Kings Forest
Tweed Coast Road and Kings Forest Parkway
Acoustic Fencing

Visual Impact Statement

Prepared for
Project 28 Pty Ltd
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Date: 28th August 2012
Document Reference: LED05_Kings Forest Visual Impact Statement_Tweed Coast Road and Kings Forest Parkway Acoustic fencing
Report: Visual Impact Statement
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Kings Forest Stage 1 Project Application No. MP 08_0194 was lodged in November 2011. The Application and Environmental Assessment Report was advertised from December 2011 to January 2012 following which 302 public submissions and 10 agency submissions were received.

As a result of the submissions, amendments to the project have been made. The amended project contains the following key elements (NB: these elements will be revised and updated as the amended project is finalised).

- Subdivision to create new lots for future development;
  - Bulk earthworks across the site;
  - Road works comprising:
    - construction of the entrance road into the site and associated intersection works on Tweed Coast Road;
    - alignment and construction of the proposed Kings Forest Parkway from Tweed Coast Road via Precincts 4 and 5 through to the western precincts; and
    - alignment and part construction of two proposed roads through SEPP 14 areas to access the southern precincts;
- Development of 2,036 m² of floor space for rural supplies development and access arrangements within Precinct 1;
- Construction of subdivision and infrastructure works along the Kings Forest Parkway and within Precincts 1 and 5;
- The Plan of Development for Precinct 5.
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SECTION 1: TWEED COAST ROAD
INTRODUCTION

1.1 Overview

The Kings Forest development is a proposed major new residential township located at Cudgen, NSW and accessed from the Tweed Coast Road to the east of the development boundary.

An existing hamlet of twelve house lots on Old Bogangar Road to the north of Kings Forest Development, is accessed off the Tweed Coast Road. An existing acoustic fence protecting the dwellings from the Tweed Coast Road traffic noise is to be upgraded. This report assesses the visual impact of the acoustic fence and makes recommendations to mitigate impacts through design measures.

The acoustic fence is intended to be designed and integrated into the landscape to reduce any negative visual impacts when viewed from either the hamlet or the Tweed Coast Road.

1.2 Purpose

This report addresses the NSW Department of Planning’s request for further information on the visual impact and appearance of the proposed acoustic fencing treatments on Tweed Coast Road, in response to the Stage 1 project application and extent of works.

This Visual Impact Statement examines the visual appearance of the existing acoustic fence, the likely impact of the proposed new acoustic fence, its integration within the road landscape and makes recommendations to reduce the extent of visual impact on the surrounding landscape.

It references the following key project application documents;

- Kings Forest Environmental Noise Impact Report, Carter Rytenskild Group, August 2012
- Kings Forest, Precinct 5 Plan of Development, RPS, August, 2012
- Kings Forest, Stage 1 Project Application, Revised Concept Plan, RPS, August 2012
- Kings Forest, Stage 1 Project Application, Revised Road Hierarchy Plan, RPS, August 2012
- Kings Forest Landscape Concept Plans, PLACE Design Group, August 2012
2.0 LANDSCAPE CONTEXT

2.1 Landscape Character

The character of the landscape leading to and surrounding the subject site is distinctly rural and typical of the inland coastal area.

The land surrounding the subject site is fairly flat and low lying, with a combination of rural residential lots, agricultural land, plantations, riparian creek vegetation and coastal forest. There is some relief in topography with a low hill to the north of the subject site.

The area to the north is predominantly farm land with some residential dwellings and scattered clumps of retained vegetation. To the south and east, the land is environmentally protected wetland forest.

There are two new developments to the east and west of the subject site. A rural supplies development will occupy a triangular site opposite the subject site on Tweed Coast Road and a major residential estate will be developed to the west. Both of these developments will alter the local rural character to some extent.

Fig 1. Site Location
1. Farmland with residence and vegetation clumps on top of the hill (looking south)

2. Plantation and farmland (looking south)

3. Low lying coastal forest (looking north)

Fig 2. Landscape character along Tweed Coast Road
### 2.2 Tweed Coast Road

The 80 kph two lane road currently carries about 9,187 vehicles a day (Source: Kings Forest Environmental Noise Impact Report, Carter Rytenskild Group, August 2012). It provides a link between the Pacific Highway and the coastal communities such as Casuarina Beach. There is a wire fence (much of it fauna proof) along its edges through environmental areas and farmland in the locality.

At the subject site, there is a very short access road between Tweed Coast Road and Old Bogangar Road (see below). There is a timber acoustic fence facing the Tweed Coast Road for the length of the hamlet (see below for further description of the fence).

At the southern end of the subject site, a new road off the Tweed Coast Road will provide the main entry to Kings Forest via the Kings Forest Parkway – a dual carriage landscaped boulevard.

### 2.3 Old Bogangar Road

This is the old road that runs parallel to the Tweed Coast Road. It is now a semi cul-de-sac with a strip of 12 properties facing it (the hamlet). The southern end of Old Bogangar Road links in to Pine Ridge Road (also called Depot Road) – the future Kings Forest Parkway and entry to Kings Forest.

The street has the character of a quiet rural road with no formal kerb and gutter or line work. There is a large clump of retained vegetation along much of its length providing privacy and a visual buffer to the main road. The buffer vegetation has some weed infestation, including radiata pines that are compromising its natural appearance.

Looking south showing the remnant vegetation buffer strip and some dwellings

**Fig 3. Character of Old Bogangar Road**
2.4 Existing Acoustic Fence

An acoustic fence, roughly 290 metres long, is located between Tweed Coast Road and Old Bogangar Road for the length of the hamlet. The fence is between 1.8m and 2m high and constructed of timber posts and palings. A metal strip about 1 metre high, runs along the bottom of the fence to deter koalas on the hamlet side of the fence.

The alignment of the fence varies along its length (Fig 5 Landscape Context Plan). There is a break in the fence to provide access into Old Bogangar Road. It is noted that several houses are not protected from noise due to this break in the fence.

Fig 4. Character of the existing acoustic fence
2.5 **New Development**

A new rural supplies development opposite the hamlet on Tweed Coast Road will alter the character of the area from an open rural landscape to a built one. The supplies structure will be located at the back of the property with a large car park in front, facing the road. A narrow planting strip along its boundary will provide some buffering to the development.

The Kings Forest Residential Development is located behind and to the west of the hamlet. The master plan includes a range of residential types, community and educational facilities, and neighbourhood commercial facilities. Kings Forest will generate a significant increase in traffic which will be evident at the turning on to Tweed Coast Road. The entry feature at this point includes decorative pillars, acoustic fencing, signage and landscape planting.
Fig 5. Landscape Context Plan
3.0 PROPOSED ACOUSTIC FENCE

3.1 Description

The Environmental Noise Impact Report has recommended removal of the existing acoustic fence and replacement with a 2.5m high acoustic fence to protect the existing residences on Old Bogangar Road. The proposed fence will reflect the design of the acoustic fences at Kings Forest and illustrated in Figures 6 & 7.

There are a number of differences between the proposed fence and the existing one as follows:

- An additional section of fence is proposed along the side boundary of the most southern property and the end of Old Bogangar Road to protect it from traffic noise generated by the future Kings Forest Parkway.
- This additional section of fence will cut off access to Pine Ridge / Depot Road and the future Kings Forest Parkway from the existing lots.
- The alignment of the fence south of the access road is through the middle of the buffer rather than at the edge, as existing.
- The proposed fence is about 0.5 metre higher than the existing.
- There is no requirement for the metal sheet fauna deterrent in the proposed acoustic fence due to the new fauna crossing arrangement at Kings Forest.

![Sketch No. 2: Tweed Coast Road Existing Dwellings and Recommended Acoustic Barriers (Not to Scale).](image)

**ACOUSTIC BARRIER LEGEND**

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<td>Recommended 2.5m high acoustic barrier constructed above finished ground. Barriers are to be constructed free of gaps and holes. Typical materials include earth berms, 19mm lapped timber fence (60% overlap), 6mm PC sheet, masonry, or a combination of the above (a minimum surface mass of 11kg/m² is required).</td>
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*Fig 6. Proposed acoustic fence extent*

Source:  Kings Forest Environmental Noise Impact Report, Carter Rytenskild Group, August 2012
Fig 7. Plan of acoustic fence on Kings Forest Entry
Source: Kings Forest Landscape Report, PLACE Design Group, August 2012
Fig 8. Illustration of proposed acoustic fence
Fig 9. Photomontage of proposed acoustic fence

Fig 10. Typical example of proposed acoustic fence
4.0 VISUAL IMPACTS

4.1 Viewers

The existing and proposed acoustic fences are and will be, viewed by both local people living close by and by regional visitors or locals travelling through the area.

From Tweed Coast Road, a very large number of daily travellers including locals or regional visitors are impacted by an acoustic fence. The impact however is for a limited time but nevertheless has some impact on their experience of their movement through the rural landscape.

From Old Bogangar Road an acoustic fence impacts on a much smaller number of people, namely the occupants of 12 dwellings and their visitors. However, the acoustic fence is in permanent view and influences the amenity of their private space (gardens and houses) over a long period of time.

This viewer sensitivity requires that the impact of the acoustic fence be lessened wherever possible.

4.2 Visibility

4.2.1 Existing Fence

Most of the existing acoustic fence is visible from the Tweed Coast Road as one approaches it and drives past. The fence is most prominent where the ends return at the entry in to Old Bogangar Road. To the south where the fence deviates away from Tweed Coast Road, it is screened from view by buffer planting.

From Old Bogangar Road sections of the fence to the north and south are visible where it is adjacent to the road or where there is no buffer planting. However most of the fence is completely screened, due to the depth of the buffer planting.

4.2.2 Proposed Fence

The location of the new fence will result in a similar visibility to the existing fence. The additional section of fence to the south may be visible at the end of Old Bogangar Road and from with the property on which boundary it will be located.

4.3 Visual Impact

4.3.1 Existing Fence

The dominant landscape element at the subject site is the road side vegetation, including the buffer between Tweed Coast Road and Old Bogangar Road. The wire fences either side of the Tweed Coast Road are a secondary landscape feature. While mostly transparent, they are still a strong element due to their constancy in the landscape scene. The wire fences vary in configuration and condition and in places have a fairly “messy” and unmaintained appearance.

The solid acoustic fence is a stronger visual element than the wire fences, however it is a visually consistent element and neater in appearance. Where there is no softening of the fence through planting, it is a fairly stark element. That said, the 290 metres of acoustic fence is a fairly fleeting experience from Tweed Coast Road in comparison with the wire fence that runs for many kilometres.
4.3.2 Proposed Fence

The new acoustic fence will have a native shrub planting in front of it and so its impact will be reduced and it will appear more sympathetic to the rural landscape. The returns of the fence at the entry to Old Bogangar Road will also be softened with planting.

The choice of fence materials and colour will also be sympathetic to the rural landscape. The face will be dark in tone and neutral in colour so that it recedes into the background and is less visually prominent. Indeed, for much of the day the fence is in the shadow line created by the vegetation buffer. In addition, some articulation to the materials and face of the fence will reduce monotony along its length.

The exact alignment of the fence is yet to be determined. It would be an advantage to locate it within the vegetation buffer, however it should not compromise any of the existing mature trees that so greatly contribute to the landscape character and amenity at this location.

4.4 Conclusion

The proposed acoustic fence will have a slightly reduced visual impact to the existing one from Tweed Coast Road and it will not detract from the existing overall rural character.

From Old Bogangar Road the proposed acoustic fence will have a similar impact to the existing. However, additional buffer planting in front of the fence would screen or soften the entire fence along this stretch. In addition, the new section of fence to the south should be screened with planting to reduce its impact from Old Bogangar Road and adjacent residences.

The replacement of the acoustic fence provides an opportunity to improve on the existing visual amenity and quality of landscape character. Recommendations to achieve this are outlined below.
5.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Discussion

The following recommendations will assist in reducing any visual impacts of the acoustic fence and enhance, rather than detract from, local landscape character. These recommendations are to be integrated into the detail design of the acoustic fence.

5.1.1 Alignment of fence

A detailed tree survey should be undertaken to determine the exact future location of the acoustic fence. Where the fence can be set back in among the buffer planting, it should be. However, it is not appropriate to remove any of the mature vegetation to install the acoustic fence (with the exception of the radiata pines or other environmental weed species).

5.1.2 Finishes to fence

The colour of the fence should be dark, rather than light so that it recedes into the background and is less visible until softened by plant growth. The face of the fence should also be articulated with a variety of materials to break up any monotony along its length.

5.1.3 Additional buffer planting

From Old Bogangar Road, the buffer planting should be extended to its full length to screen the acoustic fence from view.

Along the Tweed Coast Road a single row of shrubs should be planted to soften the fence where it is located to the outside edge of the buffer. The new buffer planting should comprise of local native species.

5.1.4 Closing the gap

There is an opportunity to close the gap in the middle of the acoustic fence by retaining the access between Old Bogangar Road and Pine Ridge Road - the future Kings Forest Parkway. This would provide acoustic protection to 3 dwellings that are currently directly exposed to the Tweed Coast Road.
SECTION 2: KINGS FOREST PARKWAY
INTRODUCTION

Overview

The Kings Forest development is a proposed major new residential township located at Cudgen, NSW and accessed from the Tweed Coast Road. In accordance with the Stage 1 project application and Kings Forest Development Code, the overall development will be connected to the Tweed Coast Road via a dual carriageway distributor road, referred to as the Kings Forest Parkway. It is intended to be developed as an attractive landscaped boulevard road that will provide a four lane dual carriageway vehicular corridor, pedestrian and cyclist pathways, local bus routes and stormwater conveyance (via a central median).

Stage 1 of the estate (Precinct 5), will require approximately one kilometre of acoustic fencing, intended to protect the adjacent Precinct 5 residential housing from traffic noise, as well as forming the rear boundary fencing to these lots. The acoustic fence is intended to be designed and integrated into the landscape to reduce any negative visual impacts of this long and potentially visually prominent boundary interface, on entry and exit to the development.

Purpose

This report addresses the NSW Department of Planning’s request for further information on the visual impact and appearance of the proposed Kings Forest Parkway acoustic fencing treatments, in response to the Stage 1 project application and extent of works. This Visual Impact Statement examines the visual appearance of the fence, its integration within the Parkways’ landscape intent and assesses the extent of visual impact.

It references the following key project application documents;

- Kings Forest, Precinct 5 Plan of Development, RPS, August, 2012
- Kings Forest, Stage 1 Project Application, Concept Plan, RPS, August 2012
- Kings Forest, Stage 1 Project Application, Road Hierarchy Plan, RPS, August 2012
- Kings Forest Environmental Noise Impact Report, Carter Rytenskild Group, August 2012
- Kings Forest Landscape Plans, PLACE Design Group, August 2012

This report provides further detail to these documents by illustrating appropriate landscape treatments, materials, finishes and colours for the acoustic fence. This will guide future operational works and detailed design of the Kings Forest Parkway and construction of the first stage of development.
Fig 11. Recommended Precinct 5 acoustic barriers
Source: 09371a_Report rev2.pdf
2.0 DEVELOPMENT DESCRIPTION

2.1 Site Context
The locality surrounding Kings Forest Estate is fairly flat and low lying, with a combination of rural residential lots, agricultural land, riparian creek vegetation and environmental protection areas. Access to the Estate is via the Tweed Coast Road and the Kings Forest Parkway.

2.2 Kings Forest Parkway
The dual carriageway road is the main access route into the Estate from the Tweed Coast Road. It is the project’s primary distributor road and along the Precinct 5 boundary includes two main intersection points providing access to the proposed future town centre, Precinct 3 community facilities and the Precinct 5 residential neighbourhood. It continues centrally into the development and connects to lower volume neighbourhood connector roads that access the southern and western balance precincts.

The Kings Forest parkway is to be landscaped to create a feature boulevard that provides an attractive arrival experience into the Estate. This will be achieved through avenue planting of tall native pines and shade trees and a landscaped median that will also accommodate stormwater conveyance through vegetated swales.

The north edge of the Kings Forest Parkway interfaces with the community facilities area and Precinct 1 and 2 employment area. Any future development to this boundary will have transparent fencing to maintain existing open space views and appropriate landscape amenity to future public facilities and uses.

An acoustic fence is proposed to run along a section of the south and west boundaries of the Parkway forming the back boundary of the Precinct 5 residential lots.

2.3 Precinct 5 Acoustic Fence
An acoustic fence is required to run along approximately one kilometre of the Precinct 5 residential rear boundary interface with the parkway corridor. It is intended to be 2 metres high and constructed of 19mm thickness lapped timber palings (40% overlap) and stained a dark brown/black. There is a small length of 2.1 meter high acoustic at the Southern end of the Precinct 5 frontage to Kings Forest Parkway as per Figure 11. Both will have a timber sleeper base with a capped railing. One metre wide decorative pillars will abut the fence at regular intervals and at key pedestrian and vehicular entry points. These pillars will create variety in fencing type, articulation of the long fencing frontage and identify access and entry points.

A similar level of construction is proposed for the 2m high, 13 to 16m long barrier returns that extend along the side boundaries of respective residential lots adjacent the pedestrian pathway linkages between Precinct 5 and the Kings Forest Parkway. The remainder of the side boundary fences will be constructed as a 1.8m high acoustic barrier, as per the acoustic report requirements. The standard of construction of the acoustic fence is in accordance with Section 5.1: Road Traffic Noise Acoustic Treatments of the CRG acoustic report, and will be subject to further detailed design and documentation as part of the operational works approval process.
2.4 **Landscape treatment**

The verge to the Kings Forest Parkway is approximately seven metres wide from kerb edge to residential boundary. It is intended to contain a pedestrian and cyclist path to each side and landscape planting zones. A 4m wide landscape strip is proposed in front of the acoustic fence (and wider in some key locations).

It is proposed that the fence is “softened” through partial screening, rather than fully screened, with a mix of exotic and native species in a layered planting. The planting will screen most of the fence, but provide some exposure to the decorative pillars.

The planting pattern is to vary along its length, with accents at entry points so as not to create a monotonous monotone landscape.

Shrubs to a maximum of two metres will be used against the north facing fence so as not to block winter sun. Shrubs to 4 metres will be used against the west facing fence to provide some relief to adjacent residential living areas from the western sun.

Smaller shrubs and groundcovers will be planted between the tall shrubs and the pathway creating a mass of foliage that provides interest at the pedestrian level. (Refer Kings Forest Landscape Report for plant species.)

The following plans and elevations provide illustration of the intended Kings Forest Parkway treatment and proposed acoustic fence details.
Fig 12. Kings Forest Landscape Concept Plan
Source: Kings Forest Landscape Concept Plan Report, PLACE Design Group, August, 2012
**Fig 13. Kings Forest Parkway Elevations**

Source: Kings Forest Landscape Concept Plan Report, PLACE Design Group, August 2012
Kings Forest Parkway Roundabout Cross Section

- Boulevard trees & low scale planting to road edge
- Hoop Pine or feature tree to roundabout centre
- Road reserve, pavement & footpath widths in accordance with Kings Forest Development Code
- Indicative signage wall incorporated into acoustic fence
- Indicative rear fence treatments to Precinct 5. To include acoustic treatments with decorative pillars at regular intervals

Fig 14. Indicative acoustic fence and landscape treatments
INSET A: Indicative acoustic fencing and landscape detail
3.0 VISUAL IMPACTS

3.1 Visibility
Due to the flat topography of the site, the acoustic fence and associated landscape will only be visible from the public realm along Kings Forest Parkway. It will be most prominent from the west bound entry carriageways and pedestrian pathway along the Parkway drive, with roof lines visible above the fence. The acoustic fence returns and associated landscape will be visible at entry points and along adjacent pathways. The fence will also be visible as the back fence from within private residential lots.

3.2 Viewers
The acoustic fence and associated landscape will be viewed by local residents, visitors and others travelling through the residential estate by car or on foot. This type of view is consistent with public expectations of a residential subdivision landscape. Viewer sensitivity is low for these reasons.

3.3 Visual Impact
The dominant landscape element along the Kings Forest Parkway will be the very tall native pine trees creating a boulevard effect. The mass planting in the median will also be a strong visual feature at ground level due to its width and location right next to the carriageway.

The acoustic fence and associated landscape treatment will appear as a secondary element in the landscape. This is due to the fence being set back from the carriageway and its relatively low height in comparison with other elements (trees and houses). For pedestrians using the pathway, the richness of detail and variety in planting will be more noticeable than sections of the exposed acoustic fence which will recede into the background due to the dark colour and shadows cast onto the north and west facing elevations.

In time, the planting will serve to screen much of the timber fence. The decorative pillars will become a feature in the landscape softened with low plantings only. This will provide accent and variety and break up the potential monotony of the long fence line and planting strip.

3.4 Conclusion
The landscape intent for the Kings Forest Parkway is to “deliver appropriate boundary interfaces with private allotments”, whilst meeting the acoustic fencing requirements contained within the CRG Environmental Noise Impact Report. The Stage 1 acoustic fence and landscape treatments have been designed to integrate and reduce the impact of its visual appearance by:

- Providing layered planting within a four metre wide planting strip in front of the acoustic fence to soften and partially screen it.
- Providing planting with variety and interest to the long acoustic fencing elevation.
- Using dark colours on the fence so that it visually recedes into the background.
- Introducing decorative pillars to provide accent and variety to the long stretch of fence.
- Providing focus on other landscape features, such as the planted median and tall trees, to visually dominate the scene.

The acoustic fence will have a low visual impact and is appropriate in visual appearance for an entry road of a residential subdivision. It will not detract from the overall character or function of the entry road and residential landscape.
There are no recommendations for amendments to the proposal on visual amenity grounds.

References

Kings Forest Precinct 5 Plan, RPS, August 2012
Kings Forest Environmental Noise Impact Report, Carter Rytenskild Group, August 2012
Kings Forest Landscape Concept Plans, PLACE Design Group, August 2012
Kings Forest Rural Supplies Development Visual Impact Statement, PLACE Design Group, August 2012
Kings Forest Visual Impact Statement For Precinct 5, PLACE Design Group, August 2012