

# Horsley Park Employment Precinct Visual Impact Assessment

Lot A Burley Road, Horsley Park

Submitted to  
Minister for Planning  
On Behalf of Jacfin Pty Ltd

November 2010 ■ 10317



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## 1.0 Introduction

This Visual Impact Assessment (VIA) has been prepared by JBA Planning as part of a Concept Plan Application for the proposed Horsley Park Employment Precinct located at Lot A Burley Road, Horsley Park. This VIA has been prepared on behalf of the Proponent Jacfin Pty Ltd, and is based on Concept Plans dated 23 November 2010 prepared by JBA Planning.

This report is structured as follows:

- Section 2 provides an overview of the site's location, context, landscape environment and topography;
- Section 3 identifies the existing visual catchment of the site and assesses the visual impact of the proposed project; and
- Section 4 summarises the key findings of the report.

The preparation of this VIA has included a physical inspection (by car and foot) of the site and its context.

### 1.1 The Proposed Project

The proposed Concept Plan for the site is illustrated at **Figure 1**. Concept Plan approval is being sought for the following:

- Site layout and developable areas;
- Regional road connections;
- Site Infrastructure;
- Indicative building footprints; and
- Indicative project staging.

The Project Application details the first building that is to be located in the north-eastern corner of the site. The building (**Figure 2**) comprises some 27,300m<sup>2</sup> of floor space and includes associated earthworks, landscaping and infrastructure.



**Figure 1** – Proposed Horsley Park Employment Precinct Concept Plan



**Figure 2** – Photomontage of the Stage 1 Building to be located at the northern end of the site

Source: MNIA Architects

## 2.0 The Site

### 2.1 Site Location

The site is legally known as Lot A Deposited Plan 392643 and is approximately 100 hectares in area. It is located within the Penrith local government area at Horsley Park (**Figure 3**). The site is approximately 550m to the south of the Sydney Catchment Authority (SCA) water supply pipeline. Its northern and eastern boundaries form the boundary between Penrith (to the west) and Fairfield local government areas (east). The site is located within Precinct 8 of the Western Sydney Employment Area (WSEA) and is zoned IN1 General Industrial under the WSEA SEPP. The extent of land zoned IN1 within the SEPP is indicated in **Figure 3**.

### 2.2 Site Landscape

The site is generally cleared of vegetation and is currently used for cattle grazing (**Figures 4, 6 and 7**). The only structure is a small demountable cottage located in the south east corner of the site. A farm dam is located in the centre of the southern portion of the site.

The topography of the site is varied (**Figure 5**). A ridge line runs north-west, south-east through the northern portion of the site with a high point at RL 94m. The landform in the southern part of the site forms a shallow valley opening out towards the west with a ridgeline wrapping around the southern and eastern boundaries of the site.



**Figure 3** – Local site context





Figure 4 – Aerial photograph of the site



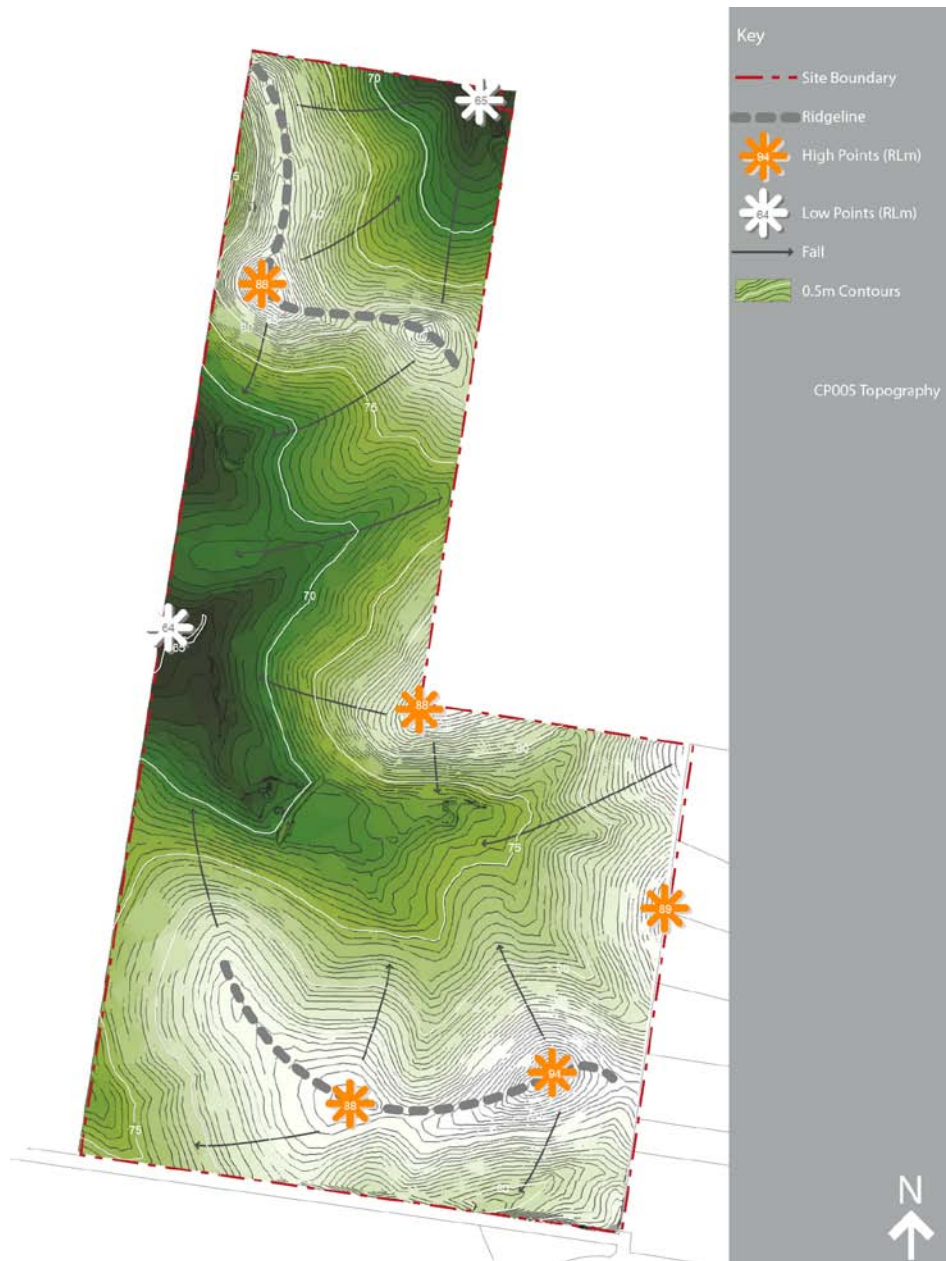


Figure 5 - Site topography



Figure 6 - View south-west across the site from the north-east corner

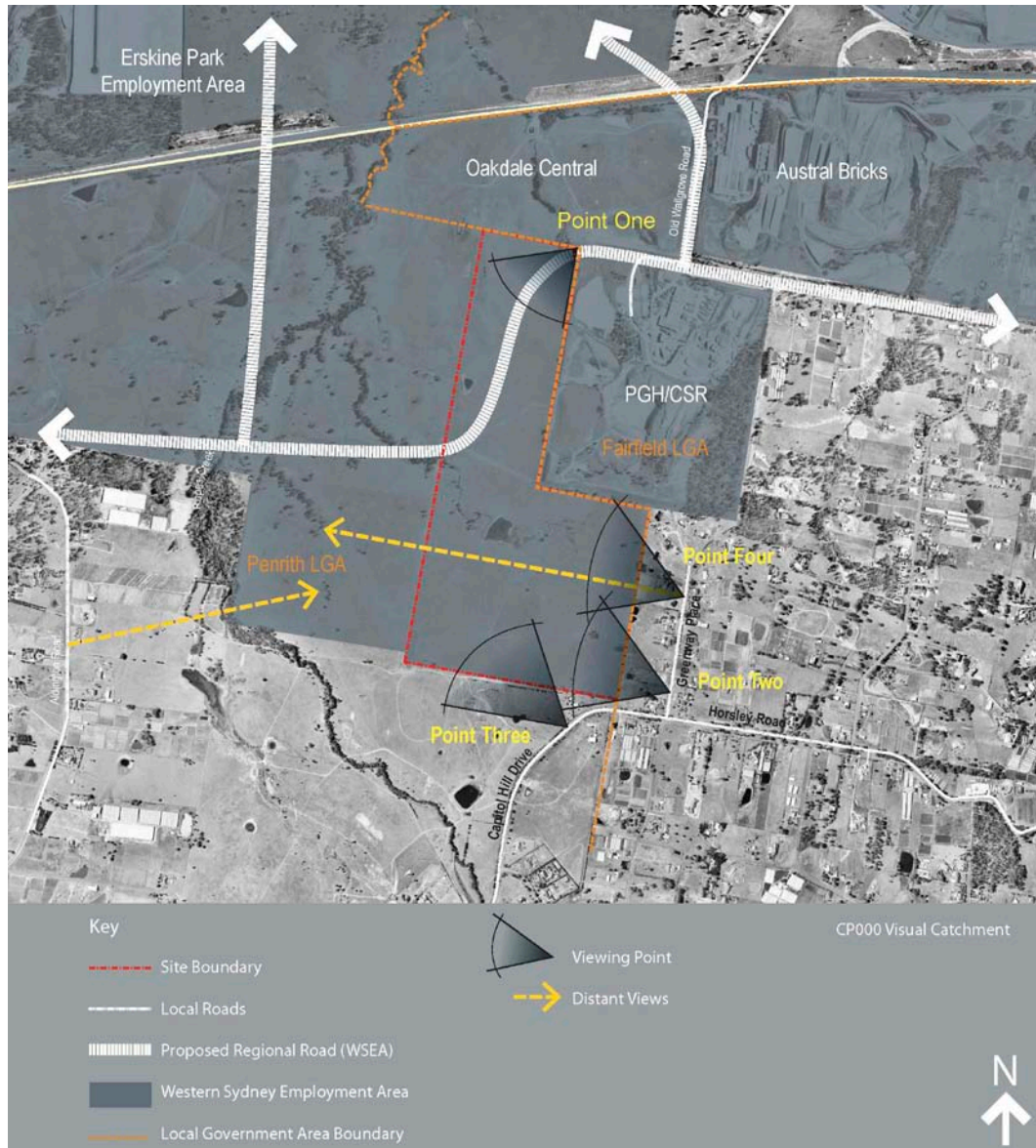


Figure 7 - View west across the site from the southern portion of the site. Note the dam located in the foreground

## 3.0 Visual Assessment

### 3.1 Visual Catchment

The key observation points of the site are shown at **Figure 8** below. A description of the visual catchment is described below.



**Figure 8** - Visual catchment

### From the North

To the north and west of the site is the proposed 'Oakdale Industrial Estate'. Zoned for industrial uses, Concept Plan approval has been granted, for large scale industrial / warehouse uses to the north of the site with Project Approval for two warehouses adjacent to the Old Wallgrove Road boundary. Land preparation works are currently being undertaken to the north of the site.

Views to the site from the north are limited to the northern most ridgeline (*Viewing Point No 1 - Figure 8*). Distance views of the same ridgeline will be available from the proposed industrial / warehouse area and regional road further north (i.e. from the Jacfin Ropes Creek site).

### From the West

Near and medium distance views of the site will be available from the west. Like the north, this area is intended to be developed for industrial / warehouse uses similar to that envisaged by the proposed Stage 1 project. Long distance views to the southernmost portion of the site will be available from properties at the northern end of Aldington Road.

### From the North-east

To the east of the northern part of the site, is the PGH brickworks facility owned by CSR Limited. The operational parts of the brickworks are partly screened from the site by earth mounding and vegetation.

Some limited near distance views of the site will be available from the PGH site to the east. This area is zoned Industrial under the WSEA SEPP and may be developed for industrial / warehouse uses.

### From the South and South-east

The eastern and part of the southern boundaries of the site form the interface between the WSEA and the rural residential area of Horsley Park. To the south of the site is a combination of rural land and rural residential blocks accessed from Capitol Hill Drive. This area, known as Capitol Hill and Mt Vernon, is characterised by open, relatively flat pasture and large dwellings on acreage. To the east of the southern part of the site are rural residential properties accessed from Greenway Place. Further to the east is Horsley Park which is characterised by similar rural residential blocks.

Near distance views of the site are experienced from approximately 12 dwellings located off Greenway Place (*Viewing Point No 2 - Figure 9*) and Horsley Road that adjoin or are adjacent to the site. Dwellings at the northern end of Greenway Place also obtain long distance views over the site towards the Blue Mountains.

From the south, near distance views of the southern boundary of the site are available from Capitol Hill Drive (*Viewing Point No 2 - Figure 10*). Further south, medium distance views exist of the southern ridge area within the site.





**Figure 9** – Viewing Point No. 2. View west across the site from the southern end of Greenway Place (approximate site boundary in red). Note the stand of trees and small rural cottage located on the high point of the site



**Figure 10** – Viewing Point No. 3. View north-west towards the southern boundary of the site viewed from the west of No 1-17 Capitol Hill Drive (approximate site boundary in red)



Figure 11 – Viewing Point No. 4. View west from Greenway Place (approximate site boundary in red)



## 3.2 Visual Sensitivity

**Figure 12** illustrates the visually sensitive portions of the site. The south-eastern corner of the site is considered to have a relatively high visual sensitivity due to:

- the proximity of adjacent rural residential properties;
- the orientation of these dwellings and elevation above the site (providing views looking into and over the site); and
- the 'openness' of the landscape and the lack of existing vegetation within the site that could be used to help screen future development.

The northern portion of the site, whilst having a similar open land character and elevated in part, will be contained within a future context of large scale industrial / warehouse development (to the west, north and north-east). In this regard, it will not be surrounded by sensitive land uses such as residential dwellings.

The vista from the Greenway Place residences will also be impacted by the future industrial development of the land to the west, outside the subject site. The dwellings on Greenway Place are setback from the site boundary by between 50 meters and 170 meters (approximately).



**Figure 12** – Visually sensitive portions of the site

### 3.3 Visual Impacts and Proposed Mitigation

The visual impacts of the proposed development and the proposed mitigation measures to minimise visual impact are discussed below. Photomontages of the proposed development (viewed from Point No. 2, 3 and 4 - see **Figure 8**) are provided below at **Figures 13, 14 and 15**.

The buildings shown in **Figure 13** and **Figure 15** are located at a setback of 30 meters from the eastern boundary of the site consistent with the minimum recommended setbacks in the Horsley Park Employment Precinct Site Development Guidelines. The buildings shown in **Figure 13** are located 20 meters from the southern boundary.

As noted previously, the south eastern portion of the site is visually sensitive. Development of the site for industrial / warehouse uses has the potential to result in a negative visual impact in the absence of any mitigation measures. These impacts arise from the scale and the proximity of the industrial / warehouse buildings proposed and the potential for the existing long distance views to the Blue Mountains to be obscured.



**Figure 13** - Photomontage of the proposal viewed from ground level on Greenway Place (Viewing Point No. 2) Properties in this street are typically 2 storeys high



**Figure 14-** Photomontage of the proposal when viewed from Capitol Hill Drive (Viewing Point No. 3)



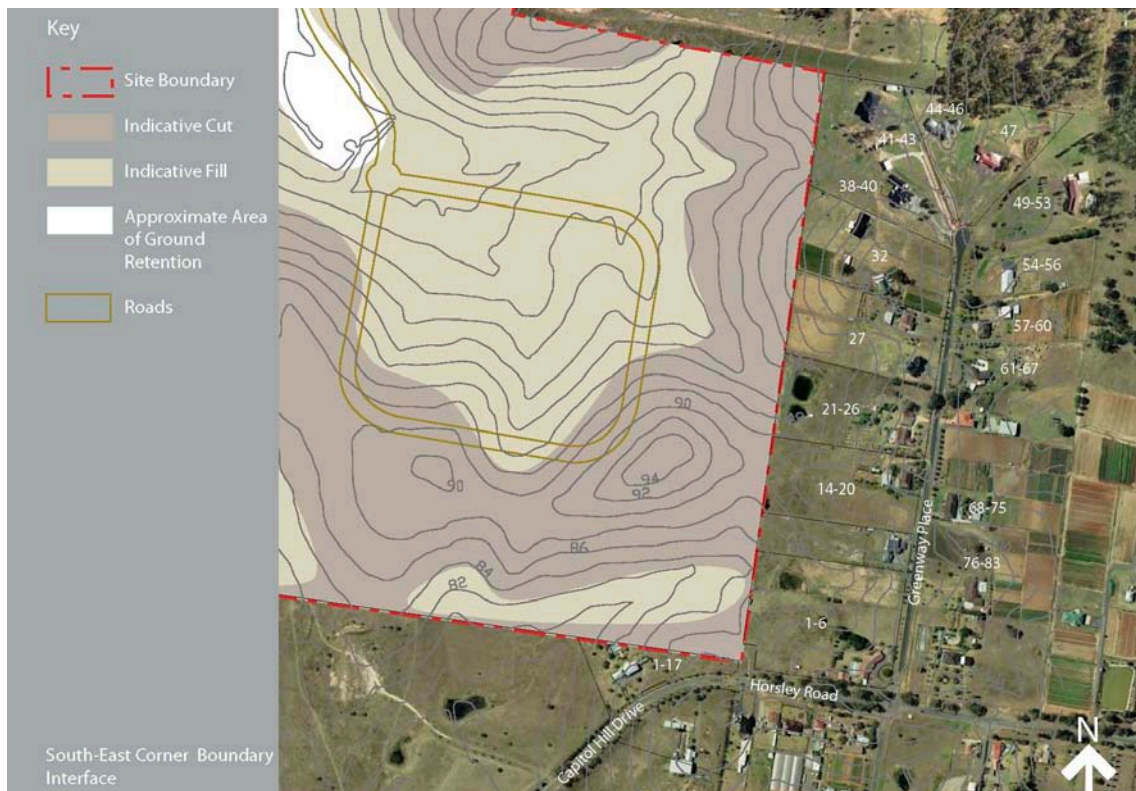


**Figure 15-** Photomontage of the proposal when viewed from Greenway Place (Viewing Point No. 4)

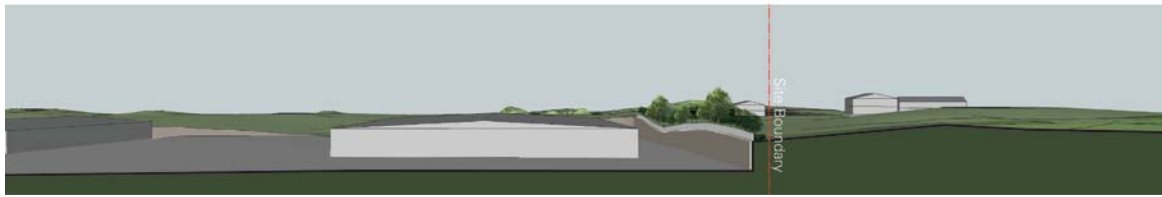
### Cut and Fill Strategy

An indicative cut and fill strategy plan for the southern portion of the site is included at **Figure 16** below. As well as aiming to provide useable, level building pads for industrial / warehouse development, an objective of the cut and fill strategy is to minimise the visual impact of the development on the adjacent rural residential properties, by lowering the ground levels in the sensitive areas.

For the buildings along the eastern boundary, pad levels of around RL78- 85m can be achieved, which is approximately 13-18 meters below the level of Greenway Place. Assuming a building height of up to 14m, this will allow for the retention of long distance views to the horizon / Blue Mountains from the majority of dwellings along the western side of Greenway Place (see **Figure 17**).



**Figure 16 –** Indicative areas of cut and fill



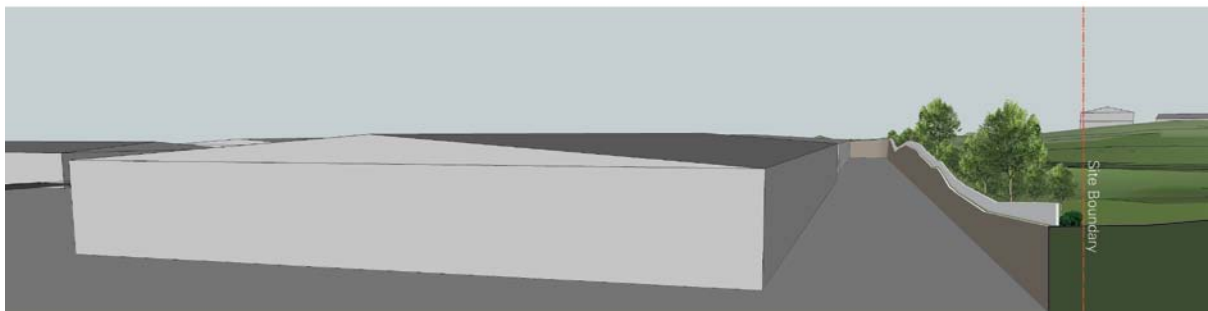
**Figure 17** – Indicative east-west cross section through the eastern boundary of the site illustrating the relationship with the proposed pad (~RL 78m) and No. 30-32 Greenway Place (~RL 96)

#### Building Setbacks

A minimum building line setback of 30m to the eastern boundary is proposed to provide suitable separation to the existing dwellings at Greenway Place and 20m to the southern boundary to Capitol Hill Drive. The setbacks will incorporate earth batters and landscaping where appropriate and may exceed this minimum distance, at the detailed design stage, subject to final site layout and building footprints. The images at **Figures 13, 14 and 15** illustrate this setback.

#### Landscaping and Boundary Treatment

A landscape treatment to the eastern and southern boundary is envisaged. A number of measures have potential beneficial effects including vegetation screening, a solid fence and earth mounds that can be incorporated along the eastern boundary to the Greenway Place properties (see **Figure 18**) and along approximately 200-300m of the southern boundary, at its eastern end. The detailed design of this boundary treatment will be determined as part of future project applications once the final layout and building footprints are determined.



**Figure 18** – Indicative cross section through the eastern boundary of the site illustrating the relationship with the proposed pad (~RL 80m) and No. 14-20 Greenway Place (~RL 98)

## 4.0 Conclusion

This Visual Impact Assessment (VIA) has been prepared by JBA Planning as part of a Concept Plan application for the proposed Horsley Park Employment Precinct located at Lot A Burley Road, Horsley Park.

The site is approximately 100 hectares in area and is located within the Western Sydney Employment Area (WSEA). The Concept Plan for the site envisages large scale industrial / warehouse development. The site is currently rural in character and is generally cleared of vegetation.

The southern and south-eastern boundaries of the site form the future interface between the Employment Area and rural residential area of Horsley Park. This south-eastern corner of the site has a relatively high visual sensitivity due to:

- the proximity of adjacent rural residential properties;
- the orientation of these dwellings and elevation above the site (providing views looking into and over the site); and
- the 'openness' of the landscape and the lack of existing vegetation within the site that could be used to help screen future development.

In order to minimise potential visual impact, a number of strategies, as outlined in this report, regarding lower building pads, building setbacks, and landscaping and boundary treatment can be implemented to achieve an acceptable visual outcome. These strategies will be developed in more detail as part of future project applications when exact details of the layout, pad levels and building footprints are known.