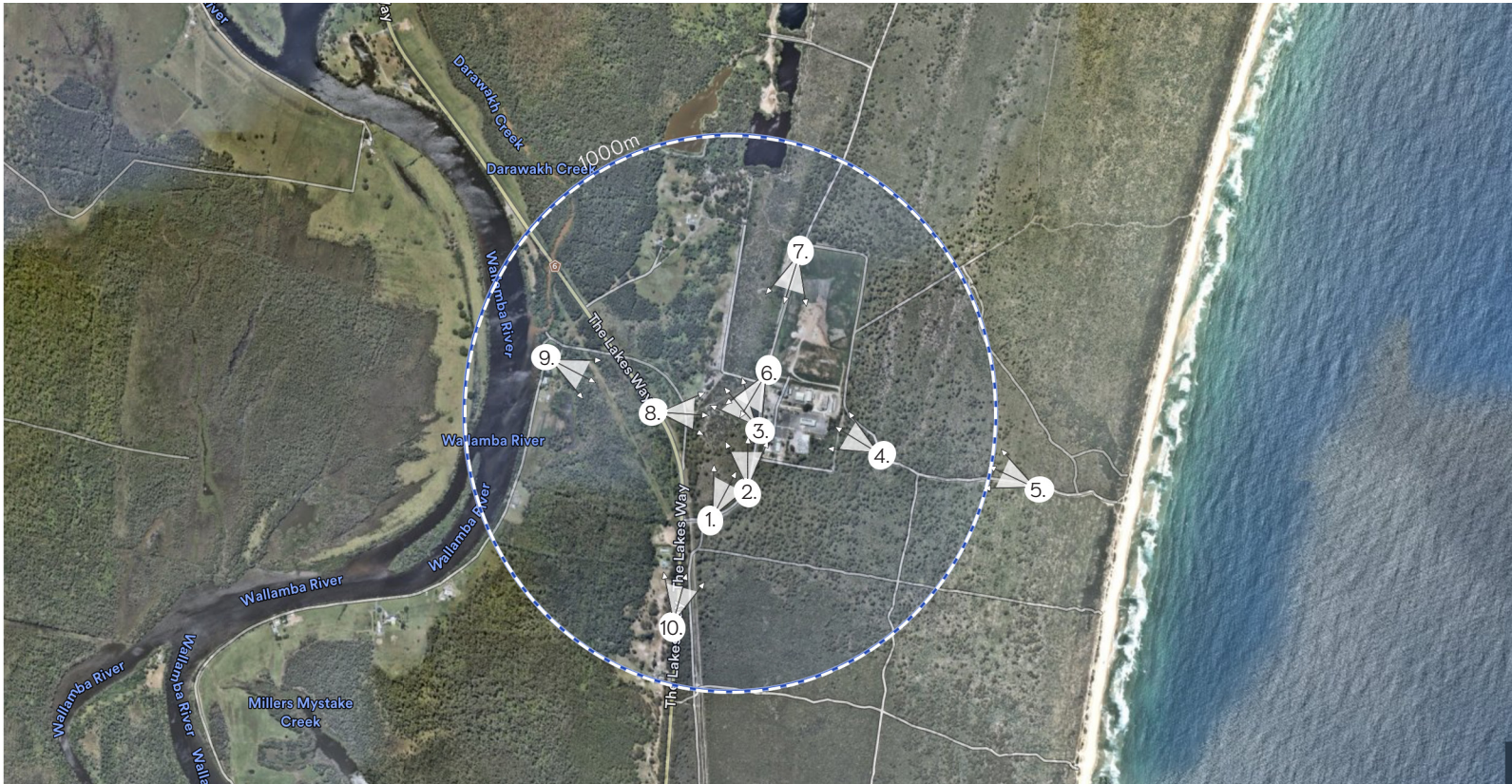


FIGURE 14: Viewpoints Map 1000m radius



FIGURE 15: Viewpoints Map 5000m radius

Viewpoint 01



FIGURE 16: Viewpoint 1 current scene



FIGURE 17: Viewpoint 1 Proposed view

VIEW FROM MIDGE ORCHID ROAD ADJACENT TO SUBJECT SITE

SUMMARY

Location: MIDGE ORCHID ROAD ENTRANCE, DARAWANK

Coordinates: 32.12878S, 152.49333E

Height: 9.00

Viewing Direction: North

Distance to Site: 378m

Land Use: Public Road

VIEWPOINT DESCRIPTION:

Viewing point is close to the subject site, looking in a generally N direction towards the proposed development.

POTENTIAL VISUAL IMPACT:

From this location, the subject site is largely screened by the intervening lot and dense stands of mature eucalyptus and native bushland. The proposed facility will reach a maximum height of approximately 16.45 m (RL 4.4 to RL 20.85), but these upper elements—such as the anaerobic digesters—will remain hidden behind the existing vegetation and only fleetingly perceptible through filtered gaps at certain angles.

The foreground and approach along Midge Orchid Road will remain unchanged, defined by roadside vegetation and the surrounding rural character. The proposal will not obstruct any key scenic features or alter the existing sense of enclosure and natural backdrop experienced along the road corridor.

Overall, the development will result in a negligible to minor visual change, with mature vegetation providing effective long-term screening and the facility reading as part of the broader rural-infrastructure setting rather than a dominant new feature.

VISUAL IMPACT EVALUATION			
	LOW	MODERATE	HIGH
Viewer Position	INFERIOR	NEUTRAL	SUPERIOR
Viewer Access			
Viewer Sensitivity			
Viewer Magnitude	Very Low		
Visual Impact	Based on above criteria overall visual impact rating is NEGLIGIBLE		
Visual Quality	LOW		

Viewpoint 02



FIGURE 18: Viewpoint 2 current scene

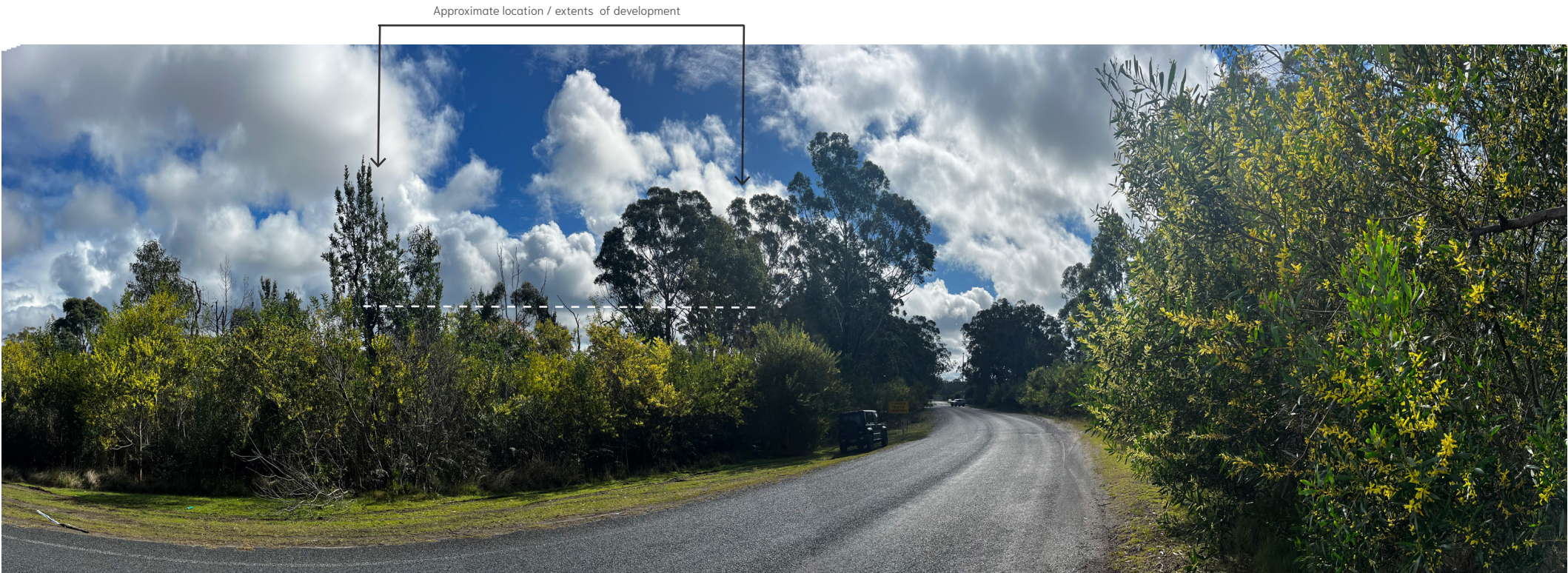


FIGURE 19: Viewpoint 2 Proposed view

VIEW FROM MIDGE ORCHID ROAD ADJACENT TO SUBJECT SITE

SUMMARY

Location: MIDGE ORCHID ROAD ENTRANCE, DARAWANK

Coordinates: 32°7’47.064S, 152°29’35.196E

Height: 10.00

Viewing Direction: North West West

Distance to Site: 200.6m

Land Use: Public Road

VIEWPOINT DESCRIPTION:

Viewing point is close to the subject site, looking in a generally NWW direction towards the proposed development.

POTENTIAL VISUAL IMPACT:

From this location, the subject site is largely screened by dense mature eucalyptus and understorey vegetation along Midge Orchid Road. While the proposed facility introduces new built elements up to approximately 16.45 m high (RL 4.4 to RL 20.85), visibility from this viewpoint will be highly filtered, with only glimpses of upper structures—such as the anaerobic digesters—potentially visible through canopy breaks.

The foreground remains dominated by roadside vegetation and the adjoining Waste Management Centre, maintaining the established rural–infrastructure character. The proposal will not obstruct any valued scenic features, and the filtered nature of views ensures it integrates visually with its service–related surroundings.

Overall, the development will appear as a minor visual change within an already modified landscape, with effective screening and contextual alignment limiting visual prominence.

VISUAL IMPACT EVALUATION			
	LOW	MODERATE	HIGH
Viewer Position	INFERIOR	NEUTRAL	SUPERIOR
Viewer Access			
Viewer Sensitivity			
Viewer Magnitude	Very Low		
Visual Impact	Based on above criteria overall visual impact rating is NEGLIGIBLE		
Visual Quality	LOW		

Viewpoint 03



FIGURE 20: Viewpoint 3 current scene

Approximate location / extents of development



FIGURE 21: Viewpoint 3 Proposed view

VIEW FROM MIDGE ORCHID ROAD ADJACENT TO SUBJECT SITE

SUMMARY

Location: MIDGE ORCHID ROAD, DARAWANK

Coordinates: 32°7’46.524S, 52°29’35.196E

Height: 9.00

Viewing Direction: North West

Distance to Site: 60.6m

Land Use: Public Road

VIEWPOINT DESCRIPTION:

Viewing point is close to the subject site, looking in a generally W direction towards the proposed development.

POTENTIAL VISUAL IMPACT:

From this location, the proposed facility will be partially visible above the existing tree canopy, though views are highly filtered by dense roadside vegetation. Only the upper sections of the anaerobic digesters and rooflines may be momentarily discernible through gaps in the canopy when travelling north along Midge Orchid Road.

The foreground remains dominated by roadside trees and the adjoining Waste Management Centre, retaining the established rural–infrastructure character of the corridor. As a result, the proposal will be perceived as an incremental extension of existing utility development rather than a new or intrusive element.

The development will not obstruct any valued scenic features, and vegetation along the road provides effective visual containment. Overall, the impact from this viewpoint is assessed as minor, with existing screening and contextual alignment minimising visibility and visual contrast..

VISUAL IMPACT EVALUATION			
	LOW	MODERATE	HIGH
Viewer Position	INFERIOR	NEUTRAL	SUPERIOR
Viewer Access			
Viewer Sensitivity			
Viewer Magnitude			
Visual Impact	Based on above criteria overall visual impact rating is MINOR		
Visual Quality	LOW		

Viewpoint 04



FIGURE 22: Viewpoint 4 current scene

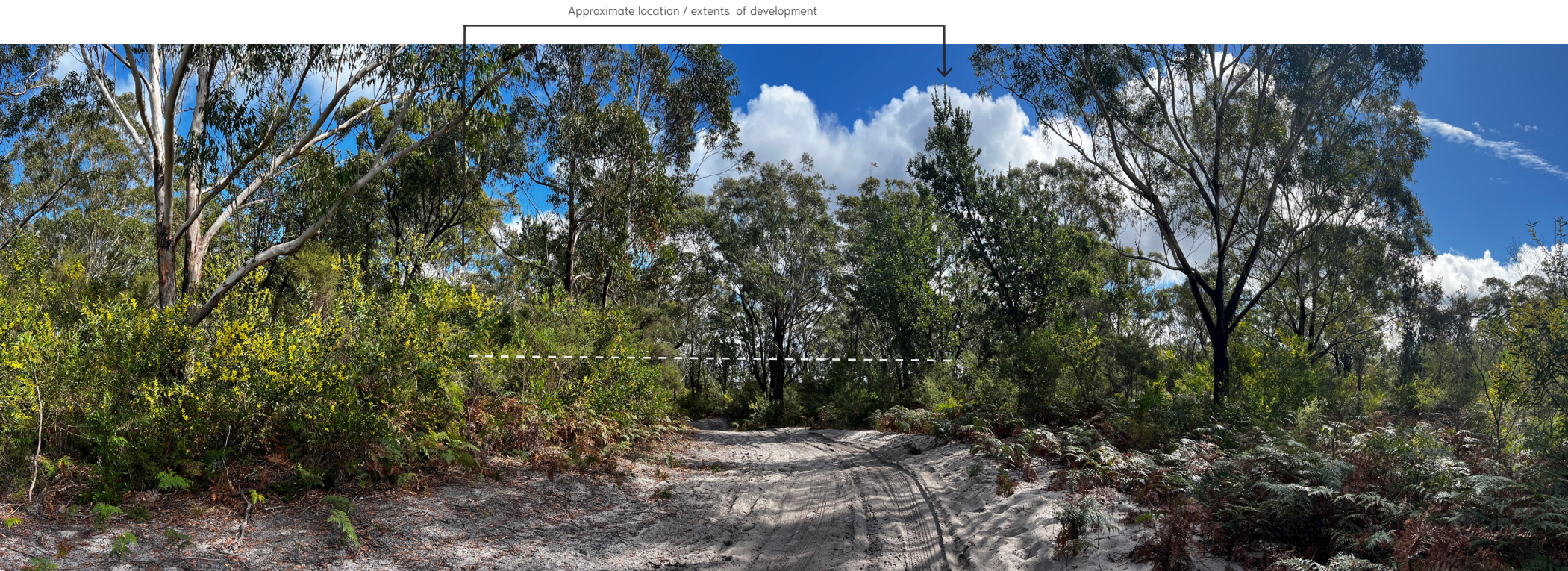


FIGURE 23: Viewpoint 4 Proposed view

VIEW FROM SOUTHERN BOUNDARY TRAIL

SUMMARY
Location: SOUTHERN BOUNDARY TRAIL
Coordinates: 332°7'44.904S, 152°29'53.592E
Height: 7.00
Viewing Direction: West
Distance to Site: 571.6m
Land Use: Nature Trail

VIEWPOINT DESCRIPTION:

Viewing point is close to the subject site, looking in a generally W direction towards the proposed development.

POTENTIAL VISUAL IMPACT:

From this recreational trail behind the existing Waste Management Facility, the proposed development will be effectively screened by the refuse facility buildings and dense intervening vegetation. No direct or partial views of the site are anticipated from this location.

The foreground composition remains entirely natural bushland and existing service infrastructure, with the trail user experience focused on the vegetated setting and access towards the coast. The proposal will not alter this character, nor will it block or interfere with any valued scenic features.

VISUAL IMPACT EVALUATION			
	LOW	MODERATE	HIGH
Viewer Position	INFERIOR	NEUTRAL	SUPERIOR
Viewer Access			
Viewer Sensitivity			
Viewer Magnitude	Very Low		
Visual Impact	Based on above criteria overall visual impact rating is MINOR		
Visual Quality	HIGH		

Viewpoint 05



FIGURE 24: Viewpoint 5 current scene



FIGURE 25: Viewpoint 5 Proposed view

VIEW FROM SOUTHERN BOUNDARY TRAIL

SUMMARY

Location: SOUTHERN BOUNDARY TRAIL
Coordinates: 32°7’48.180S, 152°30’14.112E
Height: 5.00
Viewing Direction: West
Distance to Site: 1140.1m
Land Use: Nature Trail

VIEWPOINT DESCRIPTION:

Viewing point is close to the subject site, looking in a generally W direction towards the proposed development.

POTENTIAL VISUAL IMPACT:

From this recreational trail behind the existing Waste Management Facility, the proposed development will be effectively screened by the dense intervening vegetation. No direct or partial views of the site are anticipated from this location.

The foreground composition remains entirely natural bushland and existing service infrastructure, with the trail user experience focused on the vegetated setting and access towards the coast. The proposal will not alter this character, nor will it block or interfere with any valued scenic features.

VISUAL IMPACT EVALUATION			
	LOW	MODERATE	HIGH
Viewer Position	INFERIOR	NEUTRAL	SUPERIOR
Viewer Access			
Viewer Sensitivity			
Viewer Magnitude	Negligible		
Visual Impact	Based on above criteria overall visual impact rating is MINOR/ NEGLIGIBLE		
Visual Quality	HIGH		

Viewpoint 06



FIGURE 26: viewpoint 6 current scene

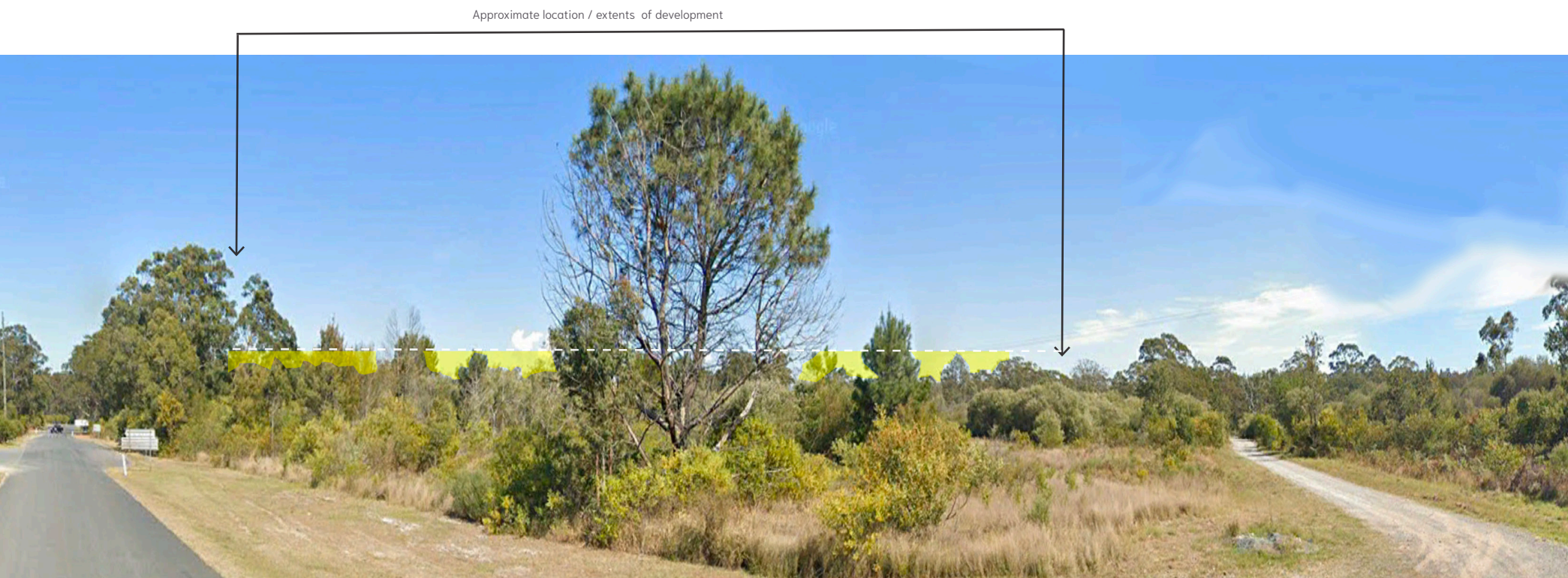


FIGURE 27: Viewpoint 6 Proposed view

VIEW FROM MIDGE ORCHID ROAD ADJACENT TO SUBJECT SITE

SUMMARY
Location: MIDGE ORCHID ROAD, DARAWANK
Coordinates: 32°7’34.176S, 1152°29’37.680E
Height: 9.00
Viewing Direction: South
Distance to Site: 202.7m
Land Use: Public Road

VIEWPOINT DESCRIPTION:

Viewing point is relatively close to the subject site, looking in a generally S direction towards the proposed development.

POTENTIAL VISUAL IMPACT:

The proposal introduces new contemporary built form to the view, with a partial view of the of the development visible above surrounding buildings and tree canopy. Predominantly the top portion of the eastern buildings are visible, The proposal minimally increases the level of built form visible in the composition, the existing foreground composition remains largely unaffected, and the contrast in scale, materiality and architectural style between the proposal and the surrounding buildings creates visual separation and distinction. The proposal does not block views of highly valued scenic features or visual resources.

VISUAL IMPACT EVALUATION			
	LOW	MODERATE	HIGH
Viewer Position	INFERIOR	NEUTRAL	SUPERIOR
Viewer Access			
Viewer Sensitivity			
Viewer Magnitude			
Visual Impact	Based on above criteria overall visual impact rating is MINOR/ NEGLIGIBLE		
Visual Quality	MEDIUM		

Viewpoint 07



FIGURE 28: viewpoint 7 current scene



FIGURE 29: Viewpoint 7 Proposed view

VIEW FROM MIDGE ORCHID ROAD

SUMMARY
Location: MIDGE ORCHID ROAD, DARAWANK
Coordinates: 32°7’21.828S, 152°29’42.000E
Height: 10.00
Viewing Direction: South
Distance to Site: 700m
Land Use: Public Road

VIEWPOINT DESCRIPTION:

Viewing point is relatively close to the subject site, looking in a generally S direction towards the proposed development.

POTENTIAL VISUAL IMPACT:

The proposal is not visible from this location due to the distance from the site and the screening provided by intervening vegetation. As a result, there is no change to the existing view composition and no impact on valued scenic features or visual resources.. The proposal does not block views of highly valued scenic features or visual resources.

VISUAL IMPACT EVALUATION			
	LOW	MODERATE	HIGH
Viewer Position	INFERIOR	NEUTRAL	SUPERIOR
Viewer Access			
Viewer Sensitivity	Very Low		
Viewer Magnitude	Negligible		
Visual Impact	Based on above criteria overall visual impact rating is NEGLIGIBLE		
Visual Quality	LOW		

Viewpoint 08



FIGURE 30: viewpoint 8 current scene



FIGURE 31: Viewpoint 8 Proposed view

VIEW FROM THE LAKES WAY

SUMMARY
Location: THE LAKES WAY, DARAWANK
Coordinates: 32°7’32.844S, 152°29’15.504E
Height: 4.00
Viewing Direction: East
Distance to Site: 272m
Land Use: Public Road

VIEWPOINT DESCRIPTION:

Viewing point is relatively close to the subject site, looking in a generally E direction towards the proposed development.

POTENTIAL VISUAL IMPACT:

From this location on The Lakes Way, the proposal may be partially visible to passing motorists, with the upper portions of the western buildings discernible above surrounding tree canopy. The proposal results in only a minimal increase in built form within the view, while the existing foreground remains largely unaffected. The contemporary scale, materiality, and architectural style create visual distinction from the surrounding buildings without obstructing views of valued scenic features or visual resources.. The proposal does not block views of highly valued scenic features or visual resources.

VISUAL IMPACT EVALUATION			
	LOW	MODERATE	HIGH
Viewer Position	INFERIOR	NEUTRAL	SUPERIOR
Viewer Access			
Viewer Sensitivity			
Viewer Magnitude			
Visual Impact	Based on above criteria overall visual impact rating is MINOR		
Visual Quality	MEDIUM		

Viewpoint 09 & 10



FIGURE 32: Viewpoint 9 current scene

VIEW FROM MANNS ROAD

SUMMARY

Location: MIDGE ORCHID ROAD, DARAWANK
Coordinates: 32°7’35.796S, 152°29’4.704E
Height: 5.00
Viewing Direction: East
Distance to Site: 725m
Land Use: Public Road

VIEWPOINT DESCRIPTION:

Viewing point is looking in a generally E direction towards the proposed development.

POTENTIAL VISUAL IMPACT:

Nil visual impact form this location due to surrounding landscape.

VISUAL IMPACT EVALUATION			
	LOW	MODERATE	HIGH
Viewer Position	INFERIOR	NEUTRAL	SUPERIOR
Viewer Access			
Viewer Sensitivity			
Viewer Magnitude	Negligible		
Visual Impact	Based on above criteria overall visual impact rating is NEGLIGIBLE		
Visual Quality	MEDIUM		



FIGURE 33: Viewpoint 10 current scene

VIEW FROM THE LAKES WAY

SUMMARY

Location: THE LAKES WAY , DARAWANK
Coordinates: 32°8’6.612S, 152°29’27.024E
Height: 8.00
Viewing Direction: North
Distance to Site: 790.9m
Land Use: Public Road

VIEWPOINT DESCRIPTION:

Viewing point is looking in a generally N direction towards the proposed development.

POTENTIAL VISUAL IMPACT:

Nil visual impact form this location due to distance, surrounding buildings and landscape.

VISUAL IMPACT EVALUATION			
	LOW	MODERATE	HIGH
Viewer Position	INFERIOR	NEUTRAL	SUPERIOR
Viewer Access			
Viewer Sensitivity			
Viewer Magnitude	Negligible		
Visual Impact	Based on above criteria overall visual impact rating is MINOR / NEGLIGIBLE		
Visual Quality	MEDIUM		

Viewpoint 11 & 12



FIGURE 34: Viewpoint 11 current scene

VIEW FROM HIGH STREET, BLACK HEAD

SUMMARY

Location: HIGH STREET, BLACK HEAD
Coordinates: 32°4’7.716S, 1152°32’13.920E
Height: 5.00
Viewing Direction: South West
Distance to Site: 7773.3m
Land Use: Public Road

VIEWPOINT DESCRIPTION:

Viewing point is looking in a generally SW direction towards the proposed development.

POTENTIAL VISUAL IMPACT:

Nil visual impact form this location due to surrounding buildings, vegetation and landscape.

VISUAL IMPACT EVALUATION			
	LOW	MODERATE	HIGH
Viewer Position	INFERIOR	NEUTRAL	SUPERIOR
Viewer Access			
Viewer Sensitivity			
Viewer Magnitude	Negligible		
Visual Impact	Based on above criteria overall visual impact rating is NEGLIGIBLE		
Visual Quality	MEDIUM		



FIGURE 35: Viewpoint 12 current scene

VIEW FROM THE BOULEVARD, TALLWOODS VILLAGE

SUMMARY

Location: THE BOULEVARD, TALLWOODS VILLAGE
Coordinates: 32°3’23.724S, 152°30’27.648E
Height: 36.00
Viewing Direction: South
Distance to Site: 8031.2m
Land Use: Public Road

VIEWPOINT DESCRIPTION:

Viewing point is looking in a generally S direction towards the proposed development.

POTENTIAL VISUAL IMPACT:

Nil visual impact form this location due to distance, surrounding buildings and landscape.

VISUAL IMPACT EVALUATION			
	LOW	MODERATE	HIGH
Viewer Position	INFERIOR	NEUTRAL	SUPERIOR
Viewer Access			
Viewer Sensitivity			
Viewer Magnitude	Negligible		
Visual Impact	Based on above criteria overall visual impact rating is NEGLIGIBLE		
Visual Quality	MEDIUM		

Viewpoint 13 & 14



FIGURE 36: Viewpoint 13 current scene

VIEW FROM FAILFORD ROAD

SUMMARY

Location: JCT MILL ROAD & FAILFORD ROAD, FAILFORD
Coordinates: 32°5’31.524S, 152°26’51.216E
Height: 9.00
Viewing Direction: South East
Distance to Site: 5791.4m
Land Use: Public Road

VIEWPOINT DESCRIPTION:

Viewing point is looking in a generally SE direction towards the proposed development.

POTENTIAL VISUAL IMPACT:

Nil visual impact form this location due to surrounding buildings, vegetation and landscape.

VISUAL IMPACT EVALUATION			
	LOW	MODERATE	HIGH
Viewer Position	INFERIOR	NEUTRAL	SUPERIOR
Viewer Access			
Viewer Sensitivity			
Viewer Magnitude	Negligible		
Visual Impact	Based on above criteria overall visual impact rating is NEGLIGIBLE		
Visual Quality	LOW		



FIGURE 37: viewpoint 14 current scene

VIEW FROM AQUATIC ROAD

SUMMARY

Location: AQUATIC ROAD, DARAWANK
Coordinates: 32°5’52.260S, 152°28’30.468E
Height: 12.00
Viewing Direction: South East
Distance to Site: 3753.8m
Land Use: Public Road

VIEWPOINT DESCRIPTION:

Viewing point is looking in a generally SE direction towards the proposed development.

POTENTIAL VISUAL IMPACT:

Nil visual impact form this location due to distance, surrounding buildings and landscape.

VISUAL IMPACT EVALUATION			
	LOW	MODERATE	HIGH
Viewer Position	INFERIOR	NEUTRAL	SUPERIOR
Viewer Access			
Viewer Sensitivity			
Viewer Magnitude	Negligible		
Visual Impact	Based on above criteria overall visual impact rating is NEGLIGIBLE		
Visual Quality	LOW		

Viewpoint 15 & 16



FIGURE 38: Viewpoint 15 current scene

VIEW FROM THE PINES ROAD

SUMMARY

Location: THE PINES ROAD, DARAWANK
Coordinates: 32°5’48.624S, 152°30’25.776E
Height: 14.00
Viewing Direction: South East
Distance to Site: 5791.4m
Land Use: Public Road

VIEWPOINT DESCRIPTION:

Viewing point is looking in a generally SE direction towards the proposed development.

POTENTIAL VISUAL IMPACT:

Nil visual impact form this location due to surrounding buildings, vegetation and landscape.

VISUAL IMPACT EVALUATION			
	LOW	MODERATE	HIGH
Viewer Position	INFERIOR	NEUTRAL	SUPERIOR
Viewer Access			
Viewer Sensitivity			
Viewer Magnitude	Negligible		
Visual Impact	Based on above criteria overall visual impact rating is MINOR		
Visual Quality	MEDIUM		



FIGURE 39: viewpoint 16 current scene

VIEW FROM CHAPMANS ROAD

SUMMARY

Location: CHAPMANS ROAD, TUNCURRY
Coordinates: 32°9’23.940S, 152°29’13.776E
Height: 7.00
Viewing Direction: North
Distance to Site: 3197.2m
Land Use: Public Road

VIEWPOINT DESCRIPTION:

Viewing point is looking in a generally N direction towards the proposed development.

POTENTIAL VISUAL IMPACT:

Nil visual impact form this location due to distance, surrounding buildings and landscape.

VISUAL IMPACT EVALUATION			
	LOW	MODERATE	HIGH
Viewer Position	INFERIOR	NEUTRAL	SUPERIOR
Viewer Access			
Viewer Sensitivity			
Viewer Magnitude	Negligible		
Visual Impact	Based on above criteria overall visual impact rating is NEGLIGIBLE		
Visual Quality	LOW		

Viewpoint 17 & 18



FIGURE 40: Viewpoint 17 current scene

VIEW FROM STEWART PARADE

SUMMARY

Location: STEWART PARADE, TUNCURRY
Coordinates: 32°10'23.052S, 152°29'28.752E
Height: 6.00
Viewing Direction: North
Distance to Site: 5046.3m
Land Use: Public Road

VIEWPOINT DESCRIPTION:

Viewing point is looking in a generally N direction towards the proposed development.

POTENTIAL VISUAL IMPACT:

Nil visual impact form this location due to surrounding buildings, vegetation and landscape.

VISUAL IMPACT EVALUATION			
	LOW	MODERATE	HIGH
Viewer Position	INFERIOR	NEUTRAL	SUPERIOR
Viewer Access			
Viewer Sensitivity			
Viewer Magnitude	Negligible		
Visual Impact	Based on above criteria overall visual impact rating is NEGLIGIBLE		
Visual Quality	MEDIUM		

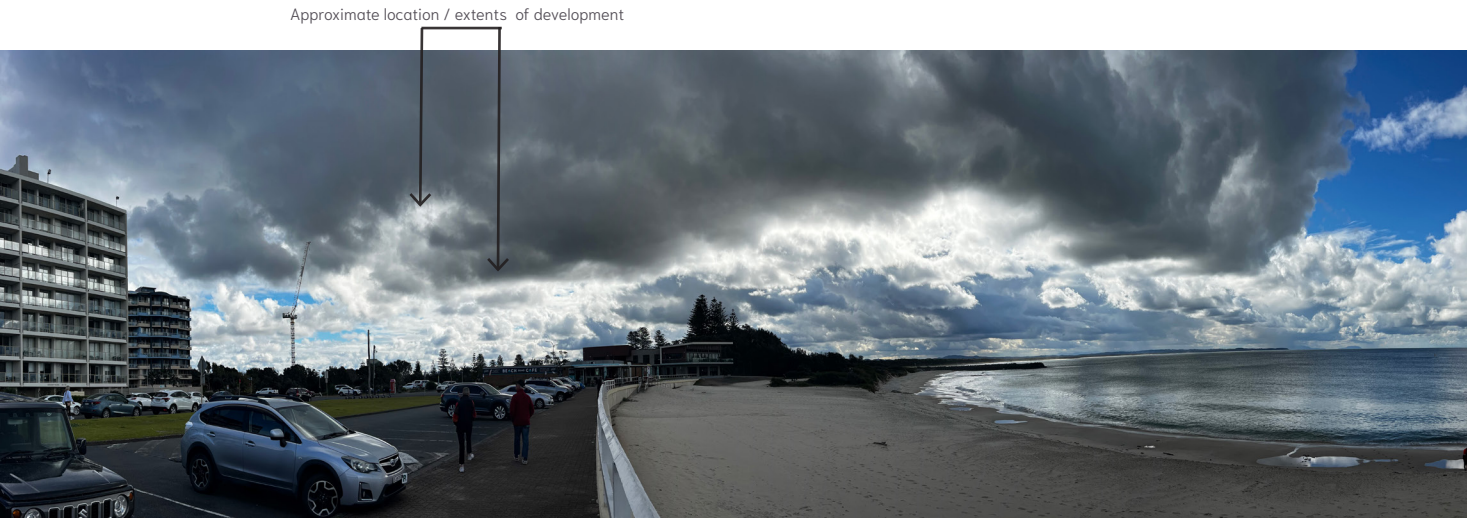


FIGURE 41: viewpoint 18 current scene

VIEW FROM BEACH STREET CAR PARK

SUMMARY

Location: BEACH STREET CAR PARK, FORSTER
Coordinates: 32°10'42.168S, 152°30'44.640E
Height: 8.00
Viewing Direction: North West
Distance to Site: 5945.2m
Land Use: Public Road

VIEWPOINT DESCRIPTION:

Viewing point is looking in a generally NW direction towards the proposed development.

POTENTIAL VISUAL IMPACT:

Nil visual impact form this location due to distance, surrounding buildings and landscape.

VISUAL IMPACT EVALUATION			
	LOW	MODERATE	HIGH
Viewer Position	INFERIOR	NEUTRAL	SUPERIOR
Viewer Access			
Viewer Sensitivity			
Viewer Magnitude	Negligible		
Visual Impact	Based on above criteria overall visual impact rating is MINOR		
Visual Quality	MEDIUM		

Visual Impact Assessment

VIEWPOINT ANALYSIS

Wherever possible the viewpoints for this subject site have been selected to represent the worst case scenario. For each viewpoint, the potential visual impact was analysed through the use of a combination of topographic maps and on site analysis.

The visual sensitivity and visual magnitude of each viewpoint have been assessed which, when combined, result in an overall visual impact for the viewpoint.

Of the 18 viewpoint studied, five(5) were rated as Minor, three (3) were rated as Minor / Negligible and ten (10) were rated as Negligible level of visual impact.

Generally, these viewpoints rated as having a minor visual impact were taken within a close proximity of the proposal and within a residential or public road area. The visual magnitude (the level of visual contrast) is likely to be minor/ negligible for the majority of locations.

VIEWPOINT SUMMARY:

The table presented outlines the results of the visual impact assessment, correlating each viewpoint considered with the corresponding level of visual impact significance. The assessment takes into account both the existing scenic quality of the area and the design merits of the proposed development. To support a more objective comparison, qualitative impact ratings were converted into numerical values and then averaged.

SIGNIFICANCE OF VISUAL IMPACT: The overall significance of visual impact at this location is judged to be **MINOR / NEGLIGIBLE**.

DISCUSSION:

This section considers the general public visual impact of the proposed development on the surrounding environment, highlighting locations where the proposal would be most visible and prominent.

Prominent views are expected from Midge Orchid Road, where motorists and pedestrians will have partial, foreground views of the site. These views occur within the existing context of a waste facility and will be softened by proposed landscaping.

Surrounding views are primarily within a mixed-use landscape setting. From the north, visibility is fragmented and limited due to intervening vegetation, buildings, topography, and distance.

Elevated viewpoints beyond Midge Orchid Road are further constrained by existing vegetation and built form, reducing exposure of the proposal.

Viewpoints 2 and 3 represent typical road-level views along Midge Orchid Road. While the site may be partially visible, exposure is moderate due to the frequency of road use. Visual sensitivity is therefore considered moderate, given the functional nature of the road and its users. The proposal has been designed to integrate with existing facility structures through material selection and built form, while accommodating landscaping to further reduce visual dominance.

Visual Absorption Capacity (VAC):

The landscape demonstrates a high capacity to absorb change, given the proposal's consistency with surrounding residential and industrial development. Existing visual quality is assessed as low.

Result: The overall public visual impact of the proposal is considered Minor.

VIEWPOINT SUMMARY				
	ACCESS	SENSITIVITY	MAGNITUDE	IMPACT
Viewpoint / Photomontage 1	Minor	Minor	Negligible	Negligible
Viewpoint / Photomontage 2	Minor	Minor	Negligible	Negligible
Viewpoint / Photomontage 3	Minor	Minor	Moderate	Minor
Viewpoint / Photomontage 4	Minor	Moderate	Minor/ Negligible	Minor
Viewpoint / Photomontage 5	Minor	Moderate	Negligible	Minor/ Negligible
Viewpoint / Photomontage 6	Minor	Minor	Minor	Minor/ Negligible
Viewpoint / Photomontage 7	Minor	Minor/ Negligible	Negligible	Negligible
Viewpoint / Photomontage 8	Major/ Moderate	Moderate	Minor	Minor
Viewpoint / Photomontage 9	Minor	Minor	Negligible	Negligible
Viewpoint / Photomontage 10	Major/ Moderate	Moderate	Negligible	Minor/ Negligible
Viewpoint / Photomontage 11	Minor	Minor	Negligible	Negligible
Viewpoint / Photomontage 12	Minor	Minor	Negligible	Negligible
Viewpoint / Photomontage 13	Minor	Minor	Negligible	Negligible
Viewpoint / Photomontage 14	Minor	Minor	Negligible	Negligible
Viewpoint / Photomontage 1 5	Minor	Major/ Moderate	Negligible	Minor
Viewpoint / Photomontage 1 6	Minor	Minor	Negligible	Negligible
Viewpoint / Photomontage 1 7	Minor	Minor	Negligible	Negligible
Viewpoint / Photomontage 1 8	Minor	Major/ Moderate	Negligible	Minor

Significance of Residual Visual Impacts

Following the implementation of appropriate mitigation strategies, any residual visual impacts must be assessed in context to determine their overall acceptability. These impacts generally relate to the lasting visual changes to the immediate environment. In urban areas, such residual impacts are often influenced by individual perceptions of the development’s scale and design elements that cannot always be fully mitigated through the use of materials, colour schemes, or façade treatments alone. Community responses may vary, with different individuals or groups expressing differing levels of acceptance or concern regarding changes to the area’s visual character. Perspectives may also differ depending on familiarity with existing, approved, or proposed developments.

Nevertheless, the considered use of materials and thoughtful landscape design during the detailed design phase is expected to meaningfully reduce visual impacts from surrounding viewpoints. These design strategies will assist in ensuring the development integrates harmoniously with the existing streetscape.

Conclusion

This visual impact assessment has been undertaken in accordance with the Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (GLVIA) and the Transport for NSW Visual Impact Assessment Guidelines.

The site is located in a predominantly rural landscape, where the existing waste facility is the primary built feature. The proposed development is not visible from the majority of locations due to distance, vegetation, and landform. From the few viewpoints where it is visible, the proposal is generally limited to the upper and mid-levels of the built form and is seen in the context of the existing facility.

Of the eighteen viewpoints assessed, most were rated as negligible or minor, with only a small number rated as minor to moderate. The proposal does not block or diminish valued scenic views, heritage features, or distant natural skylines.

Overall, the development has a localised and limited visibility, resulting in a level of impact that is considered minor to moderate and acceptable within the rural context. With the application of recommended visual mitigation measures, including native vegetation screening, earth-toned materials, and low-impact lighting, the proposal will be further integrated into the surrounding landscape, ensuring its visual effects remain limited and consistent with the character of the area.

Visual Mitigation Measures

To reduce visual impacts and support integration of the proposal into the rural setting, the following measures are recommended for detailed design and implementation:

- Native Vegetation Screening: Establish targeted planting of locally indigenous trees and shrubs along key sightlines. This will provide long-term screening, soften built edges, and reinforce the natural character of the rural setting.
- Earth-Toned Materials and Finishes: Apply non-reflective, muted colours and materials that reflect the tones of the surrounding rural environment (e.g., greens, browns, and greys) to minimise contrast.
- Low-Impact Lighting: Incorporate downward-facing, shielded, and low-glare lighting to reduce spill and preserve the character of the rural night-time environment.
- Landscape Integration: Where possible, use landform shaping, bunds, or contouring to integrate the built form into the surrounding topography and reduce overall visual exposure.
- Progressive Planting and Maintenance: Stage planting early in the construction process to ensure screening establishes as the development progresses, with ongoing maintenance to retain visual effectiveness over time.

A note on Subconsultant Reports

Design Updates Post Assessment:

Following Revision 10A, minor reductions in roof levels have been made to the Pre-treatment Building (RL 18.85) and IVC Loading Corridor (RL 14.8). These changes do not alter the footprint or visual composition of the development and marginally reduce the visual exposure of built form in all assessed views. The findings of this Visual Impact Assessment therefore remain unchanged.

Landscape Plan Review – October 2025:

The updated Landscape DA Package (Ground iNK, 23 October 2025) enhances the project’s visual integration and mitigation measures without changing the development footprint or overall layout.

Key observations include:

Increased native screening:	The planting strategy introduces layered native vegetation consistent with PCT 3544 (Coastal Sands Apple–Blackbutt Forest), including Angophora costata, Banksia integrifolia, Eucalyptus pilularis, and Lomandra longifolia, which will provide effective year-round visual screening.
Peripheral planting zones:	New screen planting and locally native tree zones along Midge Orchid Road and site boundaries will further soften built form edges and visually blend the facility into the existing vegetation context.
Bushfire-compliant landscaping:	Asset Protection Zone (APZ) design maintains vegetation breaks and low fuel zones while retaining canopy separation and visual depth.
Raingarden and biodiversity planting:	Vegetated swales and rain-gardens enhance green infrastructure and visual permeability within the site.

These refinements reduce potential visual contrast and improve landscape character compatibility. As such, the Visual Analysis findings remain valid or slightly conservative, with likely marginal improvements in screening and perceived visual bulk.

The revised landscape plans provide stronger vegetative mitigation and enhance visual absorption. No additional viewpoints or photomontage revisions are required, and overall visual impact ratings remain unchanged or marginally reduced.

Arboricultural Context and Integration:

The Arborist Impact Assessment (Anderson Environment & Planning, September 2025) identified 180 trees within and adjacent to the subject site. Of these, 37 trees require removal to accommodate the proposed development, while 143 trees can be retained, with 130 protected through fencing and arborist-supervised management in accordance with AS 4970:2025 – Protection of Trees on Development Sites

Most trees proposed for removal are within the internal development footprint or are of low to moderate retention value, and their removal will not materially alter the broader vegetated context or visual screening available from surrounding public vantage points. Importantly, the tree protection measures and retention zones along the site perimeter ensure that the established vegetation buffer facing Midge Orchid Road and The Lakes Way will be retained and supplemented by the proposed landscape strategy.

As a result, the findings of the Visual Analysis remain valid and, if anything, conservative. The combined implementation of arboricultural protection and new landscape planting will maintain or enhance the site’s vegetative character, effectively mitigating any potential increase in visual exposure.

The Arborist Impact Assessment supports the Visual Analysis’s conclusions by confirming that visual screening along key view corridors will be retained. No revisions to visual impact ratings or mitigation outcomes are required.

Geotechnical Considerations and Visual Relevance:

The Geotechnical Investigation (Douglas Partners, September 2025) confirms that the site is generally level, underlain by sandy clays and weathered sandstone, with no significant cut, fill, or retaining structures required beyond standard pad preparation. The report recommends minimal regrading and standard site compaction methods for slab foundations

These findings mean there will be no material change to the finished ground levels (RLs) or the previously assessed building envelopes, and therefore no alteration to the visual bulk or visibility of the proposed development. Importantly, the report also notes existing surface drainage patterns will be retained, and no large-scale soil battering or slope reshaping is required — ensuring the landform and vegetative screening described in the VIA remain accurate.

The geotechnical outcomes confirm that the proposal will maintain the existing topographic form, and therefore do not affect the VIA’s conclusions regarding visibility, magnitude of change, or landscape integration.

A note on Tenacity

View sharing refers to the consideration of how new developments—such as buildings or other structures—may affect views enjoyed by neighbouring properties or the broader public. It involves striking a balance between the rights of landowners to develop their property and the protection of visual amenity and valued views within the community.

While each case requires careful and often complex planning and legal evaluation, the general framework for assessing view sharing is guided by established case law, most notably the judgment in *Tenacity Consulting v Warringah Council* [2004] NSWLEC 140 (‘Tenacity’), which is referenced in Section 3.02.09 of the Newcastle Development Control Plan 2012.

In *Tenacity*, Senior Commissioner Roseth SC established a four-step assessment process to guide planning decisions involving view sharing:

Assessment of View Value: Identify the nature, extent, and completeness of the views likely to be affected—considering whether they include water, landmarks, skyline, or other elements of significance.

Location of the View: Consider the location within the affected property from which the view is enjoyed (e.g., living areas vs. secondary spaces such as laundries or hallways).

Extent of Impact: Qualitatively assess the severity of the impact—whether it is negligible, minor, moderate, severe, or devastating.

Reasonableness of the Proposal: Evaluate whether the impact is reasonable, particularly in relation to the development’s compliance with relevant planning controls. If the impact results from a non-compliant design, even a moderate loss of view may be deemed unreasonable.

The *Tenacity* case makes clear that property owners do not have a legal right to retain a particular view, nor do they have proprietary entitlement to maintain uninterrupted outlooks from their land. This principle has been consistently upheld in subsequent judgments of the NSW Land and Environment Court.

For instance, in *Robson v Leischke* [2008] NSWLEC 152, Chief Judge Preston stated at paragraph [86]:

“...a defendant may erect a building or other structure such as a fence or plant a tree on his or her land which interferes with the neighbour’s enjoyment of their land. The building, structure or tree may...spoil the neighbour’s view... yet such interferences are not actionable as a nuisance.”

This statement reinforces the view that while loss of view may be a valid consideration in planning assessments, it does not constitute a legal right or basis for private legal action. Accordingly, planning authorities assess such matters on the basis of reasonable design outcomes, broader public interest, and compliance with planning frameworks.

References and Glossary of terms

Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (GLVIA) – Third Edition (LI/IEMA 2013)

The Landscape Institute Advice Note 01 (2011) Photography and Photo–montage in Landscape and Visual assessment

The Guideline for landscape character and visual impact assessment: Environmental impact assessment practice note E1A–N04 (TfNSW, version 2.3, 2023)

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

GLVIA	Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (UK Landscape Institute)
LVIA	Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment
VIA	Visual Impact Assessment
DIPE	Department of Planning Industry & Environment
LEP	Local Environment Plan
DCP	Development Control Plan
Baseline	The existing current condition / character of the landscape or view
Landscape Receptor	The landscape of the development site
Landscape Sensitivity	How sensitive a particular landscape is to change and its ability to accept the development proposals.
Visual Receptor	A group or user experiencing views of the development from a particular location
Visual Sensitivity	The degree to which a particular view can accommodate change arising from a particular development, without detrimental effects.
Viewing Distance	The distance from the point of projection to the image plane to reproduce correct linear perspective.
Magnitude of Change	The magnitude of the change to a landscape receptor or visual receptor
Significance of Impact	How significant an impact is for a landscape or visual receptor



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