planning consultants

Visual Impact Assessment

Fairfield Sustainable Resource Centre Expansion

Hassall Street and Widemere Road, Wetherill Park

Prepared for: Fairfield City Council
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Abbreviations

AS	Australian Standard
BCA	Building Code of Australia
CC	construction certificate
CIV	capital investment value
Council	Fairfield City Council
DA	development application
DCP	development control plan
DFP	DFP Planning Pty Limited
DPE	NSW Department of Planning and Environment
EP&A Act	*Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979*
EP&A Regulation	*Environmental Planning and Assessment Regulation 2000*
EPI	environmental planning instrument
ESD	ecologically sustainable development
FSR	floor space ratio
GFA	gross floor area
HIS	heritage impact statement
LEP	local environmental plan
LGA	local government area
PA	planning agreement
OEH	NSW Office of Environment and Heritage
REP	regional environmental plan
RL	reduced level
RMS	NSW Roads and Maritime Services
SEPP	state environmental planning policy
WM Act	*Water Management Act 2000*
WSUD	water sensitive urban design

1 Introduction

1.1 Commission

DFP has been commissioned by Fairfield City Council to prepare a Visual Impact Assessment (VIA) for the proposed expansion of the Fairfield Sustainable Resource Centre (SRC) at Hassall Street and Widemere Road, Wetherill Park (the Site). The proposal for an expanded SRC meets the criteria for State Significant Development (SSD) pursuant to Clause 23(3) of Schedule 1 of State Environmental Planning Policy (State and Regional Development) 2011 (SEPP SRD). The Secretary's Environmental Assessment Requirements (SEARS) for the preparation of the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) were issued in February 2017. The SEARS include the requirement to address the following key issue:

- ***Visual*** *– including an assessment of the potential visual impacts of the project on the amenity of the surrounding area.*

This VIA is to accompany a development application and Environmental Impact Statement to the NSW Department of Planning and Environment. The Site is located within the Wetherill Park Industrial Area and is zoned part IN1 General Industrial zone, part E2 Environmental Conservation zone and part RE1 Public Recreation zone.

The proposed development comprises:

- Expansion of the SRC to increase its processing capacity to up to 550,000 tonnes of recycled materials per year;
- 'Fill in' gully running north-south through the site known as 'Canal Road'; and
- Fill in a small area of land to the south east of the gully fronting Hassall Street.

1.2 Purpose of this Statement

The key objective of this VIA is to determine the visual impacts of the proposed development on the amenity of the surrounding area. The VIA has been undertaken to:

- Assess the existing visual character of the site and the surrounding urban landscape;
- Determine the extent and nature of the potential visual significance of the proposal on surrounding visual receivers; and
- Identify measures to mitigate and minimise potential visual impacts both during construction and operation.

1.3 Methodology

The VIA has been prepared with regard to industry standards including:

- Roads and Maritime Services "Environmental Impact Assessment Practice Note: Landscape Character and Visual Impact Assessment EIA – NO4" 2013
- Landscape Institute with the Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment (2013) *Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment,* 3rd Edition.

The VIA methodology included the following activities

- Desktop study to understand the precinct's existing visual character and identification of view locations from the surrounding precincts;
- Fieldwork and photography;
- Assessment and determination of visual significance; and
- Determination of potential mitigation measures.

1 Introduction

1.4 Definitions and Glossary

Table 1 Glossary of Terms

Term	Definition
Cumulative effects	The summation of effects that result from changes caused by a development in conjunction with other past, present or reasonably foreseeable actions
Element (Urban Landscape)	Individual parts of the developed landscape which make up the urban environment (e.g. buildings, roads, bridges and parks)
Indirect Impacts	Impacts on the environment, which are not a direct result of the development but are often produced away from it or as a result of a complex pathway
Landscape Character	The combined quality of built, natural and cultural aspects that make up an area and provide its unique sense of place
Magnitude	A combination of the scale, extent and duration of an effect
Mitigation	Measures, including any processes, activity or design to avoid, reduce, remedy or compensate for adverse landscape and visual effects of a development project.
Photomontage (visualisation)	Computer simulation or other technique to illustrate the appearance of a development
Sensitivity	Susceptibility of a receiver to a specific type of change.
Visibility	A relative determination at which the proposal can be clearly discerned or described
Visual Absorption Capacity	The degree to which a particular landscape character type or area is able to accommodate change without unacceptable adverse effects on its character.
Visual amenity	The value of a particular area or view in terms of what is seen.
Visual envelope	Extent of potential visibility to or from a specific area or feature.
Visual Impact Assessment	A process of applied professional and methodical techniques to assess and determine the extent and nature of change to the composition of existing views that may result from a development.
View location	A place or situation from which a proposed development may be visible.
Visual receiver	Individual and/or defined groups of people who have the potential to be affected by a proposal.
Visual Significance	A measure of the importance or gravity of the visual effect culminating from the degree of magnitude and receiver sensitivity.

1.5 Material Relied Upon

This VIA has been prepared by DFP based on information referred to herein and/or appended to this report and a Site inspection undertaken on 24 May and 23 August 2017.

2 Project Context

2.1 Regional and Local Context

Fairfield SRC is located within the Wetherill Park Industrial Precinct, in the Fairfield Local Government area (**Figure 1**). The Site is bound by Prospect Creek to the north and east with the Wetherill Park Industrial precinct located to the south and west. North of Prospect Creek is the Gipps Road Sports Ground, Boral Quarry and Quarry Industrial Development, Greystanes. To the north-east of the site is the suburb of Greystanes. The Liverpool-Parramatta Transitway runs east-west to the north of the site. There is also a cycleway and walking path running alongside Prospect Creek linking Widemere Road and Fairfield City Centre.

Figure 1 Aerial photograph

2.2 Land use and built form

The land use surrounding the site consists of land used for industrial, infrastructure and recreation purposes (**Figure 2**). Prospect Creek and the associated riparian corridor is zoned E2 Environmental Conservation.

2 Project Context

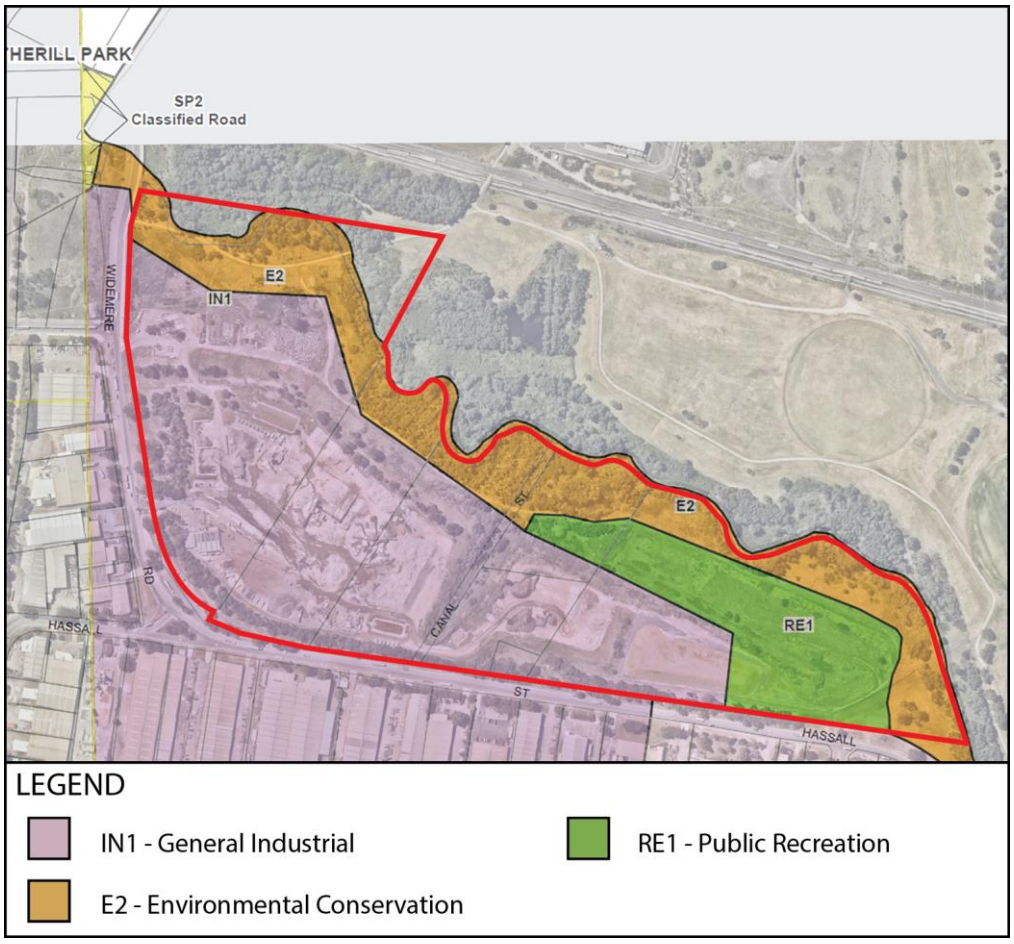

Figure 2 Surrounding land uses

2 Project Context

Wetherill Park Industrial Area is located to the west and south of the site. The industrial area has an area of approximately 603.9 hectares. It provides a diverse range of industrial businesses including manufacturing, warehousing and service industries (**Figure 3 - 5**).

Figure 3 Typical industrial development along Widemere Road near the main entry to the Fairfield Sustainable Resource Centre.

2 Project Context

Figure 4 Typical industrial development along Hassall Street.

Figure 5 View looking west along Hassall. The Fairfield SRC is screened by an established landscape buffer.

2 Project Context

At the eastern end of Hassall Street is a public reserve zoned RE1 Public Recreation (**Figure 6**).

Figure 6 Public Reserve

The Gipps Road Sporting Complex is located on Gipps Road, Greystanes (**Figure 7**). The sporting complex provides sporting fields for athletics, baseball, Australian Rules Football and cycling. The AFL field has lighting for night games and training. The sporting fields are popular on the weekends.

2 Project Context

Figure 7 Gipps Road Sporting Complex AFL field with changeroom building in the background.

The Prospect Creek Cycleway runs along the northern edge of Prospect Creek between Wetherill Park and Fairfield City Centre (**Figure 8**).

Figure 8 View looking west along Prospect Creek Cycleway

3 Project Description

3.1 Existing Facility

In December 1996 development consent was granted for a Roads Material Recycling Centre with a processing capacity of 180,000 tonnes per annum. The SRC accepts construction and demolition waste including roof tiles, clay bricks, concrete and asphalt. The waste is crushed or milled to produce recycled materials such as sand, road base, cement stabilised sands and aggregates for use in civil construction, landscaping and domestic building applications.

The existing buildings and associated structures are located on site:

- Single storey office building;
- Weighbridge;
- Carparking areas;
- Concrete materials storage bays;
- Materials crushing and mixing plant machinery;
- Pug mill (blending/mixing plant);
- Water retention dams;
- Trucks, utility vehicles and earthmoving and road building equipment;
- Vehicle circulation roads; and
- Stockpiles of crushed materials.

The existing SRC hours of operation are:

- Monday to Friday 7am – 4pm; and
- Saturday 7am – 4pm.

A site plan of the existing facility is provided as **Figure 10**.

Figure 9 Existing facility showing location of existing buildings

Under the existing Environment Protection Licence (EPL 5713) the following limit conditions apply:

3 Project Description

L3.2 The height of any stockpile of waste at the premises must not exceed the height limit of eight (8) metres

L3.3 The licensee must install and maintain stockpile height markers at the premises. The markers must show the stockpile height

3.2 Proposed Development

The proposed development is for an expansion of the SRC to increase its processing capacity to up to 550,000 tonnes of recyclable construction material per year. The proposal is also seeking to fill a gully running north-south through the centre of the site, known locally as 'Canal Road' and fill a small area of land to the south east of the gully, fronting Hassall Street.

The following is proposed:

- A processing capacity of up to 550,000 tonnes of recycled construction materials per year.
- Importation of approximately 31,000m^3 of Virgin Excavated Natural Material (VENM) for site fill.
- Site earthworks and grading to establish a level site, including the construction of batters.
- Removal of a small stormwater basin and construction of a new larger sediment basin and stormwater harvesting basin.
- Receiving, processing, recycling and storage of the following waste material, consistent with existing operations and EPA licensing:
    - VENM;
    - Building and demolition waste including roof tiles, clay bricks, concrete;
    - Asphalt waste (including asphalt resulting from road construction and waterproofing);
    - Spoil and Soils.
- Modifications to the main site entry and exit and carparking area to provide additional car parking spaces.
- Change to the site operating hours to the following:
    - Receiving and loading of trucks – 24hrs/7 days;
    - Crushing operations 5.00am – 6.00pm (Monday to Friday);
    - Pug Mill operations 3.00am – 4.00pm (Monday to Friday).
- Vegetation and tree removal to facilitate the proposed works and replacement tree planting.
- Associated infrastructure and services works.

No increase to the maximum 8 metre height limit of stockpiles is proposed.

4 Visual Impact Assessment

4.1 General

The potential visual impact of the proposal has been assessed in relation to key viewpoints and/or groups of viewpoints. The levels of significance of potential visual impacts have been assessed through consideration of the combination of the magnitude of visual change in the landscape and its proximity to the viewer and the sensitivity in relation to the quality of the view and how sensitive it is to the proposed change.

The magnitude of visual change is strongly influenced by the level of visibility of the new works resulting from the combination of scale, extent, distance and duration of views, Visual sensitivity depends on the nature of the existing environment and on the likely response from people viewing the scene. People driving on a busy road and/or at high speeds are likely to be less sensitive to a change in the environment since they are focused on changes in traffic conditions and driving, compared to someone who is enjoying a recreational experience or someone who is viewing the scene from their living room.

The categories of magnitude and sensitivity of visibility are defined in **Table 2** below:

Table 2 Magnitude and sensitivity of visibility

Rank	Description
Negligible	Very minor loss or alteration to one or more key elements/features/characteristics of the baseline visual character and/or introduction of elements that are consistent with the visual character of the existing landscape character
Low	Minor loss and/or alteration to one or more key elements/features/characteristics of the baseline visual character and/or introduction of elements that are consistent with existing landscape character.
Moderate	Partial loss of/or alteration to one or more key elements/features/characteristics of the baseline visual character and/or introduction of elements that be may prominent but not considered to be substantially uncharacteristic of the existing landscape character.
High	Substantial to total loss of key elements/features/characteristics of the baseline visual character and/or introduction of elements considered to be totally uncharacteristic of the existing landscape character.

The magnitude and sensitivity of potential visual impacts to existing views would depend on a combination of scale, extent, distance and duration of the views. Impacts are assessed by applying a consistent set of criteria to each of the viewpoints as outlined in **Table 3** below.

Table 3 Visual Impact Criteria

	Criteria	Definition	Rating
Sensitivity	**Duration of View** Long term Moderate term Short term Very short term	 > 1 hour 30 minutes to 1 hour 1 minute to 30 minutes < 1 minute	 High Moderate Low Negligible
	Number of viewers High Moderate Low Very Low	 > 1,000 100 - 999 10 - 100 <10	 High Moderate Low Negligible
	Viewer sensitivity (type) Resident Pedestrian / cyclist Motorist		 High Moderate Low

4 Visual Impact Assessment

Table 3 Visual Impact Criteria			
	View sensitivity Pristine landscape Moderately modified landscape Significantly modified landscape		High Moderate Low
Magnitude	**View distance / proximity** Short Medium Long	<100m 100m – 500m >500m	High Moderate Low
	Visibility in relation to the field of view Highly visible Visible Partially visible Barely visible		High Moderate Low Negligible

The combination of sensitivity and magnitude provides a visual impact rating for the proposed works based on the following table (**Table 4**):

Table 4 Visual Impact Assessment Matrix					
		Magnitude			
		High	**Moderate**	**Low**	**Negligible**
Sensitivity	**High**	High	High - Moderate	Moderate	Negligible
	Moderate	High-Moderate	Moderate	Moderate - Low	Negligible
	Low	Moderate	Moderate - Low	Low	Negligible
	Negligible	Negligible	Negligible	Negligible	Negligible

4 Visual Impact Assessment

4.2 Visual Envelope Mapping

The visual envelope map identifies the areas from where the proposal might be visible (**Figure 10**). The visibility of the proposed works is influenced by the existing land use, vegetation and topography.

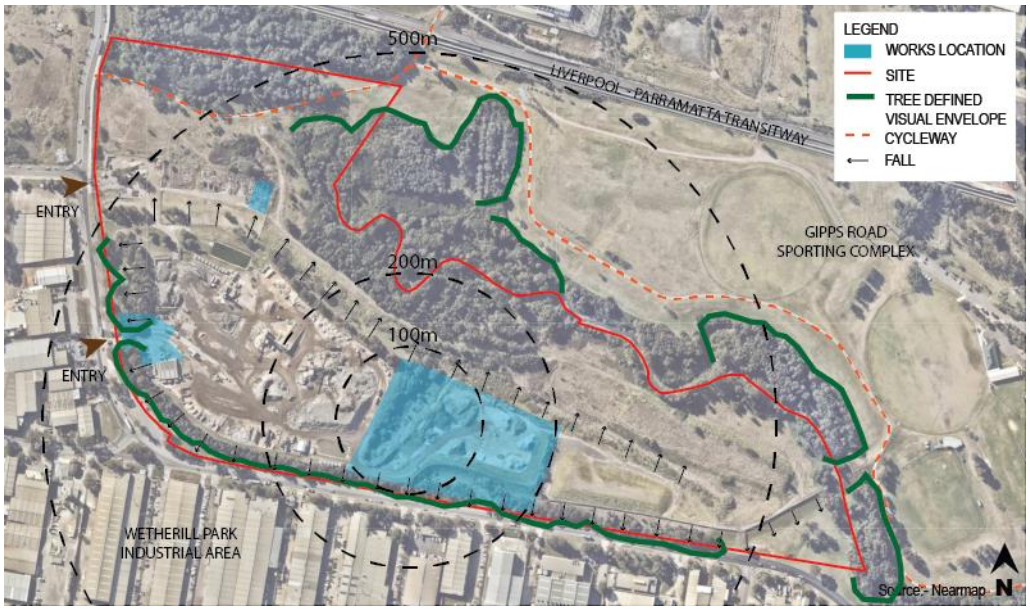

Figure 10 Visual Envelope Map

4.3 Key Viewpoints

The key viewpoints from the surrounding areas are identified in **Figure 11**.

Figure 11 Key Viewpoints

4 Visual Impact Assessment

Key View Point 1

Key View Point 1 is the view looking east along Hassall Street (**Figure 12**). The view is visible to motorists and pedestrians/cyclists. It is noted that there are currently no footpaths along either side of Hassall Street so the number of pedestrians is very low.

Figure 12 Key View Point 1

Table 5 Key View Point 1

	Motorist	Pedestrian / Cyclist	Residents	Comment
Sensitivity				
- Duration	Negligible	Low		
- No of Viewers	Low	Negligible		
- Viewer Sensitivity	Low	Moderate		
- View Sensitivity	Low	Low		Existing industrial buildings are located on the south side of Hassall Street. The existing established vegetation and trees effectively screens the Fairfield SRC from view.
Overall Sensitivity Impact	**Low**	**Low**	**n/a**	
Magnitude				
View Distance / proximity	High	High		
Visibility in relation to the field of view	Negligible	Negligible		
Overall Magnitude impact	**Negligible**	**Negligible**	**n/a**	
IMPACT	**Negligible**	**Negligible**	**n/a**	

4 Visual Impact Assessment

Key View Point 2

Key View Point 2 is the view from 120 Hassall Street directly opposite Canal Road (**Figure 13**).

Figure 13 Key View Point 2

Table 6 Key View Point 2				
	Motorist	**Pedestrian / Cyclist**	**Residents**	**Comment**
Sensitivity				The existing vegetation on the embankment screens the view towards the proposed works.
- Duration	Negligible	Negligible		
- No of Viewers	Low	Negligible		
- Viewer Sensitivity	Low	Moderate		
- View Sensitivity	Low	Low		
Overall Sensitivity Impact	**Negligible**	**Negligible**	**n/a**	
Magnitude				
View Distance / proximity	High	High		
Visibility in relation to the field of view	Negligible	Negligible		
Overall Magnitude impact	**Negligible**	**Negligible**	**n/a**	
IMPACT	**Negligible**	**Negligible**	**n/a**	

4 Visual Impact Assessment

Key View Point 3

View Point 3 is looking west along Hassall Street (**Figure 14**).

Figure 14 View Point 3

Table 7 Key View Point 3				
	Motorist	**Pedestrian / Cyclist**	**Residents**	**Comment**
Sensitivity				The existing vegetation on the embankment screens the view towards the proposed works
- Duration	Negligible	Negligible		
- No of Viewers	Low	Negligible		
- Viewer Sensitivity	Low	Moderate		
- View Sensitivity	Low	Low		
Overall Sensitivity Impact	**Negligible**	**Negligible**	**n/a**	
Magnitude				
View Distance / proximity	High	High		
Visibility in relation to the field of view	Negligible	Negligible		
Overall Magnitude impact	**Negligible**	**Negligible**	**n/a**	
IMPACT	**Negligible**	**Negligible**	**n/a**	

4 Visual Impact Assessment

Key View Point 4

Key View Point 4 is from the Gibbs Road Sporting Field looking west towards the site (**Figure 15**).

Figure 15 Key View Point 4

Table 8 Key View Point 4				
	Motorist	**Pedestrian / Cyclist**	**Residents**	**Comment**
Sensitivity				Fairfield SRC is visible through a gap in the vegetation.
- Duration		High		
- No of Viewers		Moderate		
- Viewer Sensitivity		Moderate		
- View Sensitivity		Moderate		
Overall Sensitivity Impact	**n/a**	**Moderate**	**n/a**	
Magnitude				
View Distance / proximity		Low		
Visibility in relation to the field of view		Low		
Overall Magnitude impact	**n/a**	**Low**	**n/a**	
IMPACT	**n/a**	**Low - Moderate**	**n/a**	

4 Visual Impact Assessment

Key View Point 5

Key View Point 5 is taken from the cycleway looking south towards the site (**Figure 16**).

Figure 16 Key View Point 5

Table 9 Key View Point 5				
	Motorist	**Pedestrian / Cyclist**	**Residents**	**Comment**
Sensitivity				
- Duration		High		
- No of Viewers		Moderate		
- Viewer Sensitivity		Moderate		
- View Sensitivity		Moderate		
Overall Sensitivity Impact	**n/a**	**Moderate**	**n/a**	
Magnitude				
View Distance / proximity		Moderate		
Visibility in relation to the field of view		Moderate		
Overall Magnitude impact	**n/a**	**Moderate**	**n/a**	
IMPACT	**n/a**	**Moderate**	**n/a**	

4 Visual Impact Assessment

Key View Point 6

Key View Point 6 is taken from the cycleway adjacent to the high voltage transmission lines. This view point is located within the site boundary but is publicly accessible via the Prospect Creek Cycleway. The existing pug mill is visible. (**Figure 17**).

Figure 17 Key View Point 6

Table 10 Key View Point 6

	Motorist	Pedestrian / Cyclist	Residents	Comment
Sensitivity				
- Duration		Low		
- No of Viewers		Low		
- Viewer Sensitivity		Moderate		
- View Sensitivity		Moderate		
Overall Sensitivity Impact	**n/a**	**Moderate-Low**	**n/a**	
Magnitude				
View Distance / proximity		Moderate		
Visibility in relation to the field of view		Low		
Overall Magnitude impact	**n/a**	**Moderate-Low**	**n/a**	
IMPACT	**n/a**	**Moderate-Low**	**n/a**	

4 Visual Impact Assessment

Key View Point 7

Key View Point 7 is the main entry to the Site from Widemere Road (**Figure 18**). This entry is proposed to be widened to upgrade vehicular entry and exit. There will be a number of trees removed adjacent to the entry to facilitate the extension of the car park.

Figure 18 Key View Point 7

Table 11 Key View Point 7

	Motorist	Pedestrian / Cyclist	Residents	Comment
Sensitivity				Provide new trees to replace any trees removed as a result of the works adjacent to the site entry.
- Duration	Negligible	Negligible		
- No of Viewers	Low	Negligible		
- Viewer Sensitivity	Low	Moderate		
- View Sensitivity	Low	Low		
Overall Sensitivity Impact	**Negligible**	**Negligible**	**n/a**	
Magnitude				
View Distance / proximity	High	High		
Visibility in relation to the field of view	High	Neglible		
Overall Magnitude impact	**High**	**Negligible**	**n/a**	
IMPACT	**Negligible**	**Negligible**	**n/a**	

4 Visual Impact Assessment

4.4 Visual Impact Assessment Summary

Generally, the proposed development has a negligible to moderate visual impact. **Table 11** summarises the findings.

Table 12 Visual Impact Assessment Summary

	Motorist	Pedestrian / Cyclist	Residents
View Point 1	Negligible	Negligible	n/a
View Point 2	Negligible	Negligible	n/a
View Point 3	Negligible	Negligible	n/a
View Point 4	n/a	Low-Moderate	n/a
View Point 5	n/a	Moderate	n/a
View Point 6	n/a	Low-Moderate	n/a
View Point 7	Negligible	Negligible	n/a

5 Mitigation Strategies

The visual impact of the proposed works is assessed as being negligible to moderate. Nevertheless, the following recommendations are made to assist in mitigating the visual impacts of the proposed works.

Construction

- Installation of screen hoardings and/or shade cloth screens.
- Retention and protection of existing planting.
- Rehabilitation of any disturbed areas.

Operation

- Existing landscape should be maintained and protected wherever possible, particularly on the embankments facing Widemere Road and Hassall Street. Any new planting should be consistent with the existing planting treatments.
- Provide revegetation works along the Prospect Creek riparian corridor (**Figure 19**).
- Install and maintain stockpile height markers.
- Provide replacement tree planting at Widemere Road entry.

Figure 19 Site for rehabilitation works along Prospect Creek riparian corridor

6 Conclusion

This report provides an assessment of the visual impact of the proposed expansion of the Fairfield Sustainable Resource Centre (SRC) at Hassall Street and Widemere Road, Wetherill Park. The proposed development comprises the expansion of the SRC to increase its processing capacity up to 550,000 tones of recycled materials per year; 'fill in' of the gully running north-south through the site known as 'Canal Road'; and 'fill in' of a small area of land to the south east of the gully fronting Hassall Street.

The land use surrounding the site consists of land used for industrial, recreation and infrastructure purposes. The closest residential area is Greystanes approximately 1 kilometre to the north-east of the site.

The southern and western boundaries of the site are screened by the existing vegetated embankments along Widemere Road and Hassall Street. The landscape riparian corridor along Prospect Creek screens views towards SRC from the north and east.

Visual impacts from the proposed expansion were assessed as negligible to moderate. This is a result of the existing vegetation surrounding the site, which minimises its visibility from the public domain. This vegetation should be protected and maintained during construction and operation of the facility. The existing maximum stockpile height of 8 metres should also be maintained. Long term it is recommended to undertake rehabilitation of the riparian landscape along Prospect Creek.