5. Impact Assessment

5.1 Visual

Lune River Road is a part sealed/part unsealed road flanked by a mixture of button grass plains and areas of thick forest, occasionally punctuated by cleared housing lots. The road corridor accommodates above-ground power infrastructure and is occasionally crossed by the Ida Bay Railway network.

On the northern approach, the site is flanked on the right-hand side by Moonlight Flats and Lune Sugarloaf. From the southern approach, there is a row of housing on the western side of Lune River Road and some significant cleared areas along the road, to assist as a fire break. The backdrop to the southern approach is the forested hills north of Hastings including Shingle Hill and Coal Hill.

The site also sits to the east of Lune River Quarry which is a significant entry point into the South-west conservation area including the Moonlight Ridge/Precipitous Bluff walking track and the main Mystery Creek Cave entrance.

Methodology

This visual impact assessment describes potential effects on the values of the landscape/space from changes in the composition and quality of views, the impact of likely changes and the overall effect on visual amenity. The study methodology to identify potential visual impact(s) involves an assessment process that is clear, logical and repeatable with respect to identifying the effects and categorisation of any impacts. The significance of impacts will be determined by a combination of the sensitivity of the receptor (whether it is a landscape or a viewer) and the magnitude of the predicted change(s). See Figure 16 for photo locations.

There are common physiological, visual and aesthetic factors affecting visual perception and these factors are likely to be relatively consistent across communities. The factors do not provide a definitive analysis of likely perceptions of visual effects/impacts or the values that may be attached to those changes in the viewed landscape, as they do not consider elements such as context, cultural meaning and how the receptor views the landscape.

Impact Assessment

The potential viewpoints identified within this study and represented within the photo images meet the following criteria.

- Locations nominated by JMG Engineers & Planners were considered to be the most likely places where there may be an impact.
- Publicly accessible viewpoints were identified as being the most likely areas of potential visual impact.

Within these areas, the most representative and the likely 'worst case' visual impact locations were chosen. The 'worst case' scenario is a demonstrable bushfire.

The important viewsheds are defined as follows:

- Viewshed 1 - The northern approach on Lune River Road (180m);
- Viewshed 2 - The southern approach on Lune River Road (300m); and
- Viewshed 3 - Western views from the Tasmanian World Heritage Area in particular:
    - Lune Sugarloaf (3.6km);
    - Moonlight Ridge (5.3km);
    - Mount Alexandra (13km);
    - Adamson's Peak (12km); and
    - Moonlight Flats (5.3km).
- Viewshed 4 – Views from adjoining property/internal road to the north

Figure 16 Map of area demonstrating photo locations

Figure 17 View sheds to the west of the site

The Northern Approach on Lune River Road

The northern approach to the site (Figure 18) is currently dominated by the existing railway shed, largely due to the zero setback of this structure from the road reserve.

The new Visitor Centre/Café will sit further back than the existing railway shed. The majority of the building will be screened by the existing mature vegetation. The proposed car park will not be visible from the northern approach as it is located behind the railway shed from this angle. Whilst there will be some loss of vegetation from this viewpoint, the large eucalypts will maintain their dominant presence.

The new Visitor Centre is a low single pitch roof structure orientated towards the west. The structure presents to visitors arriving along the boardwalk as a simple vertical timber-clad wall with a single opening.

Whilst there will be some loss of vegetation from this viewpoint, the large eucalypts will maintain their dominant presence and assist to screen the car park from the road.

The red roof and cladding of the existing railway shed will continue to draw the eye away from the new car park.

The most significant impact from this viewpoint is modified access off Lune River Road. The view from the approach is a short-range view of only 180m and by car will only be brief before the facility is reached.

The artwork will not be visible from Lune River Road due to the intervening vegetation and buildings.

Figure 18 View south on Lune River Road (approaching from the north)

The Southern Approach on Lune River Road

The southern approach (Figure 19) to the site is less dominated by the existing railway shed as attention is drawn to the row of cottages fronting Lune River Road. The eucalypts on the eastern side of the road dominate the view field, with large eucalypts on the site also providing background.

Again there will be some vegetation loss through the removal of trees, but this is not significant given the large number of trees that are being retained.

The backdrop of the Coal Hill and Adamsons Peak will not change.

The new Visitor Centre/Café will not be visible as it is located behind the existing infrastructure. The largest potential impact from this view is the proposed Visitor Welcome Centre and the entry point however these will be largely hidden behind the existing vegetation.

As with the northern approach, the distances of these views are short being only 200-300m and will be relatively short in duration before the facility is reached.

Figure 19 View north on Lune River Road (approaching from the south)

Western views from the Tasmanian World Heritage Area

The Tasmanian World Heritage area is 2.4km from the site at its closest point. The most likely structure to be visible is the art installation given it is located outside the existing tree canopy and the access path to it. There are also some construction access works that will also be visible, but these are only temporary and noting construction access is largely achieved through the use of existing roads and tracks.

The art installation itself is clad in concrete panels which are buried into the landscape with local rocks. The height of the facility at 5.5m above ground level the installation will not project above the trees which will act as the back to the facility from the western viewpoints.

The western views from the Tasmanian World Heritage Area are shown in Figure 17.

The installation at its widest point is 35.8m, thus the most likely visual impact from longer distances is the geometric form of the facility and the linear form of the walkway across the landscape when viewed from a height, such as Lune Sugarloaf (3.6km), Moonlight Flats (5.3km) or Moonlight Ridge (5.3km). However, the earthen roof and the curvaceous form of the walking track will ameliorate the view from these distances.

Elements of the facility such as the car park and Visitor Centre/Café will not be visible as they will be under the canopy of existing trees. From a longer distance perspective, such as Mount Alexandra (13km) and Adamson's Peak (12km), this will also be the case.

One aspect of visual impact is a potential impact on the World Heritage Area is reflectivity from the internal mirrors of the installation. For this reflectively to impact beyond the site there would need to be mirrored surfaces facing in a northerly direction with surfaces angled to reflect direct sunlight away from the facility in these directions.

The art installation is proposed at ground level within a slope with the aim to capture the reflection of the lower landscape rather than the sky and other higher components of the landscape. To achieve this reflection, the mirrors on the large sidewalls will be angled at 6.7 degrees from the central axis of each tunnel or 83.3 degrees from the plane off the end of the tunnel. The back wall of each tunnel will face downwards at an angle of 13.6 degrees from vertical and the roof mirror is at 10.6 degrees angle from horizontal, other than the central tunnel in which the back wall mirror is perpendicular to the floor.

With this arrangement, the mirrors will primarily reflect the external landscape to observers standing inside the building.

Further views from higher viewpoints will look down on the facility making views of the internal surfaces impossible. Views from low elevations within the Tasmanian World Heritage area will view the installation through the landscape and thus it will be obscured by the intervening vegetation from the distances of over a kilometre (see Figure 20).

Reflective views at low angles will be reflections of either the internal stone floor or re-reflected external environment further decreasing its visibility.

Figure 20 View northeast from South Lune Road.