

23 January 2020

Waikato District Council  
Private Bag 544  
Ngaruawahia 3742  
New Zealand

Attention: Victoria Majoor

**Re: Further Information Request, s92 Response – McPherson Quarry, Mangawhiri**

This letter has been prepared in response to a request for additional information prepared by O. May - Boffa Miskell (18 December 2019) and an email from V. Majoor – Waikato District Council, on behalf of the Waikato District Council.

**1. Information Request**

- *It is recognised in the MGLA analysis that there is an Identified Significant Natural Feature (SNA) and Schedule 5A Site of Special Wildlife interest at Mt William Walkway within proximity of the proposal. Can it be confirmed what the expected landscape effects are expected to be?*

Response to the above request is as follows:

The following, includes the expected landscape effects on the Significant Natural Area (SNA) and on the Site of Special Wildlife Interest (Schedule 5A):

- a. The proposed quarry (3 stage excavation) will modify the existing natural landform including the SNA area along the eastern boundary of proposed stage 1. This will result in the loss of approximately 2.08ha of the SNA. A 10m buffer has been proposed between the SNA boundary and the quarry boundary to ensure all other areas of the SNA and Special Wildlife Interest area have been directly avoided.
- b. With the loss of rural land and the increase in exposed land, creating a dominant visual element within the landscape (particularly from VP7), the rural characteristics will change to that of an extractive industry.
- c. Due to the scale, shape and appearance (including colouring of exposed land) of the proposed quarry, the landscape (surrounding rural land and vegetation) will be less able to absorb these land use changes.

This is partially addressed in the table, page 10, under paragraph 37, of the original s92 response 'McPherson Quarry, Mangawhiri – Response to the s92 Request for Additional Information (MGLA). It should also be noted that there will be limited viewing opportunities [of the proposed quarry] from the lower part of the Mt. William Walkway (and SNA) due to the dense canopy cover.

The Council email dated 19/12/2019 (V. Majoor) has sought further information around the effects on the Mt. William Walkway, which is identified as an ONF under 5A- #34 of the Franklin section of the District plan and is shown on Map 103a of the (now superseded) Franklin District planning maps.

The ONF identified on the superseded Franklin District planning maps has not been identified in the operative version of the planning maps or in the PDP planning maps. MGLA has georeferenced map 103a into the current GIS data set to show the geophysical extent of the former ONF with the SNA identified in the PDP. This is shown as the purple (scanned) outline) in attached map.

Because the identified ONF is largely contained within the SNA, the effects on landscape and visual amenity will be similar. These are identified within the MGLA s92 response report. Ecological effects on the SNA are addressed in the ecology report.

## 2. Information Request

- *The Visual Absorption Capability (VAC) was used within the original Opus assessment as a descriptor for visual audiences. This methodology is also included in Appendix Three of the MGLA report. However, VAC does not appear to be used in the MGLA visual assessment. Does the MGLA assessment rely on the Opus VAC descriptions and how has this been considered in the MGLA assessment?*

Response to the above request is as follows:

MGLA have undertaken an independent assessment and have not relied upon the ratings contained within the original LVA (Opus), due to the uncertainty of the methodology. VAC ratings for the identified view locations (MGLA) are as defined in the table below. The overall effects ratings are repeated for ease of correlation. A VAC rating definition table is attached to this response.

No.	Name	VAC Rating	VAC Notes	Effects Rating
VL1	SH2, Southern Palms (Public)	Stg1= <i>Good</i> Stg2= <i>Good</i> Stg3= <i>Neutral</i>	<p>The vegetation (including SNA) and undulating topography within the midground help to screen the proposed stages from view. The western faces of each stage will however still be visible.</p> <p>Due to the direction of works within the quarry, the northern and eastern faces/benches of the quarry will be screened from view.</p> <p>In general, the proposed expansion will be seen in the context of an already existing quarry.</p> <p>Stage 3 will see the biggest loss in rural land (western ridge) from this view location which will decrease the VAC rating.</p>	Stg1= <i>Very Low</i> Stg2= <i>Very Low</i> Stg3= <i>Low</i>
VL2	233 Pinnacle Hill Road (Public)	Stg1= <i>Very Good</i> Stg2= <i>Neutral</i> Stg3= <i>Very Good</i>	<p>The undulating topography within the foreground will partially screen the proposed quarry from view (including from surrounding houses).</p> <p>The ridgeline located within the mid-ground of this view will be removed as a result of stage 2 which will decrease the VAC rating.</p>	Stg1= <i>Negligible</i> Stg2= <i>Low</i> Stg3= <i>Negligible</i>
VL3	93 Irish Road (Public)	Stg1= <i>Neutral</i> Stg2= <i>Good</i> Stg3= <i>Very Good</i>	<p>Due to the ability to view the site (direct views), lack of intervening topography and vegetation, Stage 1 will be clearly visible from this VP.</p>	Stg1= <i>Low-Moderate</i> Stg2= <i>Very Low</i> Stg3= <i>Negligible</i>

			<p>The foreground vegetation, which surrounds neighbouring house affords filtered screening of the overburden disposal area and lower benches of the proposed quarry.</p> <p>The extent of quarry visible from this VP will stay constant throughout all 3 stages due to the ability to see the site and the low elevation of this VP. The SNA and steeply undulating topography within the foreground will screen the majority of views into the quarry (throughout stage 2 and 3).</p>	
VL4	SH2, outside 286 (Public)	<p>Stg1= <i>Neutral</i> Stg2= <i>Neutral-Poor</i> Stg3= <i>Good</i></p>	<p>Due to the ability to view the site (direct views), lack of intervening topography and vegetation, Stage 1 &amp; 2 and the overburden disposal area will be clearly visible from this VP.</p> <p>The majority of stage 3 will be screened from view by the nature of the design and existing vegetated hillside (SNA).</p> <p>The overburden disposal area will however be progressively shaped to integrate with the surrounding natural landform over the life of the proposed quarry (3 stages).</p> <p>The proposed expansion will be seen in the context of an already existing quarry.</p>	<p>Stg1= <i>Low-Moderate</i> Stg2= <i>Moderate</i> Stg3= <i>Low</i></p>
VL5	113 Baird Road (Public)	<p>Stg1= <i>Neutral</i> Stg2= <i>Very Good</i> Stg3= <i>Good</i></p>	<p>The proposed quarry will be visible along Baird Road between existing shelterbelts, specimen trees, beyond dwellings, cultivated land and associated development and pastoral paddocks, which will help partially screen views of the proposal.</p>	<p>Stg1= <i>Low-Moderate</i> Stg2= <i>Low</i> Stg3= <i>Low</i></p>
VL6	Hitchens Road, Pokeno (Public)	<p>Stg1= <i>Very Good</i> Stg2= <i>Very Good</i> Stg3= <i>Good</i></p>	<p>All 3 stages of the quarry development will be partially visible at a considerable distance over the undulating terrain and scattered vegetation in the foreground. The proposed overburden disposal area will not be visible from this location due to undulating topography and existing vegetation.</p> <p>The extent of quarry visible will increase with stage 3. This change will,</p>	<p>Stg1= <i>Very Low</i> Stg2= <i>Low</i> Stg3= <i>Moderate</i></p>

			however, be backdropped by the major skyline ridge beyond the site.	
VL7	Mt. William Summit (Public)	Stg1= <i>Neutral</i> Stg2= <i>Very Good</i> Stg3= <i>Poor</i>	<p>Due to the ability to view the site (direct views from Mt. William), lack of intervening topography and vegetation, all 3 stages will be clearly visible. The percentage of exposed land will significantly increase through all stages.</p> <p>The proposed overburden disposal area will also be partially visible from this location.</p> <p>The lower benches and pit floor will remain screened by the foreground vegetation.</p> <p>Due to the scale, shape and appearance (including colouring of exposed land) of the proposed quarry, the landscape (surrounding rural land and vegetation) will be less able to absorb these land use changes from this VP compared to surrounding VP's.</p>	Stg1= <i>Low-Moderate</i> Stg2= <i>Moderate</i> Stg3= <i>High</i>

### 3. Information Request

- *Considering the additional information provided in the landscape character baseline, is the Opus landscape character sensitivity rating of "low" relied upon?*

Response to the above request is as follows:

As identified above, MGLA have not relied upon ratings contained within the original Opus LVA report.

MGLA has evaluated the Landscape Character sensitivity as being *low-moderate*. This rating indicates that, on face value, the landscape is slightly more sensitive to character change than identified in the Opus report.

### 4. Information Request

- *Has the Overburden Disposal Area (ODA) been modelled in the Visual Simulation? The ODA is described as partially visible in the assessment but cannot be seen in the Visual Simulation.*

Response to the above request is as follows:

The overburden disposal area (ODA) is not shown in the visual simulation supplied to Council. The layer showing this aspect was accidentally left switched off on the proposed montages. This has been corrected in the attached montages.

It should be noted that the visual simulations represent the end of each stage of extraction (i.e. completed pit and overburden disposal). Because overburden stripping and disposal will occur at the beginning of each stage, the ODA will be at a point where it already has been filled and regressed. During overburden stripping and placement, a small portion of the overburden stockpile area will be exposed to view while

filling occurs. From a distance the overburden disposal area (pre-grassing) will appear like the upper parts of the quarry (or a cultivated field). This effect will be short term, with the overburden progressively grassed after placement.

While the ODA was not shown within the original visual simulation (s92 report - MGLA), the effects and overall findings will not change. The effects of the overburden disposal area along with the effects of the quarry pit was included and taken into consideration in every aspect of the previous report.

## 5. Information Request

- *Is it concluded that the overall visual effects will be less than minor, as concluded in the Opus assessment? The increased level of effects experienced in the VP4, VP6 and VP7 to moderate and high would suggest that this may have changed. Could MGLA confirm how the additional viewpoints are considered in the round for the overall conclusions?*

Response to the above request is as follows:

As identified in the s92 response, the overall adverse effects ratings will range between *Negligible* and *Low-Moderate* for stage 1, *Very Low* and *Moderate* for stage 2 and *Negligible* and *High* for stage 3. The overall effects therefore range between *Negligible-Very Low* and *High*. While the averaging of overall assessment ratings must be considered with caution (due to the potential for the type and level of effects to differ from location to location), in the round, the overall effect of the proposal on the wider landscape is considered to be *Low-Moderate*. This is equal to the *minor* threshold of the RMA.

While the Opus ratings do not take staging into consideration, when compared to the MGLA ratings for each stage, the Opus rating is generally within the range of the MGLA ratings. No Opus ratings were provided for the Mount Williams Walkway, however it can be assumed that, if assessed, the rating would have also been within the range of the MGLA ratings.

The Opus report does not conclude that the effects will be “...less than minor”. It concludes “*It is considered that effects overall will be low, with moderate effects for the closest neighbour.*” (P27). The MGLA finding of an overall *Low-Moderate* effect reflects the higher values given to some of the component ratings. While not *less than minor* effects are *no more than minor*.

For any further clarification please contact me.

Yours sincerely,



**Dave Mansergh**

Dip P&RM(Dist), BLA(Hons), MLA, Registered ANZILA  
Director

### Attachments:

- Amended photomontages
- Map 13 Franklin District ONF and Waikato District SNA Boundary Comparison
- VAC rating definition table





View Location Data

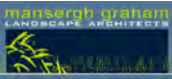
NZTM Easting: 1779634.4985  
NZTM Northing: 5880092.3644  
Focal length: 50mm  
Photographer: D.Mansergh  
Camera: Canon EOS D5 Full Frame Digital  
with EF 50mm F1.4 USM (Prime)  
Date: 23rd October 2019

A 3D digital model of the proposed development was produced and accurately superimposed into each image using a combination of Adobe Photoshop CC 2019, ArcGIS Pro and Vectorworks 2019, in accordance with NZLA best practice guidelines. Panoramic view was merged from 50mm frame images, Photo montage by MGLA.

Image should be viewed at a distance of 260 mm to approximate actual scale.

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└ ┘ SINGLE IMAGE FRAME SIZE

VIEW LOCATION SEVEN - EXISTING VIEW LOOKING EAST FROM MT WILLIAM







\*MITIGATION PLANTING NOT SHOWN

View Location Data

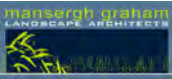
NZTM Easting: 1779634.4985  
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VIEW LOCATION SEVEN - PROPOSED STAGE 1 VIEW LOOKING EAST FROM MT WILLIAM (WITHOUT MITIGATION PLANTING)







\*WITH ECOLOGIACL AND MITIGATION PLANTING

View Location Data

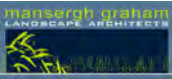
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VIEW LOCATION SEVEN - PROPOSED STAGE 1 VIEW LOOKING EAST FROM MT WILLIAM (WITH MITIGATION PLANTING)







\*MITIGATION PLANTING NOT SHOWN

View Location Data

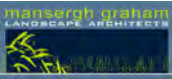
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VIEW LOCATION SEVEN - PROPOSED STAGE 2 VIEW LOOKING EAST FROM MT WILLIAM (WITHOUT MITIGATION PLANTING)







\*WITH ECOLOGIACL AND MITIGATION PLANTING

View Location Data

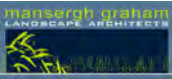
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Focal length: 50mm  
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SINGLE IMAGE FRAME SIZE

VIEW LOCATION SEVEN - PROPOSED STAGE 2 VIEW LOOKING EAST FROM MT WILLIAM (WITH MITIGATION PLANTING)







\*MITIGATION PLANTING NOT SHOWN

View Location Data

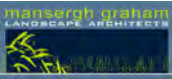
NZTM Easting: 1779634.4985  
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VIEW LOCATION SEVEN - PROPOSED STAGE 3 VIEW LOOKING EAST FROM MT WILLIAM (WITHOUT MITIGATION PLANTING)







\*WITH ECOLOGICAL AND MITIGATION PLANTING

View Location Data

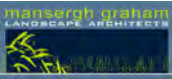
NZTM Easting: 1779634.4985  
NZTM Northing: 5880092.3644  
Focal length: 50mm  
Photographer: D.Mansergh  
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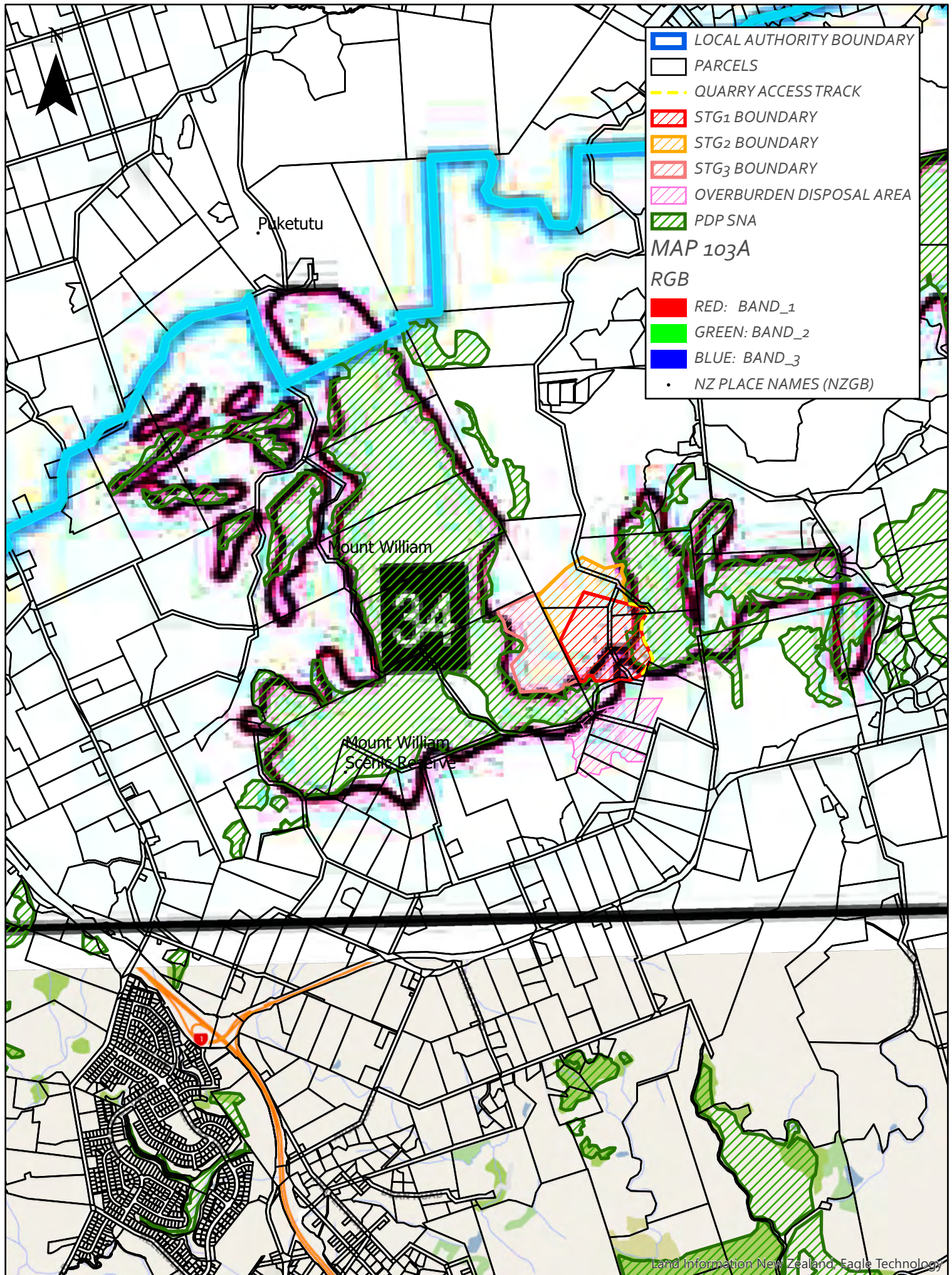
Image should be viewed at a distance of 260 mm to approximate actual scale.

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VIEW LOCATION SEVEN - PROPOSED STAGE 3 VIEW LOOKING EAST FROM MT WILLIAM (WITH MITIGATION PLANTING)







Visual Absorption Capability Definition Ratings	
VAC Rating	Use
Very Good	<p>The proposed development/activity would be completely screened, almost completely screened or completely absorbed by existing landscape features. Any views of the development would be either unidentifiable or at a great distance, and/or;</p> <p>The development/activity would not affect the existing character of the surrounding landscape or view in which it is seen, and/or;</p> <p>The development/activity would introduce a visual element into the landscape or view which may be viewed very frequently or continuously in that or similar landscape types.</p>
Good	<p>The proposed development/activity would be mostly screened or visually absorbed by existing landscape features, but still be identifiable. The development/activity may act as a tertiary focal attraction within the landscape or view in which it is seen, and/or;</p> <p>The development/activity would not affect the existing character of the surrounding landscape or view in which it is seen, and/or;</p> <p>The development/activity may introduce a visual element into the landscape or view which may be viewed frequently in that or similar landscape types.</p>
Neutral	<p>The proposed development/activity would neither be screened nor become a visual intrusion or focal attraction within the landscape or view in which it is seen. The proposed development/activity may act as a minor focal attraction from some locations, and/or;</p> <p>The development/activity would alter the existing character of the surrounding landscape or view in which it is seen, and/or;</p> <p>The development/activity would introduce a visual element into the landscape or view which may be viewed occasionally in that or similar landscape types.</p>
Poor	<p>The proposed development/activity would be clearly visible but would not act as a primary focal attraction, and/or;</p> <p>It would be expected that the proposed development/activity would alter the existing character of the surrounding landscape or view in which it is seen, and/or;</p> <p>The development/activity may introduce a new visual element into the landscape or view. The development/activity may be viewed infrequently in that or similar landscape types.</p>
Very Poor	<p>The proposed development/activity will be highly visible and may act as a primary focal attraction or feature. It would also be expected that the proposed development/activity will significantly alter the existing character of the surrounding landscape or view in which it is seen, and/or;</p> <p>The development/activity will introduce a new visual element into the landscape or view, which will be significantly different in appearance, or scale from the landscape elements surrounding it, and/or;</p> <p>The development/activity would be found very rarely in that or similar landscape types.</p>