



ESR Horsley Logistics Park - SSD  
Horsley Park, NSW  
Project No: 200224

Response to Jacafin Visual Impact Assessment – Urbaine Architectural

On behalf of:



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## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Project Background and Submissions Received

In February 2020, Geoscapes Pty Ltd were engaged to produce a Visual Impact Assessment (VIA) on behalf of ESR, for the proposed development at 327-325 Burley Road, Horsely Park.

As per the SEAR's issued by the DIPE, several viewpoints were selected and assessed for potential visual impacts generated by the development. The applicable SEAR's required the following:

*- a detailed visual impact assessment (including photomontages and perspectives) of the development including height, bulk and scale, materials and finishes, colours, signage and lighting, particularly from existing and future residences to the south and significant or important vantage points of the broader public domain;*

Following public exhibition of the development in July and August of 2020, several submissions were received from the public, organisations and public authorities. Objections to the ESR development were raised by Jacfin Pty Ltd. As part of the objection, Jacfin raised concerns regarding potential visual impacts received at the RU4 residential Jacafin Site. Jacfin commissioned an independent visual impact assessment, this was carried out by Urbaine Architectural. The report focused on visual impacts generated by the ESR development, specifically on the Jacafin land. This includes both RU4 residential and IN1 industrial zoning.

Geoscapes present this response to the findings of the Urbaine Architectural report and provide evaluation of the methodology used. This response should be read in conjunction with Geoscapes LVIA report 200204\_SSD\_RPT\_LVIA01. Geoscapes also provide responses to other submissions in this report and also in a separate response matrix.

### 1.2 About the Author

This response has been written by Ben Gluskowski (Director and Registered Landscape Architect) who has over 17 years' experience in the field of Landscape Architecture. He has previously been involved in high profile LVIA on developments within the UK, including the M1 & M62 motorway road widening, several wind farms and energy from waste facilities (EFW).

Within Australia, Ben has completed several detailed LVIA for Logos Property Group, Frasers, Altis, AirTrunk, Cadence and Dincel. These were either submitted as part of an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) to the Department of Planning and Environment or directly to Council as part of a DA process.

## 2.0 CLARIFICATION OF SOUTHERN BUFFER MANAGEMENT AND MAINTENANCE

### 2.1 Management of the Southern Boundary

HWL Ebsworth Lawyers in their letter address to Bruce Zhang and dated 26<sup>th</sup> August note the following:

*'The Landscape Master Plan prepared by Geoscapes dated 15 June 2020 indicates that the management of the southern landscape buffer will be managed by others. The Application must be amended to correct this error and to confirm that the Proponent will be responsible for the maintenance of the vegetated area on the southern boundary of the Site, including the maintenance of the gabion retaining walls, in accordance with the Court Approval.'*

Geoscapes masterplan SSD-01 has the following note 'Southern landscape buffer (by others)'. This is in reference that the southern buffer has been **designed** by others within the approved DA 893.1/2013 and therefore, one should refer to the documentation relevant to the DA for further details of

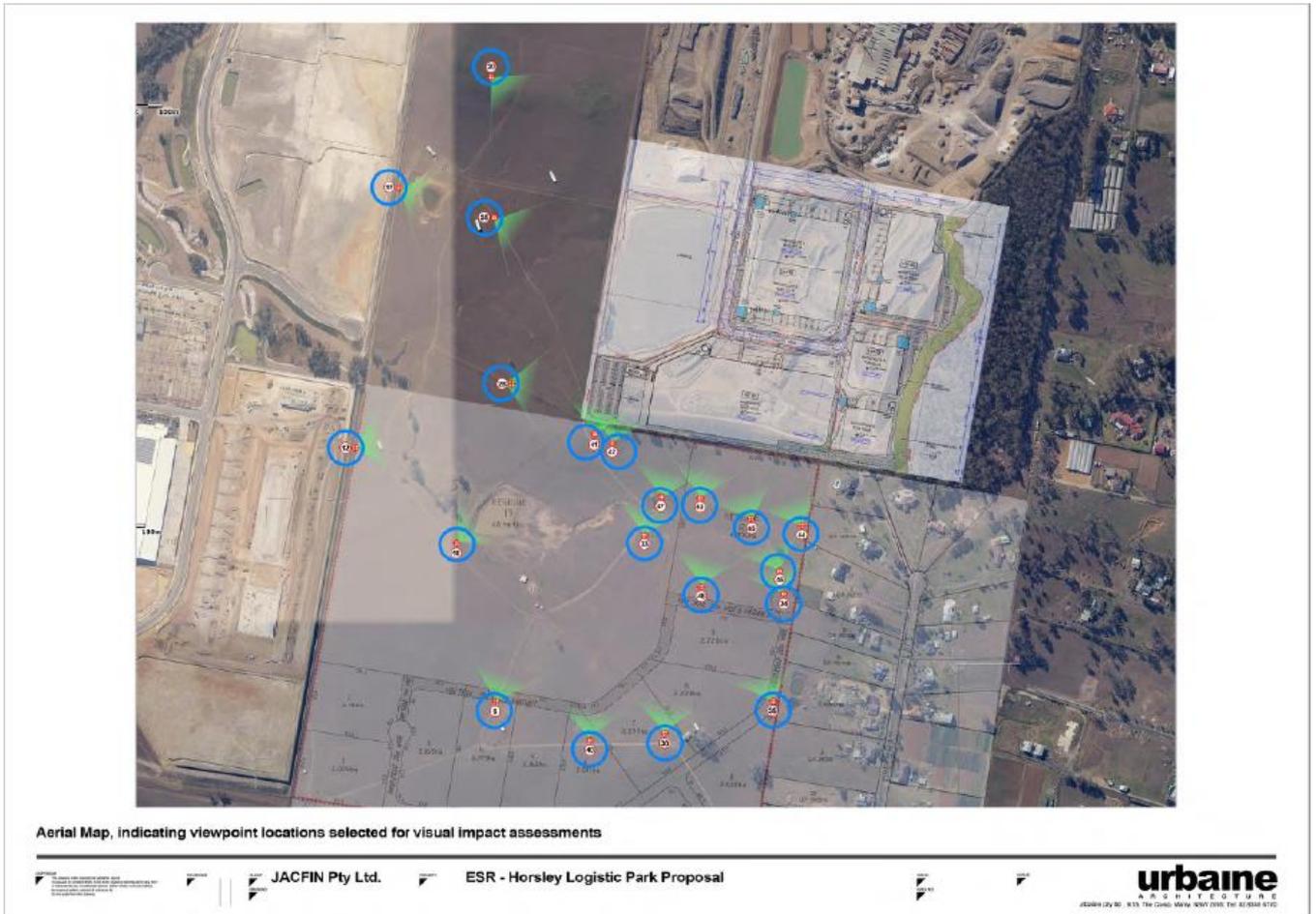


the planting and treatments to this area. The note in our opinion does not imply that the management of this area will not be maintained currently and into the future by the proponent.

### 3.0 URBAINÉ ARCHITECTURAL – RESPONSE TO VISUAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT REPORT

#### 3.1 Viewpoint Locations

Within their report, Urbaine Architectural present an aerial map indicating viewpoint locations selected for visual impact assessments. In total 20 viewpoints have been selected. Of those selected 10 are within the Jacfin land zoned for RU4 residential use. 10 viewpoints have also been selected within land zoned IN1 or on the edge of the land zoned IN1. See screenshot below:



#### 3.2 Viewpoints within or adjacent to Jacfin IN1 – VP’s 10,12,17,20,25,28,33,41,42,43

Geoscapes did not present any of the 10 views located in the IN1 zoned land and as shown above within VIA report 200224\_SSD\_RPT\_LAN\_LVIA01. In our opinion the sensitivity of the receptor did not warrant visual impact assessment. In Geoscapes opinion, the 10 viewpoints selected within the Urbaine Architectural VIA should be assigned a low rating of visual sensitivity that needs to be more heavily based on the type of visual receptor and their sensitivity rather than the view of landscape that is presented within the baseline. The IN1 land will eventually contain several industrial developments, the visual amenity of the surrounding landscape is unlikely to be of prime importance for anyone working or visiting the future industrial development. In essence any views experienced from within the IN1 land will contain industrial warehousing looking towards further warehousing within the ESR development.

Geoscapes agree that the magnitude of the change in the view for a receptor could be high for some of the 10 viewpoints identified within the IN1 land, however that does not mean that the assessment of visual impact will be also be of high significance if the sensitivity of those locations is



judged to be low. Geoscapes uses a different methodology to that of Urbaine report, this methodology would have resulted in a low sensitivity being assigned to the Jacafin IN1 land if selected for visual impact assessment.

### 3.3 Viewpoints within Jacfin RU4 – VP’s 6,34,35,38,40,43,33,45,46,48

Geoscapes agree that there will be some visual impacts for the future residential housing located in the Jacfin RU4 lands. However, as described in Geoscapes VIA report, these impacts are hard to fully understand since no housing and landscaping has yet been built. Shown below is the approved Jacfin Horsley Park Project - Concept Plan Stage 1 to 4, presented by Ethos Urban.



As shown in the approved concept plan a '10m landscape interface' area is proposed between the RU4 land and the IN1 industrial Jacfin land. Again, not knowing the exact details of this buffer and layout of individual dwellings, it is hard to judge the predicted visual impacts. However, it should be expected that views towards the ESR site from viewpoints 6, 38 and potentially 40, could be filtered/mitigated by the introduction of the 10m landscape buffer. The buffer would typically be expected to contain a mixture of native evergreen trees and shrubs that could attain a height of between 6-20m depending on the species used. Views from these locations will also be impacted by the future industrial lots, possibly preventing views all together of the ESR development.



### 3.4 Potential Mitigation on the Jacafin Site

The ESR development includes the southern buffer Terramesh bund and landscape planting as approved by DA 893.1/2013. This was implemented primarily to address and mitigate potential visual impacts created by development and received by residential dwellings along Greenway Place.

As the Jacfin RU4 lands are yet to be developed, it would be reasonable to assume that any proposal assesses the surrounding context in which the site is situated. The Jacfin RU4 land is essentially located adjacent to IN1 zoned land in the north and to the west. To the west on the Jacfin site, the impact of future industrial development has been addressed by the indication of the 10m landscape buffer interface. Therefore, it could be similarly appropriate that the residential lots adjacent to the northern boundary could also implement a landscape buffer zone.

This is not to replace any responsibility on the ESR site with regards to the function of the southern buffer or its maintenance. Rather it would further enhance and strengthen visual amenity and mitigation for visual receptors with the residential land of the Jacfin site.

### 3.5 Assessment Methodology

L VIA does not follow prescribed methods or criteria, the assessment methodology is tailored to the specific requirements of the Proposed Development, its specific landscape context and its likely significant effects. However, there are several established principals and broad approaches that have been recommended by institutes and authorities. Geoscapes VIA's apply the principles from the following:

- *RMS Environmental Impact Assessment Guidance Note: Guidelines for landscape character and visual impact assessment (2013)*
- *The Guidance for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (GLVIA), Third Edition (2013) prepared by the Landscape Institute and Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment; and*
- *Visual Representation of Development Proposals, Technical Guidance Note 02 (2017)*

Geoscapes preference is to use a separate table and criteria for sensitivity and magnitude of change when assessing visual impacts. In our opinion this makes it clearer to the reader there are two considerations when determining the significance of visual impacts. 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 receptor. Having taken such a wide range of factors into account when assessing sensitivity and magnitude at each receptor, the level of effect can be derived by combining the sensitivity and magnitude of change as per the significance of impact table.

The Urbaine VIA presents only a single table, while this still gives a rating of visual impact (Scale of 1-15), in our opinion, how this rating is derived is a little confusing. The report mentions:

*'The % visual content is then assessed, together with a visual assessment of the new development's ability to blend into the existing surroundings.'*

The table presents a rating of Visual Quality and Visual Impact, Geoscapes presume that two numbers are generated on the scale and somehow combined/averaged to determine the impact. In our opinion we find this a little confusing.

According to the Urbaine report The 'Visual Quality' is a qualitative value assigned to the view, however it is not clear if the sensitivity of a particular receptor has been considered when assigning a value. Visual sensitivity is mentioned within other sections of the report, but this appears to be in reference to the *'visual sensitivity of the Design Proposal to each location.'*

For example, when Geoscapes assess sensitivity of a particular receptor, the quality of the baseline view (the equivalent to 'Visual Quality' of the Urbaine report) is taken into consideration together with the type of receptor at that location. In the case of views taken from the IN1 Jacfin lands, in Geoscapes opinion, the type of user at this location must be considered together with the character of the future industrial context which will surround them. Therefore, we believe ultimately the type of receptor at this location, will be people working in or visiting an industrial development.

Views 10,12,17,20,25,28,33,41,42,43 within the Jacfin IN1 lands are given a scale of 4 (low) to 10 (medium) within the Urbaine report. Geoscapes believes these are purely based on the visual quality of the current view and do not take into consideration the IN1 zoning and future industrial development. People at their place of work or visiting this type of development, in our opinion, are less likely to place high importance on their view of the surrounding landscape.

Only two views have been assessed as being a visual impact of 11 (high), within the Urbanie report. These are located in the RU4 lands,



with the remainder of the residential viewpoints judged to be 9 – 10 (medium). Geoscapes would argue that three of these do not consider the future industrial development or 10m landscape buffer, which are likely to be in their sight line towards the ESR site. Similarly, it is difficult to fully understand visual impacts without the presence of residential dwellings on the Jacfin Site.

### 3.5 Presentation of Images

Geoscapes believe that the images are presented well within the Urbaine report and to standard methodologies. Overlay's of the 3D model and reference elements on site are a standard way to correctly position developments in both the horizontal and vertical planes within an image. Not all VIA's show this image but the process is always carried out in this way.

The photomontages presented appear to correctly show the development inserted into the original image, however, there does not appear to be any consideration for the development and growth of existing or proposed landscaping. The landscaping currently installed along the southern boundary has only been installed since XXX, therefore, based on the species used, one would expect further growth and development (if correctly maintained) that will provide increased screening of the southern façade.

An additional image has also been presented for each viewpoint location titled 'Visual Impact Indicated in Red Overlay'. Geoscapes presume this is to highlight the build form, so to call this the visual impact is slightly confusing. In our opinion the visual impact at day 1 is the photomontage with existing landscaping. The visual impact at year 10 or 15 (residual effects) would be the development plus the existing landscaping matured, plus any proposed landscaping also matured.

The development will not be a big red box, so Geoscapes is not sure what purpose this image serves other to highlight the mass of the building. We think this presents an overly negative image which is titled 'Visual Impact'. This we believe is misleading to the reader and would not ultimately form the view presented to the receptor.

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## 4.0 SUMMARY

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### 4.1 Conclusions

Having reviewed the independent VIA Urbaine Architectural prepared on the behalf of Jacfin Pty Ltd, Geoscapes have presented a response and feel that the report has not considered a couple of key factors when assessing the visual impacts to the Jacfin Lands. These are:

- With regards to the IN1 zoned land, sensitivity of the receptor type based on the land zoning and future character of the IN1 land.
- Depiction of the impact of more mature landscaping within photomontage images at a future point in time.
- With regards to the RU4 zoned land, consideration of the Jacfin 10m Landscape Interface as shown in the Jacfin Approved Concept Plan.
- With regards to the RU4 zoned land, consideration of the IN1 future industrial buildings and the impact of those upon views.
- With regards to the RU4 zoned land, consideration of future dwellings and the present ambiguity regarding exact view corridors and visual impacts.
- The potential for the introduction of landscape mitigation to development on the Jacfin lands.

Also, the presentation of a photomontage showing the visual impact with use of a red overlay, in our opinion is not a true representation of the visual impact, therefore this image could be view more negatively than the photomontage with respect to the ESR development.

